



Make It Simple

A Resource for Stewardship Education and Annual Response

Sharing Enough (Based on Philippians 4:11b-13)

Background thoughts

This Children's Sermon probes the concept of "enough" from children's viewpoint. An antidote to "MORE!" or worse, children's contentment with "enough" is a necessary skill in today's world.

This sermon, of course, stands as a direct contradiction to the massive advertising efforts aimed specifically at children. Cross-marketing yields children's clothing that is really advertising, and the barrage of messages at children's emerging identities is targeted at a major goal: Making children into consumers.

As you preach this sermon, be aware that it may also strike a chord with parents who are trying to find ways to lessen the effect of peer pressure, children's media, and perhaps unknown other influences that work against "God's enough." As is so often true, your audience for this "children's sermon" may very well be the entire congregation.

Reflections and questions

- Consider the vulnerability of children to the clever messages and media that come into their view each day. Who protects children?
- What part of children's daily life promotes being satisfied?
- How do children steeped in materialism learn to downshift into a mindset of less-is-more?
- What natural immaturities regarding "the good life" does "God's ENOUGH" question or even condemn?

Preparing for the Sermon

1. Write the Bible text for today's sermon onto a piece of writing paper and insert it into an envelope, as though a letter.
2. Prepare a number of briefcases, book bags, suitcases, and backpacks by filling them with heavy books. Write the word ENOUGH on each piece of baggage. Assemble these items—ideally, one piece of baggage per child—at the back of the church or off to one side of the nave.
3. Write the word ENOUGH on a small paper lunch bag, and put in a Bible, some money, a piece of communion bread and a large photo of a group of people. Place the bag on the altar.

Sermon: “God’s ENOUGH”

Today let's talk about enough. We use that word all the time. Did you get enough sleep? Do you get enough allowance? Do you have enough lunch?

ENOUGH is a huge word in our church. One of our biggest jobs as a church is to talk to each other about enough and figure out what God means by enough.

God teaches us about enough in Bible stories. God uses some helpers to teach us about enough. When God talks about enough it's about what we give, not just what we have.

In today's Bible passage, God's helper named Paul has written a letter to some church friends of his, the Philippians. Paul and the Philippians loved hanging out together at church. They were friends. They gave each other enough. Here's what Paul wrote in his letter to them. *(Open a real envelope, pull out the letter you have prepared earlier, and read the following.)*

Dear Philippians,

Thank you for sending me supplies and love. Now I'm sending you something. I'm sending you a secret that I have learned. It's a great secret. I have learned not to worry because God gives us what we need. God gives us enough to do God's work. And that's a lot of work. Try it. Ask God to show you “enough.”

Good luck! Paul

Hmmmm. Paul told his friends to ask God to show them ENOUGH. Let's take a walk to the back of the church; let's see what else we can learn together.

(Walk with children to the rear of the worship space. At the back are large suitcases, briefcases, or backpacks loaded with heavy books. Each suitcase has a sign that says ENOUGH on its side. Ideally there will be one suitcase per child.)

This looks familiar. Here's our idea of ENOUGH. God has some other ideas, but let's carry our "ENOUGH's" to the altar. *(Provide time for this. While walking back to the altar area, note how heavy these ENOUGH items seem to be!)*

(When everyone is back at the altar.) Let's put our "ENOUGH's" at God's altar. God will know what to do with it. I suspect that God has a plan to share "ENOUGH."

(Walk to the altar, remove the small lunch bag. It also says ENOUGH on its side.)

Here's God's idea of ENOUGH. *(With the children, look inside.)* There's a Bible, some money, a piece of communion bread, and a picture of people. But this is what God says we need. The word of God, the bread of life, people, and treasures to share. *(As though in semi-prayer)* Thanks, God. We'll see what we can do.

Let's pray.

God of ENOUGH, show us how to trust you and share you with others. Amen!

(Continue with this seeming afterthought.)

So who gets to carry ENOUGH back to their seat? There's only one lunch bag! Looks like we have to share God's ENOUGH. Maybe we could make God's ENOUGH work for everybody by putting it in the places where everyone could have enough: *(As an option, you might ask children to help you perform these sharing tasks.)*

- We could put the Bible next to the microphone so everyone could hear the Bible stories.
- We could put the coins in the offering plates so they go to feed hungry people.
- We could put the communion wafer here on the altar so it could be shared at communion this morning.
- We could put the picture of people lots of places—in the offering because our offerings are for people, by the baptismal font because God makes us God's people there, by the piano/organ because people sing to God there.

And what about the bag that says ENOUGH? Let's pass it around so each person can read it. Let's remind each other that God thinks we are enough. Like Paul, we are enough because God strengthens us. Maybe someone will even want to put something in God's ENOUGH bag. Maybe we'll be surprised together.

Let's pray again.

God of enough, help us to trust that we can do all things with the enough you give us. Amen!