

Kev's sermon notes for eGroups

Sunday, April 25, 2021

Elevation Church - Broadcasting from Ballantyne Campus – Charlotte, NC USA

Pastor: Steven Furtick

Sermon Title: "Worship While you Wait - Timing your Testimony - Relational trust takes time – Telling your True Testimony – Acting on God's Word and Not Seeing the Results Yet – Don't be arrogant in seasons of abundance and don't be in despair during seasons of struggle – Do I matter apart from what I do? – Confusing identity with the Gift – Getting to the understanding that inner joy with God is more important than satisfying other people – Boldly go to the King and asking for it back and don't speak to the shame of a prior situation – There is only so much God can do – We still have to speak the word and do the best that we can – It is hard to believe in advance before we get the revelation – It is time for "Thee" to do some work – Trust God's timing enough to give Him the mic."

Elevation Worship and Maverick City Music – new album to be released later this week.

- Graves to Gardens (with over 22M YouTube views) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KwX1f2gYKZ4>
- Shall Not Want (Dang! Great new song) – no official YouTube video yet.
- Wait on You (New Song) - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K3TYG7Q_fj4

Scripture for this week:

- Isaiah 40: 31 29 to 31: He gives strength to the weary, and increases the power of the weak. 30 Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; 31 but those who hope in the Lord - will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.
- 2nd Kings 8: 1 to 6: The Shunammite's Land Restored - 8 Now Elisha had said to the woman whose son he had restored to life, "Go away with your family and stay for a while wherever you can, because the Lord has decreed a famine in the land that will last seven years." 2 The woman proceeded to do as the man of God said. She and her family went away and stayed in the land of the Philistines seven years. 3 At the end of the seven years she came back from the land of the Philistines and went to appeal to the king for her house and land. 4 The king was talking to Gehazi, the servant of the man of God, and had said, "Tell me about all the great things Elisha has done." 5 Just as Gehazi was telling the king how Elisha had restored the dead to life, the woman whose son Elisha had brought back to life came to appeal to the king for her house and land. Gehazi said, "This is the woman, my lord the king, and this is her son whom Elisha restored to life." 6 The king asked the woman about it, and she told him. Then he assigned an official to her case and said to him, "Give back everything that belonged to her, including all the income from her land from the day she left the country until now."
- Psalm 119:125: "I have done what is righteous and just; do not leave me to my oppressors. 122 Ensure your servant's well-being; do not let the arrogant oppress me. 123 My eyes fail, looking for your salvation, looking for your righteous promise. 124 Deal with your servant according to your love and teach me your decrees. 125 I am your servant; give me discernment that I may understand your statutes. 126 It is time for thee to act, Lord; your law is being broken. 127 Because I love your commands more than gold, more than pure gold, 128 and because I consider all your precepts right, I hate every wrong path.

- 2nd Kings 4 and 2nd Kings 5:
 - Vs 1 to 7: The Widow's Olive Oil
 - Vs. 8 to 37: The Shunammite's Son Restored to Life
 - Vs. 38 to 43: Death in the Pot and Feeding of a Hundred
 - 2nd Kings 5: 1 to 26. Naaman Healed of Leprosy

Sermon Title: "Worship While you Wait - Timing your Testimony - Relational trust takes time – Telling your True Testimony – Acting on God's Word and Not Seeing the Results Yet – Don't be arrogant in seasons of abundance and don't be in despair during seasons of struggle – Do I matter apart from what I do? – Confusing identity with the Gift – Getting to the understanding that inner joy with God is more important than satisfying other people – Boldly go to the King and asking for it back and don't speak to the shame of a prior situation – There is only so much God can do – We still have to speak the word and do the best that we can – It is hard to believe in advance before we get the revelation – It is time for "Thee" to do some work – Trust God's timing enough to give Him the mic."

- **Please consider joining an eGroup (small group) so you don't have to walk this walk alone? – See www.elevationchurch.cc.**
- **Interested in joining Elevation Church: See: www.elevationchurch.cc**
- **Interested in leading an eGroup? See: www.elevationchurch.cc**
- **Interested in serving at Elevation Church: See: www.elevationchurch.cc**
- **Interested in attending or leading a watch party: See: www.elevationchurch.cc**
- Here Comes Church:
 - Interested in serving at Elevation Church: See: www.elevationchurch.cc
 - Please consider joining an eGroup (small group) so you don't have to walk this walk alone? – See www.elevationchurch.cc. When you are isolated, you don't have the benefit of friends to support you. Embrace the power of numbers.
 - Old Church Basement – album release later this week – quote: "From Going back to the place where we discovered worship for the first time – not a physical place - accessing our first love (within ourselves) – bringing you back to a pure place – absent of self-consciences."
 - Release of "Jireh" from Elevation Church and Maverick City Music – see: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mC-zw0zCCtg>
 - Release of "Talk to Jesus – by Elevation Church and Maverick City Music – A testament of family faith – See: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OXsxx1fRHMA>
 - Release of "Build Your Church" by Elevation Church and Maverick City Music - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y8PIYwK7ZFo>
 - Release of "Wait on You" by Elevation Church and Maverick City Music - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K3TYG7Q_fj4
 - Recall the testimony of Ron, Anthony, and Tony participating a men's eGroup that is free of judgment. "If I do this, I have to be honest and truthful – after years of suppressing layers of pain – and unveil it during eGroup – and be truly vulnerable for the first time in our lives."

