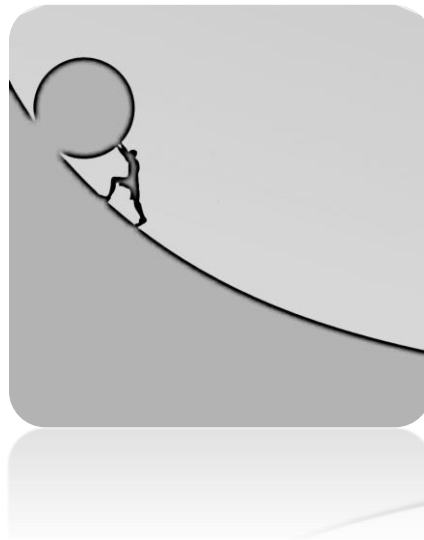


Name: _____

ELISHA

A PERSEVERING FAITH



4G Series - 2023 - cbcfamily.net/4g
Calvary Baptist Church
cbcfamily.net / 512.303.1697 / office@cbcfamily.net

Introduction to *ELISHA – A PERSEVERING FAITH*

The story of Elisha challenges us to answer God’s calling and take the risks that are necessary to do His will.

This series will encourage us to step out and walk in our vision of demonstrating the love of God, declaring the Good News, and making disciples. Come see what life can look like when we decide to have a persevering faith.

Philip Cole
Smithville Campus Pastor

Introduction To The 4G Guide

GATHER – GOD – GROUP – GIVE

It's important that we *GATHER* each week as a church family. Still, God wants us to take what He's teaching and apply it to our daily lives. This is the heart of the 4G Guides. These guides are written to encourage you in your personal *GOD TIME* and in your small *GROUPS*. They are designed to help you understand what God is teaching and apply it to your life. This understanding through application enables you to take what you are learning and *GIVE* it to others.

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture references are from the *Christian Standard Bible* (CSB Text Edition: 2020).



USING THE 4G GUIDE

Each week is divided into four sections:



Gathering Time

On Sunday mornings we gather to worship, hear God’s message, and be challenged to apply His word. You’ll find the weekly Gathering Time sermon outlines and notes sections in this booklet.

If you need to join us online, go to cbcfamily.net and click “**Watch Live**”



Group Time

We learn from one another! 4G Groups meet to dig deeper into the weekly material. Group Time outlines are simple enough for anyone to facilitate. In addition, short videos and other helpful resources are posted often on our 4G webpage.



God Times

Personal worship is vital to the Christian walk, so we’ve provided five daily devotionals for each weekly topic. This is your time to meet with God one-on-one in a guided devotional format. Once your God Time is finished, pray, seeking direction for the day.



Family Time

Family worship glorifies God. To help, we have created simple Family Time devotionals. In addition, to help get the conversations flowing, video or story guide links will be posted on our 4G webpage.

cbcfamily.net/4g





Gathering Time (Sermon Outline)

Gathering Notes

Date: _____

Faithful Commitment

1 Kings 19:19-21

Two _____ of Faithful Commitment:

1. You Don't Have to _____ Fully to Obey _____.

2. Those That God Uses _____ Are Those Who Hold on to _____.

Take A Step Toward The _____!



Horizontal lines for taking notes.

Principles / Understand, Immediately / The Most, The Least / Implausible

WEEK 1 – FAITHFUL COMMITMENT

Group Time

LOOK BACK:



1. Each participant shares one praise and one prayer request. (Commit these to prayer for the coming week.)

2. ENCOURAGEMENT 1-on-1 (See page 46 for directions)

Y / N	Y / N	_____
_____	_____	

3. Review last week's lesson.



What's the first thing you did in obedience to your call?



LOOK UP:

Question: What does God need from you? Do we often act like we have something to give Him that He needs?

1. **Review your notes from the Gathering Time (Sermon).**

2. **Context:** The prophet Elijah's reign is coming to an end, and he chooses a successor. He comes upon Elisha, a farmer. (Note: 12 yoke of oxen is like the John Deere 9R 540 Tractor of his day.) Elijah puts his cloak on Elisha, symbolizing – "you're going to be me one day, so let's get busy" – like "*follow me and I will make you a fisher of men.*"

Elisha says goodbye to family and friends and in doing so, sacrifices and cooks the oxen. Like Cortez burning his ships, he's all in – "Elisha has left the building."

3. **Discussion:** Read 1 Kings 19:19-21.

- Based on what he has, how he acts, and what he does, and without speculating too much, come up with a profile of Elisha pre-prophet. (Do you think he was well-off? Well-liked? Hard-working? Etc.)

- When Elijah put his cloak around him, how much knowledge and understanding of his future do you think Elisha had?
 - Whether the answer is a little or a lot, how much did Elisha give up (sacrifice) to pursue that future?
 - How much of his soon-to-be past life did he hold on to?
 - How did he prepare to pursue his new future?
- In light of this, explain this statement:

To serve God the most, it's not what you have, it's what you don't hold on to.
- How is this counterintuitive to the world?



LOOK FORWARD: Application

Point: *To serve God the most, it's not what you have, it's what you don't hold on to.*

At the end of our "*Who Are You?*" series we asked four questions:

- What need are you called to meet?
 - What hurt are you called to heal?
 - What else is Jesus calling you to?
 - What's the first thing you will do?

This week we will follow up those questions with these:

- Well, what are you waiting for?

- What's holding you back? (What is your 9R 540 Tractor?)

- What do you need to let go of?

