I love the way you sing it, but I love the words of that song.
1 Kings chapter 17, 1 Kings chapter 17, good to see everybody back out tonight.
Love the sound of that rain.
What's the words of that verse?
I will not boast in anything, nor gifts, nor
power, nor wisdom, but I will boast in Jesus
Christ, whose wounds have paid my ransom.
Amen.
1 Kings chapter 17, let's try to begin reading
verse number 8, we'll go ahead and take back
to verse number 1 that we looked at this morning, read down through verse number 16.
The Bible says in Elijah the Tishbite, who
was an inhabitant of Gilead, said unto Ahab,
As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom
I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.
And the word of the Lord came unto him, saying,
Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and
hide thyself by the brook Cherith that is before Jordan.
And it shall be that thou shalt drink of the
brook, and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there.
So he went and did according unto the word of the Lord.
For he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith that is before Jordan.
And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in
the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening,
and he drank of the brook.
And it came to pass after a while that the brook
dried up, because there had been no rain in the land.
And the word of the Lord came unto him, saying,
Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there.
Behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee.
So he rose and went to Zarephath.
And when he came to the gate of the city, behold,
the widow woman was there gathering of sticks.
And he called to her and said, Fetch me, I pray
thee, a little water and a vessel that I may drink.
That's what we stopped reading this morning.
Let's continue verse 11.
The Bible says, And as she was going to fetch it, that's a big, big phrase.
And as she was going to fetch it, he called to
her and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand.
And she said, As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake,
but a handful of meal and a barrel, a little oil and a cruise.
Behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may
go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it and die.
And Elijah said unto her, Fear not, go and do as thou hast said, but make me thereof a
little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son.
For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, it

says in Elijah's words, these are God's words.
For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The
barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall
the cruise of oil fail, nor shall the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth.
And she went and did, according to the say of Elijah.
She and he and her house did eat many days,
and the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did
the cruise of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Elijah.
Let's pray.
The house, Lord, together with my friends,
my family, your people, Lord, I pray that you
would take your word, this familiar record for many of us, that you would take it and,
Lord, reveal the relevance and the unchanging truth.
God, the reality and the ugliness of sin, Lord,
the greatness of your provision, dear Lord,
also the means by which you have chosen to work
with men, how to possess and acquire, Lord,
when only those things that you can provide.
We'll take this service tonight.
You use it for your honor and glory.
In Jesus' name we pray.
Amen.
Amen.
Amen.
Tonight I want to continue on that thought of the God of Elijah, but specifically this
divine provision that the Lord not only gave in this text, but that the Lord gives.
This morning we looked at God's judgment on sin.
That's what verse number one is.
Ahab did more to provoke the Lord to anger than all that had come before him.
God sent his messenger to Ahab and said, I'm shutting this thing off.
Not for days, not for weeks, not for months, not for years.
That's a reality, but it's also a very, very
small glimpse of God's judgment and sentence that he has already passed upon sin.
Sin that has separated us from God.
Sin that has led to eternal death.
Sin that has led to a curse on the world.
Folks, every problem we got on this earth,
when God made it, he said, behold, it was very
good as the result of the sin of man.
But praise God, it doesn't just end with God's judgment upon sin.
It continues to God's provision.
I love that God says, I have command.
Not I will command, or I may figure this thing out once I have a solution.
God says, I have already commanded my birds, Elijah, to take care of you.
I've already commanded a widow over there in Zarephath to take care of you.
Now, before this world was created, before
Stacey Osborne was born, he knew that you would need a salvation for your sin.