- See the video from Pastor Furtick interviewing Bishop TD Jakes virtually on Wed. April 21, 2021 at 7PM (EST) as Bishop Jakes launched a new book – Don't Drop The Mic. This will be broadcasted on the Elevation YouTube channel.
- **Opening prayer by Pastor Furtick on Sunday, April 25, 2021 - "You have been over-analyzing and trying to come to a conclusion by yourself – Right now, you are in the presence of a God that knows the end from the beginning – I speak this promise and prophecy from the assurance Isaiah over your life – where he says in Isaiah 40: They that wait shall renew their strength – I declare over your life that you are not going down – This is not the end for you – In fact I see you at the doorway of a new beginning – I see things beyond what you can ask or imagine – and you can't see this with your eyes you have to see this with your spirit – that God is bringing you into the greatest season of your life – the most peaceful season of our life – Do you have wisdom and revelation of God now? – That enables anything that you walk through – To know that he is with you – And I want to encourage you that as you wait for your eyes to see it, worship like your spirit already knows it – Worship While you wait. Give Him a great shout of praise. Amen."**
- Recall the context of "Wait for You" involving Chandler Moore and Dante from Maverick City Music – "Writing this song was like fishing all night and catching nothing as in Luke 5 – but Chandler and Dante saw the potential. Pastor Furtick's Prayer prior to the release of Church Basement later this week - "May God bless these forthcoming songs - to bless people that are so tired and weary – and have come to the end of their own understanding – Father we ask that you corporately bless this project – We ask that your anointing will saturate every MP3 file and music streaming account – that your word would bring healing – that your word would bring life – that your word would bring strength – We pray Lord that you would restore purpose and joy – We pray Lord that these songs bring hope – and ride forth with your blessing – we pray that these songs go well into places that we cannot physically go. Amen."
- **See 2nd Kings 8:1 to 6. The Lord told me to talk to you today about "Timing Your Testimony."**
- Pastor's Rule: You Hold the Mic Rule and Count down timer when people share their testimony: Recall the humorous story that Pastor Furtick shared as to why he always holds the mic when someone shares their testimony." Quote of the day from Carl's dad: "Are you talking about me - Do you want to take this outside in the parking lot."
- Trust takes time and there are certain things you need to hold onto until you develop relational trust with others. This is not being paranoid - this is just a product of wisdom and experience.
- We typically lack the time and trust to fully share our own testimony. See the prior sermon "Time Lapse Testimony" from 2/14/2021: Here are Pastor Furtick's basic points from this excellent sermon:
 - "1 Peter 2: Vs. 1 "Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. Translation by Pastor Furtick: Delete all of your social media accounts. If you can't say Amen, say Ouch instead! Some of us have to make decisions as to who is going to have access to us – the first step in getting ready is getting rid of something."
 - "A Pastor Furtick classic: In this season we're talking about asking God for us make room to receive – and how can we make room for the heart of God if we are full of malice? How can we receive the revelation

of the real me if we are living a life of hypocrisy? Because we are so determined to look better than we really are – hypocrisy is not that you're struggling with something, it is pretending that you don't."

- "When someone shares their testimony with you – and how they were set free – this is typically a time lapse testimony – where they are fast forwarding through all of life's stumbles – and they fast forward through the 3 years of utter toil - which is what Peter is doing here – what Peter says sounds so simple – and the manner in which Peter says it sounds so sudden."
- "My salvation decision is a time lapse and did not capture all of the work that my mother did on my behalf – my salvation decision at the age of 16 was me catching up toward God I've been doing all along – and this really blesses me now as a parent – Scripture tells us to train up a child in the way they should go – so when they are old, they will not depart from it. (Kev note: See Proverbs 22:6). And we all want to skip over the stuff that does not make us look so spiritual."
- **And I think it's wise to withhold the raw things of our testimony with people we don't trust.**
- **Have do you even told yourself you're a true testimony?**
- 2nd Kings 8 came alive in me – God has either terrible timing or impeccable timing – and we could certainly make the case (based on some scripture) that God has terrible timing – four days after Lazarus dies is bad timing to show up to help – the fourth watch of the night is a terrible time to step in and stop the storm.
- **For me, the scripture comes to life during times when the revelation from God comes to me at a point where He could reveal his greatest glory – this scripture in 2nd Kings 8 his speaks to me more of a lifeline than a lesson – particularly if we are looking for a restoration of something that was lost – and as we examine the scripture today, I think will find some things that will help us.**
- Focus on the word restored in 2nd Kings 8.
- In verse 2, the woman obeyed what the man of God man said – and when she came back seven years later, she lost what she had.
- I can understand Jonah – When God commanded him to go to Nineveh – But because he wanted to go to Tarshis, Jonah was put on a Mediterranean seaweed diet and lived inside of fish for a day – the scripture suggests that if you do exactly what God tells you - and go where exactly God sends you – to act on God's word and we still may not yet see the results that we imagined.
- We wrongfully conclude that the famine in 2nd Kings 8 is our fault – the Lord created the famine – and the Lord told the woman to leave – In the process of going where God send her in order to survive, she lost something that she had before she left.
- See 2nd Kings 4 and 2nd Kings 5 – this woman was amazing and had a generous heart.
- *Kev note: See my sermon notes from Pastor Furtick's "Just the Two of Us" at the end of this document from 9/27/2020*
- **What do 2nd Kings 4, 2nd Kings 5, and 2nd Kings 8 tell us? Don't be arrogant in seasons of abundance and don't be in despair during seasons of struggle.**
- **The enemy will try to convince you that it is all your fault – that there was something wrong with you based on what people did you – but the famine was not her fault – and what I'm about to say might sound difficult because we live in a culture where people don't want to take responsibility for anything – please do not miss apply this sermon – yes the famine was**