God Time Day 1: Be Faithful Where You Are



The Prophet Elisha is a significant figure of faith. While he may not be as well known as some other prophets, Elisha performed more miracles in recorded Scripture than anyone in the Old Testament. Yet, before he was a prophet, Elisha came from humble beginnings.



Read 1 Kings 19:19.
¹⁹ *Elijah left there and found Elisha son of Shaphat as he was plowing. Twelve teams of oxen were in front of him, and he was with the twelfth team. Elijah walked by him and threw his mantle over him.*

Elisha was not a priest, did not work in the temple, nor did he have a seminary degree. He was only a simple farmer when God called him. Yet, Elisha’s faith was dedicated to God.

What are your “humble beginnings?”

How do you, or can you, live out your faithfulness to God in your current situation?

God Time Day 2: The Obedience of Elisha



Read 1 Kings 19:20-21.
²⁰ *Elisha left the oxen, ran to follow Elijah, and said, “Please let me kiss my father and mother, and then I will follow you.”*

“Go on back,” he replied, “for what have I done to you?”

²¹ *So he turned back from following him, took the team of oxen, and slaughtered them. With the oxen’s wooden yoke and plow, he cooked the meat and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he left, followed Elijah, and served him.*

As Elisha is living out his normal life, God leads the great prophet Elijah to call him into service. Elisha immediately drops everything to follow God’s calling.



Take some time to reflect on what may hold you back. What might keep you from pursuing God’s calling when it comes?

God Time Day 3: You Don’t Have to Fully Understand



Go back and read 1 Kings 19:19 & 21 from Days 1 & 2.

Elisha is plowing a field when the Prophet Elijah comes along and throws his “*mantle*” over him. This might seem weird to us but this was a very symbolic act during that time. It signified a type of “adoption” into that person’s care and responsibility. Essentially, “I am taking you under my wing.”

Immediately after this, the two of them sit down and begin to negotiate the terms of Elisha’s contract. After all, if Elisha was going to become a prophet like Elijah, he needed to fully understand the benefits package and 401K. No?

No, Elisha immediately drops everything to follow Elijah. He has no details about what to expect but only knew that God is calling him. (Much like Matthew 19:18-20.)

There are reasons why God doesn’t give us all the details. Perhaps we can’t handle it, we can’t understand, or we’d mess it up.

We like having “all” the information because it gives us a sense of control. But knowing too much in advance can cause overwhelming stress and anxiety, often resulting in us giving up before even trying.



Read Proverbs 3:5-6.
⁵ *Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own understanding;* ⁶ *in all your ways know him, and he will make your paths straight.*

Is there an idea or action you feel God calling you to pursue?

What would be the first step to pursuing that calling?



Now, pray for God to give you the courage to both step out in faith and take that first step! Then trust God to lead you into the next step when the time is right.

God Time Day 4: Be Willing to Let Go



Go back again and read 1 Kings 19:21 from Day 2.

After Elijah calls Elisha into service, Elisha throws a big party by cooking his oxen using the yoke and plow as firewood. This was no small act. These were essentially the tools of his trade and his prized possessions. Once Elisha does this, there is no turning back.

For many of us, this seems very unwise. After all, shouldn't Elisha have a backup plan just in case this new occupation doesn't work out? What if he fails at being a prophet? How could he return to being a farmhand if he just destroyed all his tools?

We need to understand something:

The people that God uses the most are those who hold on to the least.

There are many stories in Scripture of those who struggled to follow God because of fear of losing what they had.

- The Rich Young Ruler in Matthew 19:16-22.
- Parable of the Talents in Matthew 25:14-30.
- The Israelites grumbling throughout Exodus.

Living a life of obedience to God means giving up control. This includes letting go of the "safety nets" we might put into place – just in case God doesn't come through like we expect He should.



We ended Day 3 by talking about what God is calling you to do and having the courage to take the first step in doing it. Today, take some time to reflect on what might be holding you back. Write down the things you are afraid of losing and pray for God to help you trust Him and let go of them.

God Time Day 5: Take a Step Towards the Unbelievable



As we look back at the faithful obedience of Elisha, we might be tempted to think, "But that was way back then in Bible times. Things are different now." But are things all that different today? No, the journey of obedience always begins with a single step of faith. And conversely, the journey of faith always begins with a single step of obedience.

So, let's put it all together.

What is God calling you to do now? Is there a passion or a need God has laid on your heart? (Note: It doesn't have to be big to be important for God's kingdom.)

Now, what would be the first step towards being obedient to that calling? (Is it a conversation for guidance, or simply saying yes to an opportunity?)



What fears might be preventing you from taking that step?

What will you have to give up or let go of to pursue God's calling? What kind of sacrifices do you need to make? (Material, financial, emotional, expectations, comfort, etc.?)

Look back at the fears you mentioned and the possible sacrifices you will need to make. Consider which is more valuable: living according to God's will and the blessings that come from following Him, or avoiding those fears and holding on to those things you listed.



Spend some time praying about the priorities in your life, and then plan to take that first step today.

Family Time



Main Idea:
Obeying God

**Key Verse: 1 Kings 19:19-21**

¹⁹ Elijah left there and found Elisha son of Shaphat as he was plowing. Twelve teams of oxen were in front of him, and he was with the twelfth team. Elijah walked by him and threw his mantle over him. ²⁰ Elisha left the oxen, ran to follow Elijah, and said, “Please let me kiss my father and mother, and then I will follow you.”

“Go on back,” he replied, “for what have I done to you?”

²¹ So he turned back from following him, took the team of oxen, and slaughtered them. With the oxen’s wooden yoke and plow, he cooked the meat and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he left, followed Elijah, and served him.

Ask:

What are some rules or chores you are expected to do?