He would need provision for your death.
But we also find, that's what the Old Testament does.
It reveals truth about men.
Folks, there's nothing new about mankind.
Nothing any different from the very beginning of time.
They say man has evolved.
No, man's learned some things out.
I don't think man has evolved as much as man is beginning to devolve.
We learn truth about men, we lose truth about
God, but we also learn how God, this great God, deals with men.
Oftentimes, preachers have taken, I heard it said
not too long ago, now we live in the dispensation of grace.
And I would say, there's never been a time
where there wasn't the dispensation of grace.
The Bible says that Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.
From the very beginning, it's always learned about faith and grace, grace and faith.
God always works in conjunction with the faith of men.
This morning, we ended here, verse number 10, looking at this widow woman's faith.
Elijah's faith is worthy to be examined, the
courage to go and face Ahab, the courage just
to trust God and go where he's sinning, that
I even believe that the birds will feed me,
that I'll go not to the king's palace, but I'll go to a widow for you to sustain me.
But I look at this widow woman, and we looked at it this morning, verse number 10.
She was a woman that I believe had expected faith.
Look at verse 10 again.
It says, so he arose and went to Zarephath.
And when he come to the gate of the city, behold,
the widow woman was there gathering of sticks.
And he called to her and said, fetch me, I pray
thee, a little water and a vessel that I may drink.
Again, that gate's not something that swings open.
That's a place of business.
It's a place of discourse.
It's where people gathered.
Now, her scene is bad.
Her and her son, they ain't got much left.
They're about to die.
But she's out and about, and she's working, and she's visible.
And I say, why do I find her there?
We find her there because God had already spoken to her.
I have a man coming.
My prophet is coming.
And your assignment is to sustain him.
I don't think she was the least bit shocked
when Elijah showed up and said, fetch me, I pray
thee, if you would, a vessel of water to drink.

She had expected faith.
But there's some other things I want to look
at tonight, beginning in verse 10 and 11, a
few things that these won't be earth-shattering to us.
They're actually rather simplistic.
But they're so, so necessary.
I'm not going to say so necessary.
They're absolutely essential to us experiencing
the provision of God, the strength of God,
the salvation of God, and the help of God.
Verse number 10 and 11, we find in this woman's life where obedience was a priority.
Obedience wasn't a preference.
It wasn't something to take or leave.
But obedience was a priority.
Again, verse 10 says, so he arose and went to Zarephath.
And when he came to the gate of the city, behold,
the widow woman was there gathering his sticks.
And he called to her and said, fetch me, I pray
thee, a little water and a vessel that I may drink.
And verse 11 says, and as she was going to fetch it, he called to
her and said, bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand.
And as she was going to fetch it, here Elijah
shows up and there are no introductions made.
There's no how do you do's, how are you and yours doing.
Elijah just shows up and back and says, will you go please go get me some water.
And then we find this phrase, as she was going.
No rebuttals.
No excuses.
No questions.
As I go, what are you going to do?
If I go, what will God do?
What?
I don't believe it so much that Elijah said please as it was that God had commanded.
Wendy, God had already told her, I'm sending a man of God and
it is your job and it is your purpose here to save this man.
So here this man shows up and he doesn't even show up with any explanations.
He doesn't show up with any promises that she would get water.
No promises that she would be fed.
It was just clear instructions from the Lord of what she was to do.
She obeyed immediately because God had commanded.
You know folks, it's really that simple.
Why?
Why must I?
Why should I?
Why will I?
Well, God had commanded.
I think often times we can dissect things so minutely and so

sharply that we fail to see how things sometimes join together.
We've got obedience.
We've got faith.
We've got mercy.
We've got grace.
It's especially done with God.
A lot of times people want to focus on the holiness of God or they just want to focus on the love of God and somehow sacrifice the justice of God or the grace of God and we sacrifice the wrath of God.
Well, all of those things fit together perfectly in who God is.
And the same thing is true with the attributes of men and what is required of men and his dealings with God, that there is obedience and there is faith, but they're not really two different things.
What they are is they're multiple links in the same chain.
As if you look at those two things, you really can't even tell them apart.
What is obedience?
Folks, obedience is the visible expression of an inward possession.
The truth that we have faith internally is the practice of obedience externally.
See, this woman believed God.
God had commanded her.
God had told her.
We know that she believed God.
Why?
Because it says so?
No, because of what she did.
And she went.
Obedience was a priority.
But number two, she was fully aware of the command.
Look at verse 11.
The Bible says, And as she was going to fetch it,
He called to her and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand.
And she said,
As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but a handful of meal in a barrel,
and a little oil in a cruise.
And behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in,
and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it and die.
And Elijah said it to her, Fear not, go and do as thou hast said,
but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it to me,
and after, make for thee and for thy son.
Folks, faith can get a bad rap from a lot of people.
Believers and unbelievers a lot.
As if somehow the people that possess it, the people that practice it,
are somehow unaware or oblivious or unintelligent.
To the real needs of life and what's going on in this world.
Because if they were, they wouldn't act this way.
I want to tell you that this mama knew exactly what she was being asked to do.
God did not pull the wool over her eyes.
He did not make this scene any easier than it was going to be.
She knew what she was being commanded to do,