not her fault however the woman still had a responsibility – so she walks back into the presence of the ruling King – to ask him to give back what she lost when she left.

- I realized about 2 ½ years ago there were some things that God wanted to give me - that I had given up on – I had made it up my mind that I was some sort of machine that God wanted to use - in order to do ministry. I have always been preaching that I am a child of God and we are all the righteousness of God – and we can all say a lot of things that sound nice but we don't believe it in our hearts – We can all project the feeling that we have all the right answers while deep in our hearts we have a lot of unanswered dark questions – Where I ask things like “Do I matter apart from what I do?” I started preaching when I was 16 – this was a little bit early for me to learn that when I speak from an altar, I'm representing God - I'm truly thankful that God called me at that stage of my life and would not change any of it – However, this kind of conflated my identity from the contribution – Stated another way: I started to confuse my identity with my gift – and this happens to a lot of pastors. Here is where 2nd Kings 8 speaks to me: God wanted to give the woman something that she didn't even know to ask for – and in the process of surviving a famine, she had lost something. In the process of building Elevation Church as a preacher and as a leader, there were some things that were required of me – and, I sort of left myself out of it – asking this question: If I couldn't do what I did, would I have any right to be here? Where I felt that for the only way for me to belong was to bring something external to myself for the benefit of others – and here's the revelation for me: To see the situation as a gift – and to have the ability to get low enough where I had to make a decision – If this is what it costs to succeed in ministry, I would rather fail in people's eyes and have joy inside myself — Rather than achieving everything that the world offers and feel internal emptiness in the process – I had a job to do in this ministry – I put so much into this ministry that I could not receive ministry myself – and this scared me that I would become a shell – And I think this happens to all of us occasionally – we have to do things in certain seasons – For example: When you are a mom, you become hostage to another human – and you have to do what has to be done. Or when you are building your career, you may find that you lose yourself to chase some other objective. So, the Prophet said you've got to get out of here – and the woman wasn't running from God - She was doing what she had to do in order to survive. Can you relate to this fact? – Some of the things you did in your prior season you had to do to survive – and the devil continues to beat you up with this at night and subtracts all of the things you did to survive – We just need to admit that it was the best you could do in that season and don't give it another thought.
- **The woman lost what she had in the process of being obedient to God – and she boldly went to the king and said I want this back! We all need to see this sometimes – “I want it back” – I don't just want to build something and survive something – I want it back – we are taught to accept the fact that we will only get it if God wants to give it to us – and He will – But there is only so much God can do. At the risk of running you out of this church, let me say something that is theologically deep – There is only so much that God can do – Yes, God can do anything – But we still have to speak the word – and be honest with the fact that in the process of**

surviving a famine that we didn't cause – we didn't have an example or frame of reference for it and we were doing the best that you could.

