

MORE THAN ENOUGH



There seems to be no limit to which “enough” leads us. Excesses have overwhelmed the financial, legal, and even spiritual systems.

Today our great spiritual need is to find new meaning in value, leadership, stewardship, character and discipleship. Enough is not a quantity, it is a core value of Christ’s disciples who proclaim, “I have been paid in full, and have more than enough; I am fully satisfied....with gifts that are acceptable and pleasing to God.” (Philippians 4:18)

Let us not fear that we will not have what we need, instead that we should have more than enough and waste it.

Scripture:

Exodus 36: 1-7

- 1 "Bezalel and Oholiab and every craftsman in whom the LORD has put skill and intelligence to know how to do any work in the construction of the sanctuary shall work in accordance with all that the LORD has commanded."
- 2 And Moses called Bezalel and Oholiab and every crafter in whose mind the LORD had put skill, everyone whose heart stirred him up to come to do the work.
- 3 And they received from Moses all the contribution that the people of Israel had brought for doing the work on the sanctuary. They still kept bringing freewill offerings every morning,
- 4 so that all the crafters who were doing every sort of task on the sanctuary came, each from the task that they were was doing,
- 5 and said to Moses, "The people bring much more than enough for doing the work that the LORD has commanded us to do."
- 6 So Moses gave command, and word was proclaimed throughout the camp, "Let no man or woman do anything more for the contribution for the sanctuary." So the people were restrained from bringing,
- 7 for the material they had was more than enough to do all the work, and more.

Luke 16:1-13

- 1 He also said to the disciples, "There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was wasting his possessions.
- 2 And he called him and said to him, 'What is this that I hear about you? Turn in the account of your management, for you can no longer be manager.'
- 3 And the manager said to himself, 'What shall I do, since my master is taking the management away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg.
- 4 I have decided what to do, so that when I am removed from management, people may receive me into their houses.'
- 5 So, summoning his master’s debtors one by one, he said to the first, 'How much do you owe my master?'
- 6 He said, 'A hundred measures of oil.' He said to him, 'Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.'
- 7 Then he said to another, 'And how much do you owe?' He said, 'A hundred measures of wheat.' He said to him, 'Take your bill, and write eighty.'
- 8 The master commended the dishonest manager for his shrewdness. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than the sons of light.
- 9 And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous wealth, so that when it fails they may receive you into the eternal dwellings.

- ¹⁰ "One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much.
- ¹¹ If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches?
- ¹² And if you have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own?
- ¹³ No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money."



GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE

This month, as part of Lent, we have brought the Garden of Gethsemane to the Church of the Roses.

OLIVE TREES AND OLIVE INDUSTRY

There are olive trees that thrive in our Mediterranean climate. This is the kind of tree that will make a black olive fruit and can be pressed into oil. The oil is used in cooking, and it can also be put in small clay lamps, and burned to provide light in homes and businesses at night. Olive oil is the electricity that powered the first century. It was used to anoint kings and holy persons. And the wood was used for building. Gethsemane means oil press, olive oil press. It was one of the most important industries of that time, just as energy is important in our own time.

We live in a Mediterranean climate. So if it grows here, it would also grow in the holy land. In 2000 years, the trees in our sanctuary will look exactly like the trees in the Garden of Gethsemane.

HOPSEED BUSHES AND FLOWERS

There are also a few Hopseed bushes in our garden - *Dodonaea Viscosa*. It is a fast growing shrub, evergreen, with a burgundy shrub leaf that grows well in our area. It is complementary to the olive in color and shape. As Lent progresses we will add colorful flowers, pathways, and sitting places to our garden. I hope you will bring a friend to the Garden of Gethsemane in the season of Lent.

A PLACE WHERE JESUS' CHARACTER WAS REVEALED

Gethsemane is a spiritual place. Just the presence of the Garden of Gethsemane is a spiritual experience.

