

BOOK OF 2 KINGS
HOW TO RETRIEVE WHAT'S BEEN LOST
2 KINGS 6:1-7

INTRODUCTION

We will get into the Scripture in a moment, but before we do let's understand some things:

Without the power of God in our lives, we as Believers have nothing to offer this world that can really make a difference!

Many times folks in the world look at those of us who name the name of Christ and, for the most part, they see very little that is right about us!

Now granted, **the world will almost always find fault with a Church that's trying to do right no matter what we do.** The crying shame though is that often we give them justification to find true fault!

The world needs for us to be different than they are! But in many ways, *"The world is getting so churchy and our Churches are getting so worldly, it is hard to tell the difference sometimes."* **That ought not to be! There ought to be a difference in the life of every person who names the name of Christ! We should be distinctively different!**

Without Christ actively living His life through us, the sum total of everything we can do that has any eternal value in it is ZERO!

John 15:5—I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

What really matters is whether we have the power of God in whatever we are doing! There is NOT ONE of us that can live a life that is pleasing to God apart from the power of the Holy Spirit!

All of the cosmetic improvements in the world will not empower us to live for God. We can stir all kinds of activity without God being in any of it at all!

If we are to have God's blessing in our lives and in our ministries, then what we must do is go to Christ and exchange our life for His life!

Jesus told his disciples about His exchange program.

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In *Matthew 16:24-25*—"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it."

Paul said in *Philippians 1:21*, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."
Let me remind you that there is nothing about us that impresses God!

God is not impressed with you or with me!

God is not impressed with our abilities!

God is not impressed with our education!

God is not impressed with our programs!

God is not impressed with our plans!

God is not impressed with anything about us!

**I've said this before and I will continue to say it because it is true:
The only thing God is impressed with is the life of His Son!**

Isaiah 64:6 says that all of our righteousnesses are as filthy rags!
By the way, that goes for the saint as well as the sinner!

God is not looking for OUR righteousnesses! He is looking for the righteousness of His own dear Son, The Lord Jesus Christ, to be lived in us!

Galatians 2:20, the Apostle Paul said, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me."

Could I tell you that **unless the life of Christ is released in us, all else that we might do is in vain!**

In fact, I think **many times we can get so busy in the work of the Lord, that we forget all about the Lord of the work!**

Many times to compensate for our barrenness inside, we keep up a facade of religious activity on the outside! We see a picture of that in our text!

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(READ THE SCRIPTURE!! 2 KINGS 6:1-7)

We see here that when the disciple of Elisha lost the axe head, **he lost the power that went with it. When that happened, He was then helpless to complete his task.**

I believe that this story has some striking parallels to our Christian life!

Let's let the axe handle represent all that you and I are apart from Christ—all our natural abilities and efforts! Let the axe head, on the other hand, represent the supernatural power and presence of the resurrected Christ in our lives!

Too many of God's servants have lost the axe head and are attempting to accomplish the work of God with a useless ax handle!

I believe that **one of the greatest tragedies of our time is the powerlessness of many of our Local Churches and of the average Believer in our Local Churches!**

As we look at many Churches, we see that they are consumed with activities, but they are not consumed with God!

I want to ask and answer some questions in our study here tonight!

1. What causes us to lose the power of God in our lives?
2. How do we get the power back once we've lost it?

GIVE THE TITLE TO THE MESSAGE!

I. WHAT CAUSES US TO LOSE THE POWER OF GOD IN OUR LIVES? (The Axe Head)

A. Sometimes We Forget That The Equipment We Have Is Borrowed!

There is stewardship that is involved in using the things that are borrowed! And without a sense of stewardship there is usually carelessness!

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When we forget that it is only by God's power and grace that we are able to serve, we become careless about the potential that we have been given by God!

When we get careless about the power of God that we have been given, then we are well on our way to losing the power of God in our lives.

Everything we have is borrowed! Job said:

Job 1:21—“ . . .Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.”

1. All Of Our Time Is Borrowed Time!

Psalms 90:12—“So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.”

2. All Of Our Treasure Is Borrowed Treasure!

1 Timothy 6:7—“For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.”

3. All Of Our Talents Are Borrowed Talents!

1 Peter 4:10-11—“As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. 11 If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”

We will all give an account one day of our stewardship of all that God has given us!

Romans 14:10—“So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.”

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What Causes Us To Lose The Power Of God In Our Lives?
Sometimes We Forget The Equipment We Have Is Borrowed!

B. Sometimes We Forget That The Equipment We Have Borrowed Needs To Be Maintained!

1. An Axe Handle Needs To Abide In The Axe Head To Work Properly!

If our lives don't stay connected to the Power of God we become useless to do the work that needs to be done! **(Look at John 15:4-7)**

2. An Axe Head Needs To Be Sharpened In Order To Work Properly!

If the axe head is not sharpened, it puts more pressure on the axe handle!

If the axe head is not sharpened, it can loosen the axe head from the handle!

In the same way, if we don't maintain the power of God in our lives, we'll lose it!