- **And the woman had to go into an enemy occupied place controlled by the philistines to survive a famine – and so have some of us – For some of us this is where our addictions came from – For some of us we had to do something to numb the pain – the most important part of this sermon is that it takes the shame out of where we have been – and helps us to understand that there comes a time where we have to appreciate where and how God fed us during the famine – and also be ready to leave and go back to the place where we really belong.**
- Consider this sermon a lifeline and don't convince yourself that you could never have it – don't convince yourself that you can never be happy even though that you caught Bible verses.
- “God wants you to be holy not happy” is not a Bible verse – this comes from the book of your dumb cousin's opinion – Have you ever read that?
- So that this woman relates better to our story let me provide a bit more detail. For this we need to go to 2nd Kings 4. See the following passages:
 - 2nd Kings 4: 1 to 7: The Widow's Olive Oil
 - 2nd Kings 4: 8 to 37: The Shunammite's Son Restored to Life
 - 2nd Kings 4: 38 to 43: Death in the Pot and Feeding of a Hundred
 - 2nd Kings 5: 1 to 26. Naaman Healed of Leprosy
 - She was never looking to get something from God she was looking to give something to God. She used what she had and never expected anything in return.
 - See the sermon “Just the Two of Us” from 9/20/2021 (Notes at the end of this text).
 - **In 2nd Kings 4, the women made a room for the prophet to stay before she knew what God was going to do through her act of obedience – and this is the hardest thing to do – to believe in advance what we can only be understood in reverse.**
 - When the prophet asked the woman what he could do for her – Did she want a greater state of being? Did she want a home among my own people? God waits for her husband to be too old to bless her with a son – And the prophet brought the woman something she had stopped asking for – for her to consider the possibility of things being any different – causing her to push away the promise of God – pushing away the possibility of something different – and sometimes we can push away all the things that God puts in our life to mature us and restore us – but God did it anyway – and she held a son in her arms one year later.
 - And one day, the son dies.
 - Recap: She did not ask for a son. However, she got one anyway. And when the boy died, she placed it on the bed of the prophet. Then the prophet restored the boy's life.
- **Here's what I mean by “Timing your Testimony”: Trusting God to obey Him before he has shown you exactly why He is calling you do.**
- It's easy to say God did a lot of stuff in retrospect.

- The hard part is to let down your nets before you have a clue that this Carpenter happens to know where the fish are.
- The same boy that was brought back to life by the prophet is standing in the Kings Court with the woman in 2nd Kings 8 – at least 7 years later.
- The thing that died in one season of the women's life, what is the thing that stood beside her during a moment of her greatest need.
- Gehazi is the servant of Elisha – And Elisha performed many miraculous things in 2nd Kings.
- And Gehazi remembered what God did through Elisha in a previous season.
- The one story that Gehazi skipped was the story involving Naaman – Naaman was a lepper and was healed by Elisha by dipping him 7 times in the Jordan river – and Elisha refused to accept the gifts – and Gehazi fraudulently accepted the gifts on Elisha's behalf – And Elisha knew about this dishonesty – Then Gehazi was afflicted with leprosy – So how is Gehazi in the Kings court because leppers were not allowed? Just like the boy, Gehazi must have been restored as well – Now Gehazi is standing the Kings court despite his prior dishonesty.
- As Gehazi recalls the story of the son being restored in the court – and as he is talking, the women walks into the room (consider the statistical improbability of this) – God knew that exact moment for the women to talk in.
- **I have learned something about God - You can trust his timing – you can give Him the mic and you can let Him speak – And know that God wants to speak over your life at the appointed time – it will come to pass – and I have seen this in my own life – God knows exactly the who, what, where, and when.**
- **See Psalm 119 vs. 125. “I am your servant; give me discernment that I may understand your statutes. 126 It is time for thee to act,”**
- **It is time for thee to work – not for me – for thee – and I want you to come in the presence of the king (not the king of Israel) – and the Lord told me to tell you it's time for Him to work – You have done everything you can do about it – You might even have manipulated it so much as to make things worse – like the time my wife Holly tells me to get out of the kitchen because I'm not helping during dinner time – and perhaps the Lord is telling you to get out of the kitchen – and let God work – It is time for Thee to do something about what they did.**
- See 2nd Kings 8: the woman comes in the presence of the king to ask back what she lost – at the exact moment she walks into the court – Gehazi was telling the King her story – does God not have the craziest timing – drag what God did in your past into the room and show the thing that you are facing today – what God did for you yesterday.
- It is time for you to work Lord.
- For the God that did this, we also need him to do that.
- See vs 6 of 2nd Kings 8: “6 The king asked the woman about it, and she told him. Then he assigned an official to her case and said to him, “Give back everything that belonged to her, including all the income from her land from the day she left the country until now.”
- **The woman got back what she needed when she told story of what God had done.**