Here's why: Jesus prayed his most earnest prayer here. Jesus' character was molded and revealed here. Jesus was betrayed and arrested here. And people still come to the Church of All Nations that was built upon this site, because this was the place where the humanity and the divinity of Jesus collided ... just as they collide for us in the

important choices of our own lives, careers, and families.

This is a symbolic place where you may bring any conflict or problem, any experience that lifts or torments your soul. This is the place where the greatest prayers of your being intersect with the greatest prayers of the being of Jesus Christ.

COME TO THE GARDEN DURING LENT

I hope you will come into the sanctuary during Lent, and sit in the Garden of Gethsemane, and read this memory of Christ's moment of truth as a backdrop to your own *moment of truth*. You'll find the story in Matthew 26, and also in Mark 14. There is also a reference to "the garden" in John 18.

THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE PRAYER

Please join me in prayer as we bless this holy place.

**"Abba, Father,
all things are possible to thee;
remove this cup from me;
yet not what I will,
but let what You will be done." (Mark 14:36)**

REMEMBER THE ELEMENTS OF THIS PRAYER:

- Time alone with God.
- Acknowledgement that trials can strengthen us and teach us lessons.
- Time to be spiritually alert for the movement of God in our lives.
- Obedience - a hard word for our generation, but obedience, nonetheless, and willingness to sacrifice, to serve and to endure.

This is now holy ground because we have made it so. Treat it as such in the weeks ahead. Do not blaspheme, curse, or desecrate this garden where the human meets the holy.

A FAMILIAR DESTINATION

The garden is at the foot of the Mount of Olives just east of the gates to Jerusalem. Jesus must have been there many times that are not listed in scripture. I've been there a dozen times or more. You have to pass through it as you travel about the city. He knew right where it was; the road to

Bethany passes through the garden, and passes the trees and olive press.

THE OLIVE PRESS IN GLEN ELLEN

Another Lenten destination for your journey this month is the olive press in Glen Ellen. Tell the manager your minister visited with him one day about the processes of making olive oil products, and is advising the church members to stop in. I have some pictures of the Garden of Gethsemane to give him the next time I am in his store. He may be surprised when so many people from the Church of the Roses drop in, but he will not be disappointed. Tell him about me. I doubt that he will remember. But let's use the symbols that are available to us right here in our community, and the olive gardens are part of them.

I have some pictures of Gethsemane today that I will show you tonight if you will join me. It is a panorama of the Old City of Jerusalem with stops at those most significant places in Christendom. I have a computer panorama of the Garden of Gethsemane and a tour inside of the Church of All Nations that was build over the rock upon which tradition says that Jesus fell to his knees and prayed that God would guide him through the events that led him to the cross. This is the place where he was betrayed by Judas with a kiss, and this is the place where he was arrested. Following the prayer, the kiss, and the arrest, everything else that happened was inevitable.

NOW OUR STAGE IS SET

So now that the Garden is set as our stage for Lent this year, let me remind you in one sentence why it is so important. This was the place where Jesus made the greatest decision of his life, and it is the place where he revealed the core of his character.

ENOUGH

Today's lesson from the Garden is a single word, and the word is "enough." *Time enough, food enough, strength enough, punishment enough, abundance enough.* All of these come from the lips of Jesus. To these words add the challenging words of the time we are going through, "Let us not fear that we will not have what we need, instead that we should have more than enough and waste it."

WHAT IS ENOUGH?

Dr. Fred Craddock, a remarkable preacher from Georgia, says he was visiting in the home of his niece. There was this old greyhound, just like the ones who race around a track chasing those mechanical rabbits. His niece had taken the dog in

to prevent it from being destroyed because its racing days were over, and Dr. Craddock struck up a conversation with the greyhound:

I said to the dog, "Are you still racing?"
"No," he replied.
"Well, what was the matter? Did you get too old to race?"
"No, I still had some race in me."
"Well, what then? Did you not win?"
"I won over a million dollars for my owner."
"Well, what was it? Bad treatment?"
"Oh, no," the dog said. "They treated us royally when we were racing."
"Did you get crippled?"
"No."
"Then why?" I pressed. "Why?"
The dog answered, "I quit."
"You quit?"
"Yes," he said. "I quit."
"Why did you quit?"
"I just quit because after all that running and running and running, I found out that the rabbit I was chasing was not even real."