What Causes Us To Lose The Power Of God In Our Lives?
Sometimes We Forget The Equipment We Have Is Borrowed!
Sometimes We Forget The Equipment We Have Borrowed Needs To Be Maintained!

C. Sometimes We Forget That It's the Little Things That Need To Be Taken Care Of To Keep From Losing The Power!

(e.g. The Wedge)

What is it that keeps us connected to the power source?

It's the little things that we know—like coming to Church faithfully, praying, reading the Word of God, and tithing, that keep the power of God connected to our lives.

When we begin to neglect the little things, we become detached from our power source.

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Luke 16:10—*“He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.”*

Now, let's ask the second question:

II. HOW DO WE GET THE POWER OF GOD BACK IN OUR LIVES?

A. The Prophet Who Lost His Axe Head Had Five Options:

1. He Could Have Just Quit!

The easiest thing to do is to quit! However, our part of the work doesn't get accomplished when we quit. Somebody else has to pick up our slack when we quit.

2. He Could Have Just Ignored That He Lost His Power Source And Tried To Fake It!

This is possibly the greatest hindrance in our Churches today. We can appear to be Spiritually successful even when we are not.

a. Some lose the power but continue to go through the motions!

Isaiah 1:11—*“To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the LORD: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats.”*

b. Some talk further down the road than they are walking with God!

We may be fooling others and we are definitely fooling ourselves, but we are not fooling God!

c. Some don't take the Christian walk as seriously as it should be taken!

Oh it's just Sunday School!

Oh it's just Sunday Night Service!

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Oh it's just Wednesday Night Service!
Oh it's just one Sunday we're missing!

- d. **Some play the "Christianity Game," only Christianity is not a game!**
(We can come to Church, we can sing the songs, we can go through all the motions, but the truth is, that if our power has been lost, it all just winds up being just a show and a waste of our effort!)

3. *He Could Have Quit, He Could Have Faked It. . .*
He Could Have Tried To Choose A Substitute!
But, no real substitute was available!
His axe was borrowed!

A substitute would not have solved his dilemma of the lost axe head!

Sometimes we try to substitute things for which there is no substitute!

Reading your Bible and praying at home and even watching the service online is no substitute for Church attendance! (Granted there are times when we can't come and I'm not talking about that!)

Giving to community charities is no substitute to bringing your tithes and offerings to Church!

There are no acceptable substitutes for obedience!
(Just ask King Saul about Amalek—*1 Samuel 15*)

4. **He Could Have Just Tried To Retrieve The Lost Axe Head Himself! (Pride)**
Pride says, "*I don't need any help, I can do it myself!*"

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Did you know that pride is the root problem of most of the other sins among God's people!

- a. **Pride Causes Us To Want To Deal With The Respectable Rather Than Deal With What's Real!**

We try to keep up a good front on the outside without admitting our real need so that no one notices our real condition!

- b. **Pride Causes Us To Deal In Generalities Rather Than Specifics!**

We make general confessions rather than specific confessions!

We view our sins as just mistakes, problems, or weaknesses! (*i.e. We take sin too lightly!*)

- c. **Pride Causes Us To Be More Concerned With What People Think About Us Rather Than Be Concerned With What God Knows About Us!**

Pride keeps us in our seat when we should be on the altar! When was the last time you came down to an old-fashioned altar?

Pride keeps us standing and singing when we should be bowing and praying!

Pride freezes our response to Holy Spirit conviction! (It's called *grieving the Spirit!*)

Pride keeps us from confessing, "*I was wrong!*"

Pride causes us to be satisfied with the way things are rather than the way they should be!

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He Could Have Just Quit!
He Could Have Just Ignored That He Lost His Power
Source And Tried To Fake It!
He Could Have Just Chosen A Substitute!
He Could Have Just Tried To Retrieve The Lost Axe
Head Himself. (Pride)

5. He Could Cry Out For Help From The Master!

By the way, that was the only thing he could do that would really work! And it is what he chose to do!

B. NOTICE WHAT THE YOUNG PROPHET DID: (Vs 5, 6)

1. He Cried Out For Help!

When we lose the power of God we need to realize that we can't get the power back on our own, we need help!

2. He Sought That Help From The Master!

The Master had the only solution to be able to get the axe head back! And, by the way, it was a supernatural solution!

If you are sitting here without the power of God in your life, you need the help of the Master!
You need a supernatural solution!

3. He Returned To The Place Where He Lost The Axe Head! He knew where he lost it! So do we!

4. The Master Performed A Miracle And Caused The Axe Head To Float To The Surface!

God can cause the lost Power to get back into our reach if we will only look to Him for the solution!

5. He Reached Out And Took It Back!

When the power was back in his reach he took it!

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Most of us are waiting for God to move on us in some traumatic flash!

While we wait for God, He waits for us to fall before Him!

CONCLUSION

The next move is ours to make!

If in all this we've looked at you find that you are powerless, realize that God's power can be restored in your life!

We must simply call out to the Master in confession and then be obedient to Him by reaching out and taking back His power into our lives through His miraculous working!