- Follow the sequence – the woman could have told any story – even a story of fear as to what might happen next – “Life isn’t fair” – “I was screwed” – I tried to obey God and look what happened? But rather she told the story of what God had done – and God tells us today – don’t stop telling the story – not to others – not to yourself.
- Stop telling ourselves these hypothetical stories of what might happen – or shameful stories of what did happen – you are standing next to a story – a living, breathing, walking, talking miracle – a product of nothing but the grace of God.
- Is April Carter once told me: you may not understand why things didn’t happen because it’s not your story – she said never stop telling herself the story – and we should never stop telling ourselves the story of the grace of God – the story of God’s faithfulness – and stop telling the story of fear.
- Say this: I don’t have it yet – I haven’t found a way to free myself of this yet – I don’t see how things are going to work out yet – don’t tell your testimony too early because you do not know what God is going to do in chapter 2nd Kings 8.
- Timing of God is so amazing – and every time you tell yourself a story about how God helped you in the past, you can bring it into the present what do you need him to do now.
- The woman received what belong to her. See 2nd Kings 8:6. Say this: Peace belongs to me and I am a child of God – Joy belongs to me and I am a child of God – Freedom is my inheritance and I am a child of God – I belong because I believe – I am a child of God – so go tell that story – tell this gospel to yourself.
- Gehazi was a lepper and a scoundrel - and yet he was able to recite the wonders of God – Can’t we? – and can you trust God’s timing enough to give him the mic – and believe God when he speaks?
- It is taking me a while to understand that God’s timing is created to increase my trust in Him – weather in the fourth watch of the night of the fourth day after you’ve lost something that you loved.
- God gives you these little gifts – what are yours?
- Have you told anyone that part of your story or so you too consumed by your present struggle that you have stopped rehearsing your past victories.
- Recall “The obedience Addie Mae (sp?)” - Selling baked goods at the farmers market in Charleston, SC (while Pastor Furtick was on vacation) – Where Pastor Furtick went to preach on short notice at a Church Holly Convocation – a church led by Chandler Moore’s Dad and Adie Mai was the nanny of Chandler Moore (Lead singer and song writer for Maverick City Music).
- Pastor Furtick’s closing prayer on Sunday, April 25, 2021: We all have moments where we question of God is really ordering our steps – Or is this random – we have overcome the world by the grace of Jesus Christ in the power of our testimony – God will not tell our testimony for us – it is our story and it is our testimony – the voice of God is louder than a shout – Bless the obedience of Addie Mae – the ram in the bush of Abraham and Isaac – God is going to bring things together in the right time I can trust him in this – God gives you these

moments that seems so small to you in one season – Jireh means we will see to it – Jehovah Jireh is the place Abraham called gave him a ram to sacrifice instead of his son – and we need to remember to tell these stories to ourselves – when we wonder if God is going to come through for us – that God can be trusted – we need to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God – in due time, He will lift you up – Addie Mae is no longer with us – but she is the one that brought Chandler Moore and me together – for those things that we lost God is going to restore them in a greater way – and your only job in this is to look for the ram – father we come today on the merit of your grace that you extend toward us – and the position in your heart as your children – it is time for THEE to work. You’re coming back to your presence – the king of kings – and the Lord of lords – to that which has been spoken over our lives - restoring the years that the locusts have eaten – restoring the years that we had wasted – thank you Lord that you are bringing it all back – and little by little and day by day will see the goodness of the Lord - it is time for THEE to work – we want it back – we want our Joy back – we want our focus back, in Jesus’ name. Amen.

Kev’s bonus Study:

Sunday, September 27, 2020 at 9:30 AM

Broadcasting from Ballantyne Campus – Charlotte, NC USA

Elevation – eFam – All sites participating on-line due to COVID-19 Pandemic

Pastor: Pastor Steven Furtick

Sermon Title: “Did I Ask part 2 – Just the Two of Us – It is Good to Go Back - Take Advantage of the opportunities that we do have – The women offered God the place of her disappointment – You be Paul and I will be Silas and we will turn these prison walls into a place of praise - Let God fill these spaces – Let God have that room”

Elevation Worship:

- My Testimony: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7NyH9mDYEck>
- Here Again: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zflCdBuB7NY>

Scripture for this week:

- **2 King 4:8 to 37: The Shunammite Woman - 8** Now there came a day when Elisha passed over to Shunem, where there was a prominent woman, and she persuaded him to eat food. And so it was, as often as he passed by, he turned in there to eat food. **9** She said to her husband, “Behold now, I perceive that this is a holy man of God passing by us continually. **10** Please, let us make a little walled upper chamber and let us set a bed for him there, and a table and a chair and a lampstand; and it shall be, when he comes to us, that he can turn in there.” **11** One day he came there and turned in to the upper chamber and rested. **12** Then he said to Gehazi his servant, “Call this Shunammite.” And when he had called her, she stood before him. **13** He said to him, “Say now to her, ‘Behold, you have been careful for us with all this care; what can I do for you? Would you be spoken for to the king or to the captain of the army?’” And she answered, “I live among