What happens if you don’t do what we want you to do?

What if your punishment was to smell fish for a full day?

**Discuss:**

That was the punishment for the man named Jonah. God wanted Jonah to go to a big city named Nineveh. The people there did not know about God and were not following God’s ways. In fact, they were not nice at all. They were very bad! God wanted Jonah to tell the people to stop being bad.

What do you think Jonah did? Did he go to Nineveh?

What happened to Jonah when he took a boat the opposite way from Nineveh?

Jonah chose to disobey God and ended up in the belly of a giant fish. While he was inside the fish, Jonah prayed and told God he was sorry. After three days and three nights, the big fish spit Jonah out, and Jonah went to Nineveh.

Why do you think we should obey God?

In the verses we read from 1 Kings, did Elisha obey God? What was the difference between what Elisha did and what Jonah did? (He obeyed)

God wants us to be loving by obeying Him because he made us and knows what is best for our lives.

**Pray:**

Thank you God for showing us how important it is to obey. You want good things for us, and we need to obey you because you know us best. Thank you for caring for us. In Jesus’ name, amen.





Gathering Time (Sermon Outline)

Gathering Notes

Date: _____

Faithful Activity

If only _____

Your Greatest Need Becomes a _____

When It Drives You to _____ On God.

2 Kings 3:9-10

2 Kings 3:11-12

2 Kings 3:13-14

2 Kings 3:15-19

Only God Can Send The _____, But He

Wants You to Dig a _____.

Real Faith Believes _____ But Is Willing To

Start _____.

2 Kings 3:20



Horizontal lines for writing notes.

? / Blessing, Depend / Water, Ditch / Big, Small

Group Time

◀◀◀ **LOOK BACK:**



1. Each participant shares one praise and one prayer request. (Commit these to prayer for the coming week.)

2. ENCOURAGEMENT 1-on-1 (See page 46 for directions)

Y / N	Y / N	_____
_____	_____	

3. Review last week’s lesson.

Were you able to take steps forward in God’s calling this past week?

LOOK UP:

Question: “Because I said so” is a statement every parent knows well. What are you really asking for by using it?

1. **Review your notes from the Gathering Time (Sermon).**

2. **Context:** In 2 Kings, chapter 3, the Moabites have been living under Israel’s rule and now decide to rebel. So, the king of Israel recruits the kings of Judah and Edom to join him in quashing the rebellion. They set out with their armies and after seven days, they run into a drought. About to die of thirst, they decide, “Hey let’s see if we can get a prophet of God on our side to solve this.” They retrieve Elisha. God acknowledges their recognition of a need and solves the problem.

3. **Discussion:** Read 2 Kings 3:9-20.

- Do you, or does someone you know, have a “had to hit bottom before giving their life to the Lord” story? Share it with the group.

- Do you, or does someone you know, have a “had to hit bottom before coming back to the Lord” story? Share it with the group.
- Do you, or someone you know, have a “didn’t know what else to do before getting on board with God” story? Share it with the group.

Verse 16 is very different depending on the Bible version you are using. Some say God will fill the valley with pools of water, and others say God commanded them to dig ditches to hold the water that he would fill the valley with. Either way:

- Reread verse 17. How was the water going to be provided?
- Reread verse 18. Who was going to cause the defeat of Moab?
- Reread verse 19. Yet, who would still have to fight the battles?

▶▶▶ **LOOK FORWARD: Application**

Point: *God wants our relationship with Him to be teamwork. When we show Him our faith, He shows us His faithfulness.*

What step of faith is God asking you to take this week – because He said so?

Examples:

- Get some education or training.
- Improve a relationship.
- Be an example for your children.
- Sacrificially give of your time, talent, and/or treasure.
- Stop living as an island.

Think BIG but start small and keep stepping.

God Time Day 1: Seeing a “Mean” God When in Need



This week we will see how God works through a seemingly impossible situation to reveal Himself. Three allied kings have set out to attack the land of Moab who has rebelled against the king of Israel. On their journey, they marched far into the desert and ran out of water. In our God Time Days 1 & 2 we will find a major contrast between how the kings of Israel and Judah see the situation.



Read 2 Kings 3:10.
Then the king of Israel said, “Oh no, the Lord has summoned these three kings, only to hand them over to Moab.”

Because he does not trust God, the king of Israel sees a hopeless situation. He assumes all is lost and that God either caused the impending disaster or is powerless to help.

When you face a seemingly impossible situation, what does your attitude say about your trust in God?

God Time Day 2: Seeing a Good God When in Need



Unlike the unbelieving king of Israel from Day 1, Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, doesn’t start with the assumption that God is hostile. Instead, he focuses on seeking guidance from the Lord.



Read 2 Kings 3:11.
But Jehoshaphat said, “Isn’t there a prophet of the Lord here? Let’s inquire of the Lord through him.”

Instead of assuming the worst and giving up hope, Jehoshaphat believes God can at least bring clarity to this seemingly impossible situation. He doesn’t waste energy blaming but seeks God’s intention.

What challenge are you facing where you need to stop blaming and start seeking God’s guidance for clarity?

God Time Day 3: When God Speaks



Even after the kings send for the prophet Elisha, the unbelief of the king of Israel prevents him from being able to hear from God. Only because of the faith of the king of Judah does Elisha even agree to seek God’s answer to their situation. When the answer comes, it makes clear that God can do more than they even imagine.