I don't know if this is a true story, but it is a story that contains the truth. I expect that most of us know just how that old greyhound felt. How many times have we gone around and around the track, chasing the false rabbit of success, only to discover that the real rabbit was under our nose, waiting to be discovered all along?

Lesson number one of Lent: "Be sure that the rabbit you are chasing is real."

ACRES OF DIAMONDS

In ancient Persia, a wealthy farmer leaves his home to seek even greater wealth, and spends his life in a fruitless search for a perhaps mythical diamond mine. Finally, as age and years of frustration take their toll, he throws himself into the sea and dies, an unhappy pauper far from home. Meanwhile, back at his estate, the new owner, surveying his vast acreage, sees something in a stream, something bright, glistening in the sunlight. It is a large diamond, and turns out to rest atop the fabulous Golconda mine.

Lesson number two: You may already be living with greater wealth than you realize. Remember what you have before you lament for what you do not.

Both of these cautionary tales come from a book by John Bogle, the well respected businessman who

founded the Vanguard Mutual Fund Group. The title of his book is *Enough*.

It asks some tough spiritual and financial questions.

He says that the excesses we are seeing in the financial world are indicators that Americans are not sure how much enough is.

How much is a professional baseball player worth? Is it more than a medical doctor? Is it more than a teacher, a farmer?

This question of enough impacts our values, our professional conduct, our leadership, our ideas of what constitutes success and failure.

So today as we gather in the garden, the simplest of all ideas:

- **What is enough?**
- **And does enough make us happy?**

THE SLIDER VOLUME CONTROL

One way to look at it would be to imagine a little control that I have on my stereo. It is a slider switch, and when you push it to the left the music is soft, and when you push it to the right the music gets louder.

If the position on the left is how much you need, then the position on the right would be how much you want. And the little slider can move between need and want.

So somewhere between what we need and what we want, let's hope we can find enough.

SOME HAVE LESS THAN ENOUGH

But as we think about "enough," what if you know someone who is off the scale, who lives below "enough?" I've talked to people who have neighbors who live below enough, and below needs. And as a church we need to be part of the safety net to those who fall below the level of basic need.

Abraham Maslov describes our levels of needs.

We have physical needs for food and shelter, sleep, regulation of bodily functions, air and water and elimination.

Above that needs for safety, and resources to live, and buy the things we need to survive physically.

Above that love, friendship, intimacy.

Above that, esteem and achievement.

Above that morality, creativity, and problem solving.

And with the meeting of these needs, time to consider the spiritual nature of life.

But how can spiritual people find time for God when they fall below the level of adequate food, shelter, water, and health?

THAT IS "ENOUGH" FOR TODAY

Next week I want to talk about the measures of enough: success, fame, and power, and compare them

with the standards that Christ sets for us.

Remember what we have done today:

- I have brought you to the garden.
- I have invited you to explore the lessons of the olive trees, the olive press, and the place where Jesus human and divine nature struggle with God.
- This is no less than the struggle of every person in this room.

So come back.

I ASKED GOD...

I asked for strength and God gave me difficulties to make me strong.

I asked for wisdom and God gave me problems to solve.

I asked for prosperity and God gave me brawn and brain to work.

I asked for courage and God gave me dangers to overcome.

I asked for patience; God placed me in situations where I was forced to wait.

I asked for love and God gave me troubled people to help.

I asked for favors and God gave me opportunities.

I received nothing I wanted;

I received everything I needed.

MY PRAYER HAS BEEN ANSWERED.

- **And think about the word "enough." Enough for you and enough for others.**

Some of our neighbors do not have enough, and we need to be more in tune with opportunities to let the light of our faith shine more than in recent memory.

And for ourselves, let us not fear that we will not have what we need, instead that we should have more than enough, more than we need, and waste it.



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