my own people.” 14 So he said, “What then is to be done for her?” And Gehazi answered, “Truly she has no son and her husband is old.” 15 He said, “Call her.” When he had called her, she stood in the doorway. 16 Then he said, “At this season next year you will embrace a son.” And she said, “No, my lord, O man of God, do not lie to your maidservant.” 17 The woman conceived and bore a son at that season the next year, as Elisha had said to her. 18 When the child was grown, the day came that he went out to his father to the reapers. 19 He said to his father, “My head, my head.” And he said to his servant, “Carry him to his mother.” 20 When he had taken him and brought him to his mother, he sat on her lap until noon, and then died. 21 She went up and laid him on the bed of the man of God, and shut the door behind him and went out. 22 Then she called to her husband and said, “Please send me one of the servants and one of the donkeys, that I may run to the man of God and return.” 23 He said, “Why will you go to him today? It is neither new moon nor sabbath.” And she said, “It will be well.” 24 Then she saddled a donkey and said to her servant, “Drive and go forward; do not slow down the pace for me unless I tell you.” 25 So she went and came to the man of God to Mount Carmel. When the man of God saw her at a distance, he said to Gehazi his servant, “Behold, there is the Shunammite. 26 Please run now to meet her and say to her, ‘Is it well with you? Is it well with your husband? Is it well with the child?’” And she answered, “It is well.” 27 When she came to the man of God to the hill, she caught hold of his feet. And Gehazi came near to push her away; but the man of God said, “Let her alone, for her soul is troubled within her; and the Lord has hidden it from me and has not told me.” 28 Then she said, “Did I ask for a son from my lord? Did I not say, ‘Do not deceive me’?” 29 Then he said to Gehazi, “Gird up your loins and take my staff in your hand, and go your way; if you meet any man, do not salute him, and if anyone salutes you, do not answer him; and lay my staff on the lad’s face.” 30 The mother of the lad said, “As the Lord lives and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.” And he arose and followed her. 31 Then Gehazi passed on before them and laid the staff on the lad’s face, but there was no sound or response. So he returned to meet him and told him, “The lad has not awakened.” 32 When Elisha came into the house, behold the lad was dead and laid on his bed. 33 So he entered and shut the door behind them both and prayed to the Lord. 34 And he went up and lay on the child, and put his mouth on his mouth and his eyes on his eyes and his hands on his hands, and he stretched himself on him; and the flesh of the child became warm. 35 Then he returned and walked in the house once back and forth, and went up and stretched himself on him; and the lad sneezed seven times and the lad opened his eyes. 36 He called Gehazi and said, “Call this Shunammite.” So he called her. And when she came into him, he said, “Take up your son.” 37 Then she went in and fell at his feet and bowed herself to the ground, and she took up her son and went out.

Pastor Steven Furtick - Sermon Title: “Did I Ask? part 2 – Just the Two of Us – It is Good to Go Back - Take Advantage of the opportunities that we do have – The women offered God the place of her disappointment – You be Paul and I will be Silas and we will turn these prison walls into a place of praise - Let God fill these spaces – Let God have that room”

- Please consider joining an eGroup (small group) so you don’t have to walk this walk alone? – See www.elevationchurch.cc.
- Interested in lead and eGroup? www.elevationchurch.cc.
- **Here Comes Church:**

- This week's focus: The Heart to Invite Others to Church – To provide guidance to others – The Baptism of Bill located in the Outer Banks of NC – The results of Inviting others to Church.
- "There is always a portion that is meant to be sown."
- New Bible Study for some eGroups – "The Art of Contentment" – A study of Philippians.
- Opening comment: Give God praise if you're doing better than what you expected – if you have a reason to praise him - praise him. I thank God for this opportunity to minister the word of God to you – we are doing things a little differently today – after I finished preaching last week God kept speaking to me – it is a weird sensation to be done preaching and God not finished speaking – during a walk with my wife Holly, she shared with me something God had been speaking to her – and now I'm taking what she said and preaching it to you – so the sermon today was stolen from my wife Holly – to make up for this she's the only one in the room today and I'm only preaching to her at the Ballentine campus.
- Recap from last week: When we stop asking what God what he wants to do for our lives – what he put inside of us – and start assuming, we limit the potential in us – and there is so much more that God wants to do – more than what we can ask or imagine (see Ephesians 3:20).
- The title of today's sermon is "Just the Two of Us."
- See 2 Kings 4: 8 to 37
- Opening Prayer: "Lord fill every heart in your presence in this moment – Will you make it so there was a direct connection from heaven to the heart? So they can hear from you the words that they need – and make it in this season of their lives – and we thank you that anything is possible in your presence – Nothing is impossible for You – Is there anything too hard for you? Is there anything too small for you? Nothing is too hard or too small for you. And we believe this and receive this in Jesus name amen.
- Sometimes it's good to go back to when I was just starting out in ministry preaching in empty rooms – our ministry did not start when people saw it – and what you see now is not how it started – and we can say that about our lives as well – you would be surprised if you saw the beta version of me – God has really been working on me – at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, we actually discussed one option of me preaching in my basement with Holly holding the camera – in order to get the message out – God will find a way to get His word out.
- When you first start out in ministry you don't have all the desired instruments.
- Recall the story of Pastor Furtick and Holly starting out in ministry running a "summer impact team" for school-age kids – and visiting smaller churches. It is good to go back and recall
- We can still preach this word even if it is just the two of us.
- And I love the worship team we have now - and I certainly don't want to go back to singing on my own with the guitar in front of small groups during a summer impact event.
- Sometimes it's good to look back in order to go forward – because sometimes if we look too far forward we just freak out.
- I believe God's resume is the reason to believe – and resurrection gives us reason to rejoice.
- How many of you - even though you felt lonely in this season – and you do not know what God's really going to do – in some kind of way, God had done things for you – the same stuff that God did back then - will be the same stuff that God will do tomorrow.
- Even while some of us are watching this alone – even through the screen - God's has a word for us today – Paul and Silas were in Philippi we're all by themselves – we are not where we want it to be

– and the situation occasionally looks bleak – feeling abandoned while in quarantine – if we start praising, chains break and doors open. We can get this done with just the two of us – it doesn’t take many of us because we have given much.