Read 2 Kings 3:16-19 (CEV).
¹⁶ *The Lord says that this dry riverbed will be filled with water.*
¹⁷ *You won't feel any wind or see any rain, but there will be plenty of water for you and your animals.* ¹⁸ *That simple thing isn't all the Lord is going to do. He will also help you defeat Moab's army.*
¹⁹ *You will capture all their walled cities and important towns. You will chop down every good tree and stop up every spring of water, then ruin their fertile fields by covering them with rocks.*

The prophet’s words make clear that rescuing the allied armies from dying of thirst in the desert is just a simple thing for God – even though the unbelievers had given up hope.

Underline what else God says He will also do. (v.18)

Compare that to what the king of Israel believed in verse 10 on Day 1 (and v. 13).

How does this promise from God reframe the planned attack on Moab?

Whenever God speaks, it always results in one of two possible responses:

- 1) We obey and open our hearts to His goodness.
- 2) We refuse to listen and harden our hearts against Him.



In the challenge you are facing right now, how are you responding to what God says about it? Are you moving forward in faith and obedience or stubbornly holding on to self-determination?

God Time Day 4: Riding on God’s Coattails



The account in 2 Kings is far from the only one in the Bible where God opens a miraculous path forward and His people follow along in His wake.

Here are some other well-known examples:

- The Israelites crossing the Red Sea (Exodus 14:10-31)
- The conquest of Jericho once the walls fell (Joshua 6)
- The defeat of Midian which began with the enemy fighting themselves (Judges 7)
- Throwing the Philistine army into confusion with a thunderstorm (1 Samuel 7)

This pattern of “God acts, and His people follow” is so frequent in both biblical history and church history that many regard this as a rule of faith: “Find where God is working and join Him.” Only when we join what God is already doing will we see great and lasting victories.

Living this faith rule begins with how we look at the world around us. Review the contrast between the kings of Israel and Judah on Days 1 & 2. Only one sought an answer from God regarding their impossible situation. One looked at his circumstances and became a victim, while the other looked to God for a solution.

As you look at the state of our world, it would be easy to feel hopeless – that it’s impossible to make any significant difference. But that is not the way of faith!



Take some time and consider where you see God at work around you. Describe one way that you can align yourself with how you see God working:

Commit to pursuing what you see as your ministry, pouring fuel on God’s fire. (Journal the results. This is important.)

God Time Day 5 – Believe Big, Start Small



In this week’s lesson (2 Kings 3:9-20), God’s provision first becomes visible right about the time of the morning sacrifice. In yet another battle involving King Jehoshaphat, God brought about a victory to the sound of the people singing God’s praises. The full account is in 2 Chronicles 20:15-22, below are some highlights.



Read 2 Chronicles 20:15b,17, 21-22 (NIV)
¹⁵ *This is what the Lord says to you: ‘Do not be afraid or discouraged because of this vast army. For the battle is not yours, but God’s. ¹⁷ You will not have to fight this battle. Take up your positions; stand firm and see the deliverance the Lord will give you, Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Go out to face them tomorrow, and the Lord will be with you.’*

²¹ *After consulting the people, Jehoshaphat appointed men to sing to the Lord and to praise him for the splendor of his holiness as they went out at the head of the army, saying:*

“Give thanks to the Lord, for his love endures forever.”

²² *As they began to sing and praise, the Lord set ambushes against the men of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir who were invading Judah, and they were defeated.*

Once the battle was over, there was so much plunder that it took the people three whole days to carry it away (v.25). But this great victory began with a fear of the enemy and a plea to God to act. Each step of the way, as the people trusted God’s word, they experienced increasing levels of confidence and victory as they obeyed and gave praise.



It may be very difficult at first, but in what ways can you offer praises to God regarding the challenge you are facing?

While it may seem like a small step, how has your attitude towards the challenge and your faith been affected by the decision to give God praise in this situation?

Family Time



Main Idea:

A Faith That Works.



Key Verse: 2 Kings 2:12-15

¹² As Elisha watched, he kept crying out, “My father, my father, the chariots and horsemen of Israel!”

When he could see him no longer, he took hold of his own clothes, tore them in two, ¹³ picked up the mantle that had fallen off Elijah, and went back and stood on the bank of the Jordan. ¹⁴ He took the mantle Elijah had dropped, and he struck the water. “Where is the Lord God of Elijah?” he asked. He struck the water himself, and it parted to the right and the left, and Elisha crossed over.

¹⁵ When the sons of the prophets from Jericho who were observing saw him, they said, “The spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha.” They came to meet him and bowed down to the ground in front of him.

Set it up:

Before family devotion, look through the closets in your home to see if you can find any “hand-me-down” clothes, or clothing that belonged to one member of the family and now belongs to a different member. Gather a few pieces of clothing like this and bring them with you. Then ask the family to identify who the owner is of each piece of clothing. Explain that this might be a difficult question because the clothing has been worn by multiple people and passed from one to another. Transition to today’s part of the story. Explain that in the story, too, we will see a piece of hand-me-down clothing. In this case, though, the clothing represented something far greater than the person who owned it.



Explain:

Elijah had gone up to heaven, but he had left behind a piece of clothing. His mantle, which was a kind of cloak, had fallen off, and this was a sign to Elisha. Elisha had asked for a double share of the spirit of Elijah, knowing he would need the power and presence of God if he were to be the next prophet. As a symbol of the transition, the mantle was left behind and then passed to Elisha who put it on.

Like Elisha, when we choose to follow Jesus we receive a new mantle, the Holy Spirit. We must have God’s spirit in us if we are to accomplish anything worthwhile for God. And God does not withhold any of His Spirit; we have total access to God’s Spirit. For us as Believers, the question is not whether we have the Spirit (we do); it’s whether we are going to obey God by surrendering to the influence of the Spirit in our lives.



