

Enough is our Concordia University Texas theme for the 2023-2024 academic year.

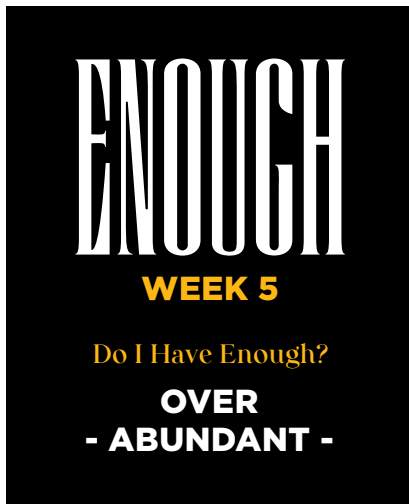
One of the best feelings I know is the safety of being provided for. I made a decision when I was 16 to work at a camp across the country for the summer. Though I was aware of the big decision I'd made, it wasn't until I started the trip there that the fears and apprehensions deeply set in (Kendra Theimer here). I wouldn't know anybody when I arrived, I'd never worked at a camp before, and I was younger than everybody by a wide gap! Never have I felt more ill-equipped for a situation, and in a freeing way, never have I felt more at the mercy of God's plan for me. When I lacked relationships and support, I was soon met with loving people and deep friendships. When I felt insecure and incompetent, I was continually built up and encouraged by kind counsel. It was an exhausting and challenging summer, but I felt so loved by the end of it that I could hardly imagine the fear and emptiness I started with. God's power is made perfect in our weakness; He knows exactly what we need and is more than able to provide.

NOTES: _____

READ
Philippians 4:10-23

Paul writes this letter to the church in Philippi while imprisoned in Rome for teaching Christ's message, in which he mentions the nature of Christ and what it means to live as a Christian. This nature is through Christ's perfect modeled humility, laying down His life, and the righteousness that comes through the gift of faith in Him. At this time, Paul was awaiting trial under an increasingly berserk Nero Caesar, and the prospect of execution impeded him. Evident in this last chapter is the letter's two-fold function.

First, it is a as a big thank you to the Philippians for sending aid to Paul with Epaphroditus, and secondly it is an overall expression of gratitude for the prevailing provision of God. Paul is greatly encouraged by the concern that this small group of Christians has shown him, and praises God for the ability to be comforted and content despite circumstances that surround him and his ministry. These circumstances include resisting forces and persecution, but also perhaps fear and apprehension that sneaks up on him from time to time! He goes on to testify that "my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19 NIV).



QUESTIONS

to discuss:

1. Consider a time when you were lacking something and needed provision. Was there something/somebody to provide for you? Was it what you expected?
2. Is it difficult for you to ask for help? If so, what makes it difficult?
3. One of Paul's big provisions came in the form of an offering sent from the church in Phillippi, for which he rejoices! Think about ways that Christ's sacrifice and constancy enables us to provide for others.

¹⁰ I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me. You were indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity. ¹¹ Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. ¹² I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. ¹³ I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

¹⁴ Yet it was kind of you to share my trouble. ¹⁵ And you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving, except you only. ¹⁶ Even in Thessalonica you sent me help for my needs once and again. ¹⁷ Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that increases to your credit. ¹⁸ I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. ¹⁹ And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. ²⁰ To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen. ²¹ Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brothers who are with me greet you. ²² All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household. ²³ The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

- Mark 8:1-10

DIG DEEPER

(now, later, alone, in a group):

Paul outlines a special kind of gift from God in verses 11-13. Reread these verses, then consider the following. In Paul's suffering, he has learned to be content with very little as God is his source of strength. Joy, peace, and patience are fruits of the Spirit we recognize a lot as Christians.

1. What might contentment look like in your life?
2. Are there specific circumstances where you can practice that type of contentment?



PRAYER:

Lord, thank you for providing for your children by offering the gift of your Son, Jesus. That is our richness. Help us to see your great love for us in all things and live according to your will, that we would turn to you in our weakness and love others in your name. When we think we have enough, Jesus, you are even more. In Jesus Name, Amen.