- Something about this concept comforts us.
- God is enough for us in every season.
- See 2 Kings 4.
- The ministry of the prophet Elisha was a lonely life – not only was he standing up to Kings that made him unpopular. And God uses people – and when we ask God for something, we have no idea what we’re asking.
- Here is the Important point in today’s Scripture: God provided for Elisha – God met the profits needs through someone he didn’t even asked to do it – just like when we talked about this last week when the crowds got fed even though they did not ask for a meal – remember those times in your life God had people walk away from you – that you didn’t even ask to have them removed - but God knew they would have probably screwed up your life.
- God is good enough to give you something you didn’t even ask for (see Ep 3:230) – yet we secretly ask God to do exactly what we planned – and none of us asked for the situation that we are in right now – and what drew me to this passage was that Elisha did not even ask for a guestroom.
- **The Bible and 2 Kings 4 states that she was a wealthy woman – The Hebrew translation says that she was a “great” woman – and she was great in ways that she could not see – and she was so great that she had the means and the humility to do things for God. And what got my attention was that Elisha never even had to ask. Does God have to ask you to do everything? There’s some stuff that God should not have to put a message in the sky to get you to do. God should not have to ask you for acts of praise. If He gave you breath you should want to give it back.**
- It belongs to him.
- We don’t always need to be asked – we should want to serve God – we should want to preach – we don’t have to do - we get to – we get to do this.
- It’s great to know that we have such a great church staff that can be counted to do things without asking – when things are so unclear. Do you have that kind of spirit? Where we say God: I’m with you regardless of what happens – even while the wheels falling off this thing, are you still with God?
- **And in every season God will send you someone – not necessarily who you expected – not necessarily who you asked – God will find a way to get it to you and He will use someone – and someone He didn’t even ask.**
- **The women in 2 Kings 4 did not go into a spiritual trance to see a Godly vision – she did not even ask – she just did it. Nothing theologically deep. She just did something simple. We typically like to ask for God’s will. And note that the deepest desire of her life was satisfied when she asked for something simple.**
- **God will send people into your life even during the most loneliest of seasons. Recall Elijah hiding in a cave trying escape the wrath of Jezebel – following a 3-year drought where is showed so much power on Mt Carmel (Kev note: See 1 Kings 18). There is often a difference between what we show publicly and what we wrestle with privately – we can have a great power publicly and great pain privately. And God tells Elijah to go back the way he came because God had already found a person to support him in his loneliness (and his name is Elisha). We tend to isolate in**

seasons of loneliness – Before you even ask, God will put someone in your path. He hears before we call. And then Elisha followed Elijah. The thing that you are running from may never happen – and do not need run from it. See 2 Kings 2.

- Does God have to push you? How responsive are you to the prompting of the Holy Spirit? Do you need to be prodded or does God prompt you? How hard is it for God to get you to say you are sorry when you are wrong? How hard is for God to get you to say something encouraging to someone in need – things that should come naturally as a child of God?
- God speaks to us in a whisper – He does not have to shout because he's not far away.
- God will give you someone in every season – Here is a prayer that I say a lot: Lord, put someone on my mind today – someone that I can call or someone that I can bless. God meets needs through people.
- And this passage is even more powerful when you consider the woman's lingering disappointment – a woman with a great big house and old husband (and it's just the two of us) – and she eventually stopped asking for a child – and then she stopped asking and decided instead to give what she had to God - and she did not even think about it – no 40 day fast or energetic thought – she just did it – it is privilege to serve God – and there comes a point when we all have to stop being bitter about something we did not get – and instead just offer to God what we have.
- Since it is just the two of us and we did not get the child that we wanted – or we did not get the opportunity that we wanted – or we can't have church full on Sunday – we might as well take advantage of the opportunities that we do have – what opportunities do we have right now that are rooted in our prior disappointments? – The woman offered God the place of her disappointment – the room that was designated for a son that they never were able to have. We need not stay stuck in the bitterness of things that we did not get. You be Paul and I will be Silas and we will turn these prison walls into a place of praise.
- God tells us that when two of us are present, there will be space for God to fill.
- If we make God a place, He will not merely visit - He wants to stay.
- Elisha then asked his assistant, what does she want?
- God's favorite punctuation is the question mark – we are compelled to ask questions. God's second favorite punctuation is the comma because this means it's not over.
- What are you going to do in your place of disappointment – even if you did not ask for this thorn? The deep one – the one you smile over? The important question is what are we going to do with this disappointment? The woman turned it into something God could use. Are you doing that right now or are you bitter – filled with regret and shame – all of those places that we remain in?
- See 2 Kings 4:13 to 15.
- Elisha is now asking God for something that the woman stopped asking for years ago – we all learn to live with certain things – where we tell ourselves that we will never be free of something and will just try to finesse it going forward (drugs, sex, negative thought patterns, etc.) – where we only let God's word in so far – where we use God to cope with stuff – but we lost hope for the prospect of real change. This "great" Woman stopped asking for a child – what is it that you have stopped asking for?