Questions:

What symbolized the transition from Elijah to Elisha?

What spirit do we need to accomplish work for God?

What do you think it means to surrender to the work of the Holy Spirit?



Prayer:

Help us, Lord, not to hold anything back from you but instead to fully surrender ourselves to the work of the Holy Spirit.

RISE AND SHINE MEN'S 8-10 AM BREAKFAST

COME HUNGRY
GET FED

Saturday, June 3

Bastrop Campus

cbcfamily.net/men

Register
Today!



Men@Calvary Weekly Ops

The Grill: Breakfast & Bible Study

Thursdays Mornings @ Texas Grill, Bastrop
Breakfast @ 7:30. Bible Study @ 8:00

Basecamp: Dinner & Bible Study

Thursday Evenings @ CBC Smithville
Vittles @ 6:30. Bible Study @ 7:00



Fireteams

Three to four men living life-on-life, iron-sharpening-iron, for the mission of our personal walk, families, and our CBC family.

Learn More @ cbcfamily.net/men



Fill out a volunteer card
in the foyer.

WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Sound Booth & Stage



Weekly Bible Study Opportunities:

Monday Evenings, 6:00 PM @ Smithville

Tuesday Mornings, 9:30 AM @ Bastrop

Wednesday Evenings, 6:15 PM @ Bastrop



Agape Groups

Three or four women connecting on a weekly basis to become one another's encouragers and accountability partners.

Learn More @ cbcfamily.net/women



Gathering Time (Sermon Outline)

Gathering Notes

Date: _____

Faithful Provision

2 Kings 4:1

When You Don't Have What You Really _____

God Is What You Really _____.

2 Kings 4:2

Stop Waiting For What You _____ And

Start Working With What You _____.

Offer God What You _____ and Trust Him

To Give You What You _____.

2 Kings 4:3-7

2 Corinthians 4:7



Horizontal lines for gathering notes.

Want, Need / Want, Have / Have, Need

Group Time

◀◀◀ **LOOK BACK:**



1. Each participant shares one praise and one prayer request. (Commit these to prayer for the coming week.)

2. ENCOURAGEMENT 1-on-1 (See page 46 for directions)

Y/N	Y/N	_____
_____	_____	

3. Review last week's lesson.

What step of faith did you take this past week?

⬆⬆⬆ **LOOK UP:**

Question: How much did you know/understand about the gospel when you first became a born-again Believer? How much more do you know/understand now?

1. Review your notes from the Gathering Time (Sermon).
2. **Context:** In 2 Kings, chapter 4, we come to the story of *The Widow's Oil Multiplied*. The woman's husband has died; she's now a widow with no means of income. As such, the "creditors" are coming to take her children. They must owe money, perhaps living paycheck-to-paycheck, and have no possessions of value. It was common practice to put family members in debtors' prisons, a practice that continued into the mid-19th century. Thankfully, through Elisha, God multiplies her one valued possession, a jar of oil, to relieve her debt.

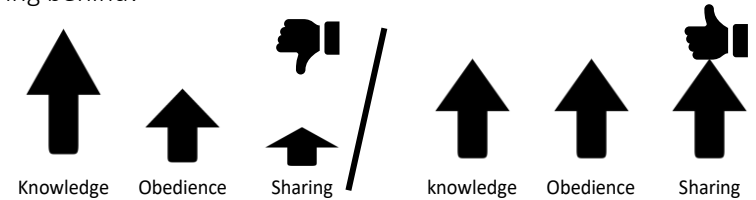
When we offer God what we have, He will multiply what we need to advance His kingdom. God loves to do big things with what we see as little. Don't fill your life with much junk that you miss what God offers.



3. **Discussion:** Read 2 Kings 4:1-7.

- What do you have that is valuable to God, something He can multiply?
 - What about your story, your testimony?
- Have you allowed God to multiply your testimony?
 - Have you shared your testimony (giving it to others) so that He can multiply it?
- What else have you learned of Christ's gospel that you could share with others so that God could multiply it?
 - How will you do this? (Hint: Gospel Conversations)

The Measure of Maturity: Knowledge should never leave obedience and sharing behind!



"We gain understanding through our obedience, instead of trying to understand before being obedient."

- Biglife leaders in Pakistan

▶▶▶ **LOOK FORWARD: Application**

Point: *When we offer to share what little we have, God will multiply it to give us everything we need.*

- Go to the GO2 webpage (cbcfamily.net/go2). Scroll down to the 15-Second Testimony video and follow the directions.
- Share your 15-Second Testimony OUT LOUD at least 10 times with anyone or anything available – including plants and pets.
- Share it again at least 10 times with real live people this week.
 - Imagine what the Holy Spirit would do in Bastrop County if everyone in the CBC family did this. Let's find out.

God Time Day 1: Hope for the Hopeless



Read 2 Kings 4:1. *One of the wives of the sons of the prophets cried out to Elisha, "Your servant, my husband, has died. You know that your servant feared the LORD. Now the creditor is coming to take my two children as his slaves."*



This widow (whose husband had been a prophet under Elisha) was in a hopeless situation. Rewrite verse 1 in your own words:

In that time, without someone to help her, this widow could have lost everything – *everything*. She went to her husband's teacher, Elisha, who she knew looked out for his students' wellbeing.

Everyone goes somewhere when they feel hopeless. Where do you go?

God Time Day 2: God Is What You Really Need



Read 2 Kings 4:2. *Elisha asked her, "What can I do for you? Tell me, what do you have in the house?" She said, "Your servant has nothing in the house except a jar of oil."*

Elisha asked the woman how he could help and then asked what she had in her house. Underline her answer.