what she was being asked to do,
was not only to take bread out of her mouth,
take bread out of her boy's mouth,
not just a little bit of bread,
but all the bread that they had.
She was fully, fully aware of the gravity of this command.
Even here, I don't think she's wavering in her faith,
but what I do think has happened,
she's looking for a little bit of reassurance.
She's looking for a little bit of just confidence.
And Elijah, do you know?
I pray you know.
But this is what God has told me to do.
And I'm intent on doing what God has told me to do.
But what I'm being asked to do
is to give you all that I have.
Folks, true faith in God isn't about being foolish,
but it is about embracing the facts.
Let's just say this.
Easy things are easy.
And that's why we call them easy.
And for the most part, most people got no issue with the easy things.
Now, it's a challenge for Sister Sherry to get to church.
It's a challenge for some of my seniors now to get to church.
But for most of us, getting to church ain't that big of a deal.
I mean, we get our relatively new car,
drive a couple of miles in our nice new clothes.
Getting there ain't all that difficult.
But church, if we're going to get to the next level in life,
if we're going to get to the next level with the Lord,
that ain't easy.
It's not easy
when it comes to certain matters of faith.
However, it is not complicated.
And there's a difference
between what's easy and what's complicated.
Reaching that next level with God,
where He is the one that we fully trust,
He is the one that we fully obey,
even when we realize the gravity of the command that God has called us to,
folks, it is not that complicated.
Number one, we must obey God.
Above all things, we must obey God.
But number two, we've got to understand that
His plans and His purposes must become our own.
Not just in our thoughts,
not just in our agreement,

but folks, in the actions of our lives.
in the actions of our lives.
I don't think there would be anyone here in this church,
and I would not agree that God's will and God's purposes and God's plan,
in order for me to be what God's wife is to be,
must come before my heart.
But it's one thing to give men a little shit to it,
it's one thing to agree to it,
but it's an entirely different thing
than what you're being asked to do.
It's take that last bread that you got, that last biscuit,
and you take that in your grandbaby's hands
and you view it as a man of God.
That's what's occurring.
But don't sound afraid of that.
Sometimes we confuse our children.
We try to have the Lord a priority of going
to church, of going to this, of going to that,
until certain things arise.
And it's not quite the priority
that we plan today to use.
I mean, His purpose has come by our own
until we have a purpose that's a little more important
or desirable than He is.
This woman understood this.
Again, she doesn't graduate with some theological degree from a seminary,
but here's what has happened.
God has spoken to her.
She can recognize her voice.
She realized the gravity of this situation.
And if she's going to be,
and I love at this point,
folks, there's not,
somebody correct me if I'm wrong,
there's not one thing that is said prior up to here
that God is going to continue to sustain her.
This is about what God is asking her to do
for someone else.
But we have a faith that is expected.
We have a faith where obedience is a priority.
We have a faith where she's fully aware of the command.
But we also have a faith
that is fully reliant upon the Lord.
Go down to verse number 15.
We'll continue reading in verse 13.
And Elijah said to her,
Fear not and go and do as thou hast said,

but make me thereof a little cake first
and bring it unto me.
And after make for thee and for thy son.
For thus saith the Lord God of Israel.
See, this don't come in to chapter, verse number 14.
All of what we've seen thus far
is happening before.
Elijah says what God tells you to say, verse 14.
For thus saith the Lord God of Israel.
The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the crucible fail,
until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth.
And again, we find it in verse 15.
And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah.
And she and he and her house did eat many days.
Folks, it needs repeating.
It needs repeating.
Jesus says in the scriptures
that the faith the grain of a mustard seed can move mountains.
That father whose child was possessed with the devil
and the disciples couldn't help him.
Jesus says if you can believe all things are possible to him that believeth.
He said, Lord, I believe.
I help my mom believe.
The Lord does not require perfect faith.
But folks, he will not be a backup plan.
He will not be another option.
He does require us.
If we are going to experience the provision of God in our lives,
we must trust and entrust ourselves to him fully,
unreservedly, not another option, not a second option,
but all that we are,
even though we don't understand it all,
don't have all the explanations.
Here's what this woman is doing.
She says, I'm good.
This is all I got left.
This is it.
But I believe God
that I'm going to entrust
myself
and my son.
I'm going to entrust God
on the Lord.
Now, what was her son?
Now, what was her son?
Her son?
You are to sustain the man of God.

