

Limited Resources

- What are some resources that we keep running out of?
- What difference would it make if **our need** doubled?
- What difference would it make if **our resources** doubled?
- What difference would it make if **there were no limit** to our resources?

1

Two stories...

Elijah and the widow and her son

1 Kings 17:7-16

- Elijah asked for water, and a piece of bread
- She said, “I don’t have any bread—only a handful of flour in a jar and a little olive oil in a jug. I am gathering a few sticks to take home and make a meal for myself and my son, that we may eat it—and die.”
- Elijah said: First make bread for me. If you will, your oil and flour will never run out
- She did, and they didn’t!

2

Two stories...

Elisha and the widow with her two sons 2 Kings 4:1-7

- When her husband died, their creditors were going to enslave her sons, so she asked Elisha for help
- Elisha asked: “What do you have in your house?”
- Her answer: “Your servant has nothing there at all, except a small jar of olive oil.”
- Elisha: You need more jars!
 - “Go around and ask all your neighbors for empty jars. Don’t ask for just a few. Then go inside and shut the door behind you and your sons. Pour oil into all the jars, and as each is filled, put it to one side.”

3



Too Big for Us!
Isaiah 49:1-7

bib.ly/Isa49.NIV
tiny.cc/cmchandouts

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Israel: God's Chosen People

“For you are a people holy to the Lord your God. The Lord your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on the face of the earth to be **his people, his treasured possession.**”

Deuteronomy 7:6

“You only have I chosen
of all the families of the earth;
therefore I will punish you
for all your sins.” *Amos 3:2*

“In that day I will restore David's fallen shelter—
I will repair its broken walls
and restore its ruins—
and will rebuild it as it used to be” *Amos 9:11*

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Isaiah 49:1-3

Listen to me, you islands;
hear this, you distant nations:
Before I was born the Lord called me;
from my mother's womb he has spoken my name.
He made my mouth like a sharpened sword,
in the shadow of his hand he hid me;
he made me into a polished arrow
and concealed me in his quiver.
He said to me, “You are my servant,
Israel, in whom I will display my splendor.”

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Isaiah 49:4

But I said,

“I have labored in vain;

I have spent my strength for nothing at all.

Yet what is due me is in the Lord’s hand,
and my reward is with my God.”

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Isaiah 49:5-6

And now the Lord says—

he who formed me in the womb to be his servant
to bring Jacob back to him

and gather Israel to himself,

for I am honored in the eyes of the Lord
and my God has been my strength—

he says:

“It is too small a thing for you to be my servant

to restore the tribes of Jacob

and bring back those of Israel I have kept.

I will also make you a light for the Gentiles,

that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth.”

8

Isaiah 49:7

This is what the Lord says—

the Redeemer and Holy One of Israel—
to him who was despised and abhorred by the nation,
to the servant of rulers:

“Kings will see you and stand up,
princes will see and bow down,
because of the Lord, who is faithful,
the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you.”

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Isaiah 49:5-6

And now the Lord says—

he who formed me in the womb to be his servant
to bring Jacob back to him
and gather Israel to himself,
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“It is too small a thing for you to be my servant
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and bring back those of Israel I have kept.
I will also make you a light for the Gentiles,
that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth.”

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The Big Idea

**God's glory is too great
to fill anything less
than all the peoples of the whole earth**

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Our resources so often feel so limited!

- Time, money, attention, emotional energy, physical energy, ...
- When you divide that over more people or more things, we will get even less!
- We are certainly ready to be generous ...once our needs and the needs of our people are met!

We so easily see God the same way

- If we give away what He gives us, there might not be enough for us


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God's resources are unlimited!

- His glory expands to fill the space available
- The more jars there are to fill, the more we will see of His glory

13



Which model best fits how we think about God?



14

The Big Idea

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Application

Rejoice: We are the ends of the earth!

- God's plan included bringing the good news to us!
 - Others sacrificed so we could be included
- For some of us, especially in families and nations where Christianity has been prominent for generations, we can easily think of ourselves as being God's chosen people
 - Not so!
 - Rather: We are the "far off lands"!

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Application

Turn from all forms of self-seeking

- Love is not self-seeking, and God will not be a part of it!
 - God is not especially concerned with any particular nation or people or church or family or...!
 - When we claim that God is (or should be) especially concerned for “us”, it reveals how small we think God is!
 - “God does not show favoritism.” *Romans 2:11*
 - One form of the error: Christians who see their tribe or country (or some version of it) as God’s new “my people”
 - The new “chosen people” is **the global Church**
 - God will be glorified by nations and tribes as He chooses

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Application

Turn from all forms of self-seeking

- Paul loved His Jewish people group, yet he was called to bring the glory of the Gospel to Gentiles
 - He would have given up His salvation personally if He could have brought salvation to the Jewish people
 - Yet He followed God’s call, seeking first God’s Kingdom
 - “I am talking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch as I am the apostle to the Gentiles, I take pride in my ministry in the hope **that I may somehow arouse my own people to envy** and save some of them.” *Romans 11:13-14*

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Talking to Gentiles: “If some of the branches have been broken off, and you, though a wild olive shoot, have been grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing sap from the olive root, **do not consider yourself to be superior to those other branches.** If you do, consider this: You do not support the root, but the root supports you. You will say then, “Branches were broken off so that I could be grafted in.” Granted. But they were broken off because of unbelief, and you stand by faith. **Do not be arrogant, but tremble.** For if God did not spare the natural branches, he will not spare you either.” *Romans 11:17-20*

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Application

Turn from all forms of self-seeking

- I am not saying that God doesn't care about a country or tribe or people
- I am saying that God is concerned for all countries, tribes, and peoples, no matter their size or wealth or power or need for grace
 - God told Jonah: “Should I not have concern for the great city of Nineveh” that worships other gods and whose “wickedness has come up before me”? *Jonah*
 - And this made Jonah angry
 - And this made the Jewish people furious with Paul!

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Application

Turn from all forms of self-seeking

- The Gospel, and God's work in the world, is **not** about us or our church or our people group or our nation
- **God's plan is about the global Church, with people from every nation, tribe, people, and language!**

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Application

Join God's work to bring the Gospel to the ends of the earth

- Intentionally put the good of others before ourselves
- Seek more jars to fill with the glory of God!
 - **Evangelism**: helping others see & know the glory of God
 - **Missions**: ...to the ends of the earth
- Our vision as a church
 - See the glory of God **fill more and more jars of more and more kinds** (rather than copies of our kinds of jars)
 - The **more different kinds of jars** we genuinely include means that **we will see more of His glory!**

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Application

Persevere in difficulty with great hope

- “But I said, ‘I have labored in vain; I have spent my strength for nothing at all.’ ” *Isaiah 49:4*
 - God’s path is not the easiest path!
 - Yet it is the best path
- Our jars are **not** unlimited
 - The One who fills our jars is
- “What is due me is in the Lord’s hand” *Isaiah 49:4*
 - We trust God to bring the needed strength and the promised reward
 - While we seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness

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The Big Idea

**God’s glory is too great
to fill anything less
than all the peoples of the whole earth**

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