Imagine, the woman's husband has died, she has no means of income, and her children are about to be taken away! She has absolutely nothing of value in her home except a jar of oil. She is desperate; she needs God's help.

God is always what we really need. How have you seen this in your life or in the life of someone you know?

Share this with someone today.

God Time Day 3: Stop Waiting and Start Working



Sometimes, we get so busy looking ahead to all the things we want, that we forget about what's right in front of us – all the blessings that God has given us in the here and now.



Reread 2 Kings 4:2. *Elisha asked her, "What can I do for you? Tell me, what do you have in the house?" She said, "Your servant has nothing in the house except a jar of oil."*

The woman only had a small jar (or flask) of oil in her home. She needed a solution to her problem but probably never imagined what would happen next. Even though she had so little, Elisha knew that it wasn't too little for God to work with! As we will see, God would use Elisha to work a miracle with this jar of oil.

God supplied her with what she needed and would use it in the way He wanted to solve her dilemma. Likewise, God has supplied us with what we need so that we can do the things He wants us to do – the things He will empower us to do! (Remember: We don't work to earn anything, or so that God will do things for us, but we obey because we love and worship the Lord.)



Read Ephesians 2:10. *For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time for us to do.*

God has called you to good works. Identify one thing that you can do in obedience to God:



Now, make plans to do it. (E.g., worship Him, help a friend, pray, visit a neighbor, etc.)

God Time Day 4: Offer God What You Have



Read 2 Kings 4:3-7. ³Then he [Elisha] said, "Go out and borrow empty containers from all your neighbors. Do not get just a few. ⁴Then go in and shut the door behind you and your sons, and pour oil into all these containers. Set the full ones to one side." ⁵So she left. After she had shut the door behind her and her sons, they kept bringing her containers, and she kept pouring. ⁶When they were full, she said to her son, "Bring me another container." But he replied, "There aren't any more." Then the oil stopped. ⁷She went and told the man of God, and he said, "Go sell the oil and pay your debt; you and your sons can live on the rest."

Underline what Elisha told the widow in verses 3 and 4.

The widow did just what Elisha told her to do (verse 5), and she poured that oil into jar after jar! It was only when she ran out of jars (verse 6) that the oil stopped flowing.



What was the conclusion in verse 7?

Charles Spurgeon was a famous preacher who lived long ago. He said, "If she borrowed few vessels, she would have but little oil; if she borrowed many vessels they should all be filled, and she should have much oil. We make our blessings little, because our prayers are little."

How would you explain this quote to a friend?



One thing that builds our faith is looking back at all the times God has been faithful to us. In another notebook, journal about a few times when you have noticed God's faithfulness. Thank Him for those times.

God Time Day 5: Trust God to Give What You Need



Read 2 Corinthians 4:7 (NIV). *But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us.*

God is who we really need. What a wonderful treasure to be filled with! Sometimes (often?) we take Him for granted. Regardless of where we find ourselves today, we can know that yes, He is all we need. Because of His kind generosity, He will meet our other needs, too.



Read Luke 12:27-31. ²⁷Consider how the wildflowers grow: They don't labor or spin thread. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was adorned like one of these. ²⁸If that's how God clothes the grass, which is in the field today and is thrown into the furnace tomorrow, how much more will he do for you—you of little faith? ²⁹Don't strive for what you should eat and what you should drink, and don't be anxious. ³⁰For the Gentile world eagerly seeks all these things, and your Father knows that you need them. ³¹But seek his kingdom, and these things will be provided for you.

Underline what we should not strive for and what not to be (verse 29).

Put a box around verse 31 and memorize it.

God will meet our needs; He promises to. Though sometimes we can't understand His plan, He knows what we need in both time and eternity.



Spend time today considering some *wildflowers* (literally or figuratively). Make a list of the needs that God is meeting for you now. Then, seek His kingdom and praise Him.

Family Time



Main Idea:
God's Care



Key Verse: 2 Kings 4:6-7

⁶ When they were full, she said to her son, "Bring me another container. But he replied, "There aren't any more." Then the oil stopped. ⁷ She went and told the man of God, and he said, "Go sell the oil and pay your debt; you and your sons can live on the rest."

Get ready:

You will need a pitcher with very little water in it, a second pitcher full, and enough cups for everyone in the family to have one.



Say:

The Bible talks about a woman whose husband had died, and now people were coming to collect money he owed them. In Bible times, someone who owed money might have to pay by giving up a child to be a slave or a servant! The woman had sons, and she was afraid that the people who wanted her to pay the debt would take her sons. The woman told her problems to a man of God named Elisha.



God wanted Elisha to help the woman so she wouldn't lose her sons, but the woman had just a little oil. **Hold up the pitcher with just a tiny bit of water in it to show the family the water.** Elisha told her to ask her neighbors for empty jars, as many jars as she could find.

Have one child pass out the cups to everyone in the family. While this is happening switch the pitchers to a full pitcher of water.

Elisha told her to pour the little oil she had into the jars. She did that and the jars filled with oil. She kept saying bring me another one, and she kept pouring oil into all the jars she had gathered until each one was full.

Have everyone from the family bring their cup up to you and fill it with water from the full pitcher. Say, "Each jar became full of oil until every jar was filled because God took the little bit of oil and turned it into lots of oil. It was a miracle! Then Elisha told her to sell the jars of oil and pay off her debts. The woman and her sons would be okay."



Ask:

What would you be thinking or feeling if you were the woman or one of her sons?

How does God show He cares for you?