And folks, I believe the scripture teaches it.
I believe it shows it.
it wasn't until she was willing to obey and submit to the plan of God
and the will of God in her own life to the assignment that God gave her
that she was able to experience the provision of God for herself.
Doesn't that make sense?
I remember my boy,
I call him,
his name is,
my name for him is knucklehead.
Because for,
I mean, now he's losing that title.
He's getting some tips about it.
But he would come home
and he would do the most asinine of things.
And he would ask for some of the most asinine of things.
And I was like,
do you really want me to?
I mean,
I'm confused.
You want $20 for this and you just did that and you come from this
and you come from that.
And I think sometimes
we're going to be supposed to die that way.
Lord, I need you to move in my life and God wants you to go,
well, you're not the least bit concerned about mine and me.
You're not the least bit concerned about my will above your own
that you're living for yourself.
You really haven't entrusted yourself with me.
Yet at the same time,
you want that extra, you want this extra,
you want that, that, and you want that, that.
Now,
I'm disappointed in the world.
She said, no,
I know exactly where I'm at.
I know what God's called me to do.
But I also know that God has said,
I'm a sustainable man.
How am I going to do it?
I don't know how.
Because I'll have to visit that for two people
and move away this one and that.
But,
I'm going to fully trust
and allow myself unto God.
I'm going to put the will of God to worship you most of my life.

Because that is when the provision of God
is not happening in your life.
Is this not a picture?
Is this not a picture of the model prayer of the Lord's prayer being lived out?
What's the first priority?
Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
You say, what got this whole thing kickstarted?
I'll tell you what it was, Mary Jo.
God spoke to her.
That's what kickstarted the whole thing.
It's God had commanded.
The first priority in prayer,
she recognized the voice of God.
Our first desire in prayer.
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
So here she gets to a place and go, you know what?
I've got to set God's desire in front of my own.
He's got to come first.
He can't come second.
He has to come first.
Then we find this daily dependence, this godly dependence.
Give us this day our daily bread where this woman
takes herself and her child
and she entrusts herself
to the hand of God.
Then we find this inexhaustible provision of God.
Y'all look at this with me.
Let your minds,
let your sanctified imagination
run wild in verse 15 and 16.
It says,
She went and did
according to the saying of Elijah.
And she and he and her house did eat many days.
And the barrel of meal wasted not
neither did the cruise of oil fail
according to the word of the Lord which he spake by Elijah.
Can you imagine the joy?
I mean, can you imagine the confidence
and the peace
and the assurance and the gratitude and the thankfulness
when every single morning
it's just like that man
that she went back every single day.
Because I believe this day when she made that
she used every bit of it she had to make for Elijah

and make for herself
and there was none left
until she went back and opened that cabinet up again
and I don't know how it got there
but there's more meal in the barrel.
I don't know how it got there
but there's more oil in the vessel.
Day after day after day after day
we find a woman
giving herself to the will of God to the power of God to the plan of God
completely trusting herself to this God.
And it's because of that
that she's experiencing the inexhaustible provision of God.
This ain't just a story about one woman and her son and some biscuits.
It's about how this great God works.
It's about the power
that this great God has.
but how
this great God
operates
in the life of his children
that this meal never rotted or ran out
that this oil it never ran dry.
He said preacher that's
that's an amazing story.
But folks it reminds us very very quickly
of even greater
provisions of God.
Much greater provisions of God.
We have some of these promises in the word of God.
We talk about the mercy of God.
I love Psalms 103 17.
It says but the mercy of the Lord you're going to give yourself a headache on this
it's from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him.
What is this saying?
Alton just like God said I'm telling you young little woman no little woman
however you are this ain't even any entire sin made.
I promise you you both you dump it all out and pray for
you yourself and your son for Elijah in the beginning.
The Bible tells me
that the mercy of God
is from everlasting
until everlasting.
You know upon those and fear.
You know what that means?
There's not one day that God is able to come to what we call his senses
and render up to me