- **The valley of the shadow of death is not a permanent mailing address. God does not want us to reside in this location for forever. This is not all that it is – What can be done? We do not belong in this negative thought loop – God want's so much more for us. Covering up and burying disappointment is not a sustainable strategy.**
- Elisha is providing a vision for the woman about something that has caused her so much pain.
- **Elisha did not ask for a bed and the woman didn't ask for a baby - yet God provided both. And the woman did not initially respond with praise – her first reaction was to push it away. When God speaks something significant to us, we first want to push it away – as a self-defense mechanism – because we have hoped before – and sometimes it hurts to hope because of prior frustrations. It hurts to hope because it is easier to show everyone publicly the illusion of how good things appear to be – and pretend. Is God giving to you what you didn't even ask for – and a way that you never could've anticipated?**
- See 2 Kings 4:18 to 37.
- See vs. 21.
- **Following the death of her son, the women's husband was tasked to prepare the donkey – and this was all that he could do. Renée ZellwegerIf was wrong – If you wait for someone else to complete you, you will remain in a state of suspended anxiety – only God can complete you. There are somethings that are only between you and God (just the two of you). Quit putting demands on people that are unreasonable. Let God fill these spaces – Let God have that room – We need to go back to the one with the promise – go back to one who started it. It is good to go back.**
- Know where the bread is – know who spoke it – know how started it - go back to that.
- **I love how this women is so bold, pro-active, humble. We have to be all three.**
- We can all praise God and places that make no sense – He who began a good work in me . . . See Philippians 1:6.
- See vs. 26. It is a complicated question: Are you alright? When the women is asked this question, she lied like we do on our own Instagram feeds – seeking reaffirmation in public places. We don't want to talk about problems with people that don't have the power to solve them – we don't need to process things within an area that is powerless to help. Why ask about stuff that only God can fix? God back to the one who spoke it.
- The difference between God and people is that God really wants to know if we are alright. Most of us do not want a complete answer with some points.
- See vs. 27. This is just between the two of us.
- We did not ask for many things. No one asks for a special needs child. No one asked for a sustained pandemic – because we didn't ask for it does not mean we cannot handle it – put it back in the place where things started.
- See vs. 30. "30 The mother of the lad said, "As the Lord lives and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." And he arose and followed her." This is the same thing that Elisha said to Elijah – the same persistence that started his ministry. God says: If I did it then, I will do it now.
- **Closing Prayer by Pastor Furtick on 9/27/2020: The woman said to Elisha "you started this – you spoke this" – we know we are growing in our relationship with God when we bring the "real" stuff to His feet and trust Him like that – only God knew the depths of despair of the women's barren womb – it's just between you and God – so maybe God put you in this moment to tell you**

a few things – just the two of you – in order to bring some things to life – just like Elisha did with a boy – and to trust God’s prophet to do what only He can do – Are you on the other side of a closed door today wondering how God is going to get you out of a situation – despite you being very proactive? It is personal as to what God does in our lives – and it is a process and this applies to everything in our lives that we do not understand – while God is working behind the scenes. God wants some alone time with our us – Let God finish things – He has our dreams – He has our destiny – He has our position – He has our prayers – God is working while you are waiting – We thank God for open doors and closed doors – because what he is doing in this moment is greater than we know – Give God this space – what do you do when the thing that you were holding in your arms dies during shifting seasons? – God tells us to put it in that place – Thank you Lord that your people are receiving back joy, hope, peace, and the right spirit – we trust you today Lord – we thank you for open doors and we trust you with closed doors – we thank that the prophet Elisha was able to work a miracle inside of a room built by faith – and by faith we trust you today – you are the God that sees beyond the surface – you are the god of the question and the comma – we thank you for doing a great things in our lives. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

This week’s William Henry Moment: Commentary on Commentary on 2 Kings 4:18-37: *“Here is the sudden death of the child. All the mother’s tenderness cannot keep alive a child of promise, a child of prayer, one given in love. But how admirably does the prudent, pious mother, guard her lips under this sudden affliction! Not one peevish word escapes from her. Such confidence had she of God’s goodness, that she was ready to believe that he would restore what he had now taken away. O woman, great is thy faith! He that wrought it, would not disappoint it. The sorrowful mother begged leave of her husband to go to the prophet at once. She had not thought it enough to have Elisha’s help sometimes in her own family, but, though a woman of rank, attended on public worship. It well becomes the men of God, to inquire about the welfare of their friends and their families. The answer was, It is well. All is well that God does; all is well with them that are gone, if they are gone to heaven; and all well with us that stay behind, if, by the affliction, we are furthered in our way thither. When any creature-comfort is taken from us, it is well if we can say, through grace, that we did not set our hearts too much upon it; for if we did, we have reason to fear it was given in anger and taken away in wrath. Elisha cried unto God in faith; and the beloved son was restored alive to his mother. Those who would convey spiritual life to dead souls, must feel deeply for their case, and labor fervently in prayer for them.”*