God sent Elisha to show the woman that He cared for her and her sons. God performed a miracle to provide for the woman and her sons, a miracle of lots of oil. The woman sold the oil and was able to pay her husband's debts. She and her sons would be okay. Don't we have an amazing God?

Pray:

Dear God, you truly are amazing. You cared for the woman and her sons in such a surprising way. You care for me, too, in amazing ways. Thanks so much for your love and care. In Jesus' name, amen.



Gathering Time (Sermon Outline)

Gathering Notes

Date: _____

Faithful Recovery

2 Kings 6:1-7

God Cares About Every _____ of Our Lives.

God Knows How to Help You _____ What You Didn't Mean To _____.

Revelation 2:4-5

Deuteronomy 30:2-4



Lined area for taking notes.

Detail / Find, Lose

Group Time

◀◀◀ **LOOK BACK:**



1. Each participant shares one praise and one prayer request. (Commit these to prayer for the coming week.)

2. ENCOURAGEMENT 1-on-1 (See page 46 for directions)

Y / N	Y / N	_____
_____	_____	

3. Review last week's lesson.

Share your 15-Second Testimony with your group. How did it go sharing with others? Who is God placing on your heart to share it with this next week?

LOOK UP:

Question: Why do you think most groups skip step two in the Look Back section above?

1. Review your notes from the Gathering Time (Sermon).
2. **Context:** In 2 Kings, chapter 6 we find an interesting miracle. It may seem unremarkable to us, but it was vitally important to one young student. A group of students are attempting to build a decent place to live. The head of the axe one of them is using goes flying off and is lost in the river. The problem is, such tools were like gold (not easy to come by), and this axe is not his. It was borrowed. It's literally a go-to-jail or worse situation.

Again, God solves the problem through Elisha. Via a miracle, the axe head floats to the surface where the student can grab it. All is well – back to building!

What would it take for you to “get back building?”

Will you let God help you?

3. **Discussion:** Read 2 Kings 6:1-7.

What is, or are, your axe head(s)? What have you lost that you'd like back in your relationship with God? (Examples: personal time in God's Word, meaningful prayer time, seeking opportunities to demonstrate God's love, declaring the Good News to others, teaching others what you have learned.)

- Read Revelation 2:4-5.

What is the consequence of refusing to repent and return to the love you once had for God?

- Read Deuteronomy 30:2-4.

God will reconcile and restore, but we must repent and commit. God is reaching down, but we must reach up.

How can we reach up? List at least five ways:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

LOOK FORWARD: Application

Point: *It's never too late with God, but He expects effort on our part.*

Matthew 22:37 says:

Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.

What will you do this week to do this?

God Time Day 1: Have You Lost Fervor?



If you've been a Christian for very long, you know that our spiritual journeys can sometimes resemble a roller coaster with lots of ups, downs, twists, and turns. Some of those downs can be times when we have lost spiritual fervor.



Read Romans 12:11 (NIV).
Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord.

God tells us to "never be lacking in zeal." Zeal can be defined as great energy or enthusiasm. More than a feeling, this fervor serves God.

On a scale of 1 (low) to 10 (high), rate your zeal, "your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord."

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



Spend time talking about it honestly with God and ask Him for more fervor.

God Time Day 2: God Cares About the Details



Read Matthew 10:29-31 (NLT).
²⁹*What is the price of two sparrows—one copper coin? But not a single sparrow can fall to the ground without your Father knowing it.* ³⁰*And the very hairs on your head are all numbered.* ³¹*So don't be afraid; you are more valuable to God than a whole flock of sparrows.*

Underline what doesn't escape the Father's notice (v. 29) and what He numbers (v. 30).



God cares about the details. This means that there is no burden too small to bring to Him in prayer. He cares about our every concern. Don't worry that you might "bother God" with your little concerns. Make a list of some of them and praise God for caring about the details of your life!

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

God Time Day 3: God Knows How to Help You...



Read 2 Kings 6:1-4.
¹*The sons of the prophets said to Elisha, "Please notice that the place where we live under your supervision is too small for us.* ²*Please let us go to the Jordan where we can each get a log and can build ourselves a place to live there."* "Go," he said. ³*Then one said, "Please come with your servants."* "I'll come," he answered. ⁴*So he went with them, and when they came to the Jordan, they cut down trees.*

The "sons of the prophets" were a guild of prophets who collected under a headmaster to study, praise, and worship. (The widow's husband from last week was one of these men. Elisha did not teach men how to prophesy – only God could create a prophet.)



Rewrite in your own words the problem this group of prophets had and what the solution was.



Read 2 Kings 6:5-7.
⁵*As one of them was cutting down a tree, the iron ax head fell into the water, and he cried out, "Oh, my master, it was borrowed!"* ⁶*Then the man of God asked, "Where did it fall?"* When he showed him the place, the man of God cut a piece of wood, threw it there, and made the iron float. ⁷*Then he said, "Pick it up." So he reached out and took it.*

Underline anything that stands out to you.

As we talked about yesterday, God cares about the details. We could look at this story and let Elisha steal our focus; he performed a really cool miracle! But ultimately, God was the one who manipulated the axe head's weight or the water's density—all because the axe head was borrowed, and the borrower would be in great trouble for losing it.



Look at your list from Day 2. Spend time praying about those little concerns. God knows how to help!

God Time Day 4: Growing the Fervor



Praying shows that we trust God. It's important to trust Him with both the little and the big things. This is one way we exhibit zeal and spiritual fervor. When we don't go to Him, we are relying on ourselves, other people, or things to meet our needs. Remember the first commandment?



Reread 2 Kings 6:1-4 from Day 4.