what I truly deserve in my life.
That I can count on the mercy of God
as an inexhaustible
unending provision of only
not giving me
what I deserve.
Folks,
the only way
to experience that
is through faith.
Faith that submits,
faith that surrenders,
faith that obey.
Faith that is expected,
faith that puts God's will above our own.
The mercy of God, we find the compassion and faithfulness of God.
Limitations,
y'all know this verse, this I recall to my mind,
therefore I have hope
that it is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed
because his compassions
or his compassions fails not, they are new every morning,
great is thy faithfulness.
I got caught up in that this afternoon.
There's two buckets in God's kitchen,
there was in her kitchen.
There was a cruise of oil
and there was a barrel of meal.
God's got a bucket of compassion
and God's got a bucket of faithfulness.
And those things are mixed together and I know
based upon the word of God and the character of God
that those two things will never run out in my life.
Compassion is one
of the greatest traits
that stands out to me about the Lord Jesus in the New Testament.
He looked upon those crowds
and the Bible says and he was moved
with compassion.
Compassion isn't feeling sorry for somebody,
it is carried to the point that you move on their behalf.
Compassion.
Faithfulness.
See, it gets easier.
I'm going to say,
no, it does get easier.
It ain't ever easy,

but it gets easier.
How does it get easier?
I think,
Sister Tammy, let's call it a Monday
when a lot of people showed up.
God had spoken.
She recognized at this point what does it have to have
very much to do with a lot that's got to do with God?
All of them.
It doesn't have to have very much to do with
anybody else that's got to do with the Lord.
So she might.
She obeyed.
She obeyed.
So Monday,
she went home.
By the way, she's out gathering two sticks.
She had enough
for one last meal for two.
We're going to eat this and we die because there's been a drought.
But somehow,
God made that work for three.
But the next day,
she got up
and it was there again.
Now, I'm just of the opinion that that was Monday and that was Tuesday.
I think it got a little easier on Wednesday.
And then I think you go to bed on Wednesday excited to wake up for Thursday
because I bet you God does it all over again.
And you go to bed on Thursday and say, I know what's going to happen in the morning.
Why?
Because the compassion of God fail not and His mercy
is from everlasting to everlasting.
His faithfulness is new every day.
What I'm trying to say is once we get to the
place that we're willing to put God first,
we're willing to mind Him above our own self,
we're willing to do whatever He's called us to do
no matter how difficult or dangerous it may appear,
but we just trust God for being God and then we begin to experience
the provision of God,
it does get easier
in this life
because you see
the faithfulness
of the Lord at work.
You see that He is

not a man of His word, but He's a God of His word.
One last one.
Inexhaustible provision of God,
His salvation
and His life.
Hebrews 7,
it says, but this man referring to Jesus because He continueth ever.
That's a big mouthful.
But this man because He continueth ever.
He ever and ever and ever and ever will be God because He continueth ever,
hath an unchangeable priesthood,
wherefore He is able to save them to the uttermost
that come unto God by Him,
seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.
That word uttermost in Greek is pentelees and it means completely,
perfectly,
utterly
that when God saves a man, please get this,
this ain't a Baptist doctrine,
it's not New Bethel
Missionary Baptist church doctrine,
it is the teaching of the Word of God that when a man drinks of the water of life,
that when he is crucified himself
and he trusts himself into God's hand,
when he is born of the Spirit,
God saves that man completely,
utterly,
honestly,
wholly,
perfectly,
and that, my friend,
lasts forever
because the Son
lasts forever.
not the faith of the man
but the strength of our God.
These provisions
Elijah sent here,
he said, you go show yourself to Ahab.
He's provoked me more than any other.
Led a nation into idolatry,
sin is not a pebble in a pond.
No, it's an earthquake that leads to tsunamis of destruction.
But God says in the midst of that,
I will judge sin and I am just
but I am also merciful and gracious and loving
and I have made

provision for Elijah,
I've made it for this widow,
I've made it for her son,
he's made it for Mitzi and he's made it for Jordan,
he's made it for every man, woman,
boy and girl in the provision of the cross.
But it is only
experience
through faith,
by faith,
expected faith,
obedient faith,
fully aware if any man will come out to me, let
him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me.
fully relying
upon the Lord's faith.
Sister Peggy, that's when we find out
that the biscuits
they're new
every day.
Let's pray.
Father,
thank you
that it is of your power,
it is of your sovereignty,
it is by your grace
that there is any provision at all.
And dear God,
it is by your power
and your faithfulness
and your compassion
that you feed the hungry
who come to you
for their sustenance.
Lord, may we see
that the God of Elijah is the God of today,
that the greatest provision is not that for our stomachs, but that for our souls.
And it's fresh and it's available
and it's real.
But dear Father,
so many starved today without it.
May your children not go hungry
due to the lack of faith in their life.
Give us the eyes to see and the desire to search.
Lord, and the will to obey
that we may truly be fed from your table.
Lord, in Jesus' name I pray.

Amen.
Let us stand.
True night.
True night.