



Make It Simple

A Resource for Stewardship Education and Annual Response

Sharing Enough

Philippians 4:11b-13 I have learned to be content with whatever I have. I know what it is to have little, and I know what it is to have plenty. In any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of being well-fed and of going hungry, of having plenty and of being in need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

What does “contentment” feel like? This is a difficult question in our current culture. When surveys have asked “How much is enough?” responses have consistently been “Twenty percent more than I have now.” If that is true, how do we break the endless circle that this leads us toward—it is always “twenty percent more.” We are told over and over every day—“You don’t have enough...What you have is fragile and could be gone at any moment...You have to go get more!” These messages come from a world focused on scarcity.

In this setting how do we understand our relationship with God? God is creator—we are God’s creatures. How do we live in relationship with our creator? Martin Luther reminds us in his explanation of the First Article of the Apostles’ Creed “that God has created me and all that exists...God daily and abundantly provides...all the necessities and nourishment for this body and life...out of pure, fatherly, and divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness of mine at all!” It is in this relationship that we recognize that God has abundantly provided us with all that we need. Living in that abundance we give of the blessings we have received.

If we focus on the scarcity, we never have enough. When we focus on God’s abundant blessings, there is more than we can ever imagine. Recognizing God’s abundant blessings we experience Paul’s message to the Philippians in our own lives. We can be content with what we have because we know that we are blessed and can “do all things through him who strengthens us.”