Elisha helped someone he cared about, and God worked a miracle. Sure, God brought the opportunity, but Elisha had to be obedient. We could call this true spiritual zeal.

But what do we do when we realize we've lost zeal or need more fervor? We position ourselves to get it back! But first, we need to ask ourselves two questions:

1. **Do I want my spiritual fervor back? OR Do I want more spiritual fervor?** It's easy to say yes, but it's harder to do something about it. Spiritual fervor takes effort.
2. **Will I let God help me?** Again, it's easy to agree to help. It's harder to accept it and then follow God's lead in developing spiritual disciplines like prayer, Bible study, and making godly decisions.



Take some time and journal your answers to the above questions. Don't try to find solutions yet; just try to answer honestly. Look at the rating you gave yourself on Day 1 and keep it in mind while you answer the questions.



Read Jesus' words in John 15:10-11.

¹⁰If you keep my commands you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. ¹¹I have told you these things so that my joy may be in you and your joy may be complete.

Keeping God's commands fill us with joy. Yes, obedience is one way to grow fervor!

How would you rate your obedience to God's commands?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Pray for more obedience.

God Time Day 5: Don't Lose Your First Love



Read Revelation 2:4-5.

⁴But I have this against you: You have abandoned the love you had at first. ⁵Remember then how far you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. Otherwise, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent.

The prophetic words above are spoken by Jesus to the church at Ephesus.

Underline what He has against them. (Verse 4)



Circle what He wants them to do (verse 5).

Verse 4 tells us that the church had abandoned the love they had at the beginning. What do you think this means?

Some scholars say that verse 4 means that the church stopped loving Jesus as much as they did at first. Others say it means they stopped loving one another. Others say that it means they stopped loving mankind at large. And guess what? Others say that it means all three. There's good reason to think the last option is right. If we love Jesus less, it only follows that our love for those inside and outside the church will also dwindle.

There is a solution! It involves the three easy steps found in verse 5:

Remember, Repent, and Do.

Love for the Lord (and His people) go hand-in-hand with obedience, and that grows fervor.



Ask God to show you what "solution" you need to follow up on. Do you need to remember, repent, or do?

(Loving God fervently will be demonstrated through our praying, worshiping, praising, reading our Bibles, fasting, serving, giving, sharing, connecting, helping, encouraging, and more.)

Remember what we've learned from Elisha: a faith that is committed, active, trustful, and fervent is a faith that perseveres!

Family Time



Main Idea:
Lost and Found

**Key Verse: Luke 15:4-7**

⁴ “What man among you, who has a hundred sheep and loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open field and go after the lost one until he finds it? ⁵ When he has found it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders, ⁶ and coming home, he calls his friends and neighbors together, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, because I have found my lost sheep!’ ⁷ I tell you, in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who don’t need repentance.”

Set it up:

Before family devotion, gather paper, pens, and colored pencils or crayons. Ask the family to imagine that they have a pet who is lost, or if you have a pet, ask them to imagine that your pet is lost. Then ask them to create a poster you might hang up in the neighborhood to find him or her. Explain that in the next part of the story, you will hear Jesus tell a story about something that was lost, then found, then celebrated.

Read: Luke 15:4-7 above.

**Explain:**

In Jesus’ story, one of the sheep was lost. Perhaps the man who owned the sheep might have thought, I still have 99 sheep; it’s not that big of a deal that I’ve lost one. But that would not be the attitude of a Good Shepherd. And the shepherd in Jesus’ story was a good one. This shepherd set out to find the one sheep rather than waiting and hoping the sheep would come home. And when he found him, the shepherd threw the sheep on his back and carried him home. And if that wasn’t enough, he threw a huge celebration when the sheep was returned.

The point of Jesus’ story was to show us just how intent God is on rescuing people. He did not wait for people to come to Him but instead sent His own Son, the Good Shepherd, to seek out those who were lost and bring them home. Jesus is still seeking sinners out, and every time He brings one back into the right relationship with God, there is a huge heavenly celebration. This is how much God values each person. This is how much each person matters.

Reflect:

1. Summarize Jesus’ story in your own words.
2. Why do you think Jesus told this story?
3. What does this story teach us about God?

Pray:



You are calling us, Lord Jesus, to follow you. Help us not to look back at what we leave behind but instead, keep our eyes fixed on you.

The 3-Step “1-on-1 Encouragement” Process

Let us hold on to the confession of our hope without wavering, since he who promised is faithful. And let us consider one another in order to provoke love and good works, not neglecting to gather together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging each other, and all the more as you see the day approaching.

Hebrews 10:23-25

- Partner-up: Partners should be of the same gender. If there is an odd number three is okay but work swiftly.
- Partners ask each other these five questions:

	1) Did you spend specific personal time in the BIBLE <u>each day</u> this past week?	These are “Yes” or “No” questions. Any hesitations or “Well...” responses are circled “No.” • If so, the partner briefly shares the encounter(s) with their partner and, on the provided line, writes the name(s) of the person(s) they showed love to, shared the gospel with, or disciplined. • If not, leave the line blank.
	2) Did you spend specific time in PRAYER <u>each day</u> this past week – not just for meals?	
	3) Did you do something specific to show Godly LOVE to someone this past week?	
	4) Did you intentionally share the GOSPEL with anyone this past week?	
	5) Did you DISCIPLE anyone this past week? (Ex: Sharing with others from any of the Gathering, God, Group, or Family Times)	

- Each partner prays for the other: No matter how or what the partner has done over the past week, this is an intentional prayer of **encouragement** for the coming week!

What I learned and who I met during this series:
