

God is for Us!
Pastor Eric Brown
Trinity, Herscher

In 1 Kings 17:8-16 Elijah meets the widow of Zarephath, and I'd like to examine her response to Elijah's request for a morsel of bread. In verse 12 we hear: "And she said, 'As the LORD your God lives, I have nothing baked, only a handful of flour in a jar and a little oil in a jug. And now I am gathering a couple of sticks that I may go in and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it and die.'"

If you want a brutally honest insight into the darkness and nihilism that permeates our world today, here it is, right here. This woman is, as we say today, not in a good place. She has many legit problems - she's a widow, she's running out of food. Things look bad. And most importantly, she has no hope.

And it's not just that she doesn't believe in God - it's that she doesn't care. She assumes that the LORD would have nothing to do with her. She'll even concede that He exists... but so what?

So often for the past decades, the debates the Church has had with the world at large have been debates over whether there is "a God". There's a place for that - but even if you win that debate and folks believe that there is "a God" - that doesn't do much. The widow here can say that, and yet her life is utterly bleak. The problem is that she (and so many people today) do not know that God is for them, for their good.

This is why St. Paul said that he was determined to preach nothing but Christ and Him Crucified. In Jesus, we see God for us. God become man to win us forgiveness, life, and salvation. God come to take care of us not just for the day but for life everlasting. In Jesus, we see a God who is with us (remember, Immanuel means "God With Us) even in the face of hardship.

That widow assumed she was alone, that it didn't matter if the LORD was around because she assumed He wouldn't do her any good anyway. God sent Elijah to her, who told her and showed her differently. Likewise, in the hard spots of this week, remember not just that there is a god, but rather that Jesus Christ is God for you and God with you, to strengthen and forgive you.

In Christ Jesus and in His love, by the working of His Spirit, we have hope in the face of all that this world throws at us - a hope that is also for our many neighbors who are hopeless.