



FAMILY

DECEMBER 10, 2023

Giving Is Like a Muscle



IF you want to grow a muscle, you must know your current ability and go a little beyond it. That's the only way to strengthen a muscle.

Recall my story of doing push-ups?

Last year, I realized I was going to grow older and weaker unless I did something about it. Doctors say the moment we hit 50, we lose 1.5% of our muscle mass every year. So, I started doing push-ups.

How many? One.

Because that was all I could do. And for the next seven days, I did one solitary, embarrassing, arms-shaking-like-toothpicks,

push-up. But on the eighth day, I made two push-ups. I just kept adding, pushing the boundaries of my capacity.

Today, I can do 40+ push-ups in one go. Who would have thought that an unathletic old bloke like me could do that?



This applies to giving too.

Because love is the core metric of the Kingdom, we should never be content with our level of generosity. Let's keep stretching it.

Please know that your actual capacity to give and your perceived capacity to give are different. You will never know your actual capacity unless you regularly challenge your perceived capacity.

May your dreams come true,

Bo Sanchez

WELCOME
to our ongoing series:
PLENTY: How To Live
in God's Radical Generosity
Talk 5: **God Wants To Give You**
the Gift of Radical Giving



Push up! Push Back!



“BE still and know that I am God...”

Fr. Bob McConaghy started his homily in last Sunday’s Feast with this line in Psalm 46:10. *Be still*, so we can follow last Sunday’s Gospel teaching to be watchful for the coming of the Lord. But Fr. Bob said it would be difficult to be *still* amid the noise of this Merry Christmas season, *page 3*.

Well, it’s also the season of bingeing on yummy Christmas buffets. So, if you don’t want all those calories staying in your tummy, don’t be *still*. Do some push-ups as you can see Bro. Bo Sanchez is doing, *page 1*. He demonstrates *giving*—which we are also doing a lot this gift season—is like, *yes*, doing push-ups. How? Learn in today’s Talk 5 of *Plenty*, our ongoing Feast series.

Bro. John Ben Rodriguez also talked about buffets in last Sunday’s Talk 4 of *Plenty*. Not so much about eating a lot—but about not having enough of the buffet spread because the guy ahead of him in the line took all his favorite Salmon Sashimi! And Bro. JB pointed out it’s the same with other buffets of life—there is enough for everyone, but how come there seems to be not enough? *Flashback* starts on *page 16*.



In our *Mercy Ministries* section, we are not doing push-ups. More of pushing back down memory lane as we celebrate highlights of our *Mercy 2023*. Be inspired again by the sharing of Krissan Medilo, our Pag-asa ng Pamilya scholar, *page 36*,

We can do push-ups or push-backs. And we can be *still* as we venerate the reason for the season—Jesus coming to us in a manger.

All for God’s Glory,

Randy Borromeo
Media Ministry
Executive Director





FLASHBACK!

DECEMBER 3, 2023

Holy Mass

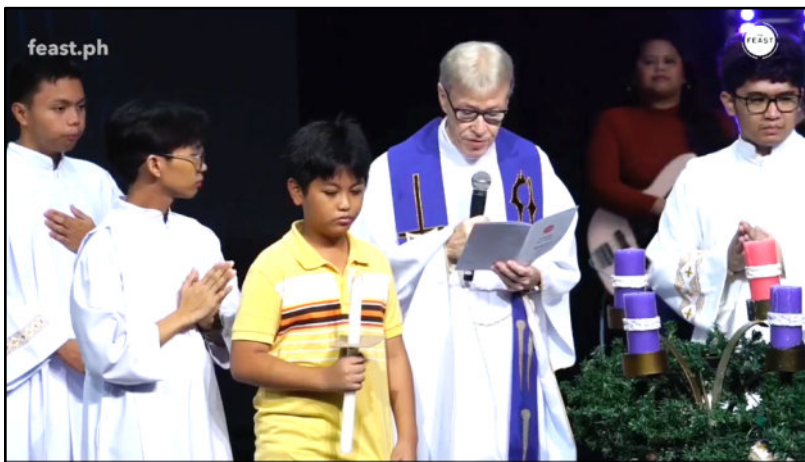


**CELEBRANT
REV. FR. BOB McCONAGHY**



FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Lighting of the First Candle of the Advent Wreath



FATHER, we ask you to bless this wreath which reminds us that your love for us goes on and on without any end. Yes, you love us so much that you give us the gift of Your Son Jesus. So, help us to prepare our hearts to celebrate His coming on Christmas Day.



As we light these candles help us remember that Christ is the only Light that can melt away the darkness in the world.

Please help us to keep His Light on our hearts by being ready to love You in the persons next to us. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.



Father, as we begin our Advent Pilgrimage we light the candle of hope. Grant us the courage to hope for Your Presence, hope for Your Peace, hope for Your Promise. So, we light our first candle.



Homily



REV. FR. BOB McCONAGHY

on the Gospel

Mark 13:33-37

The Son of Man Coming in Glory

Excerpts...

SILENCE. There should be noise. But in a quiet sense, our Lord says, “Be still and know that I am God...”

And that’s how we become watchful. Be still.

During these next three weeks, it’s going to be very difficult to be still.

And there’s going to be a lot of noise, a lot of beautiful noise. The noise of the office Christmas party. The noise of getting together for a coffee date. The noise of going to a mall and fighting the traffic. The noise of getting together on Christmas Day with relatives and perhaps traveling to see them.

There will be a lot of noise—a beautiful noise—in these next three weeks.

Only one problem... The last word of the Gospel: *watch*.

Watch. You see, when we are getting ready for Christmas, the celebrator, Jesus Himself, is saying: *How about a coffee date with me? How about a gift for me? Will you spend some time with me as you do with your relatives and friends?*

That’s the *watch* part. To be still and know that He is God.

Maybe these next three weeks, for 10 minutes, at the end of the day, after all the noise of the day passed by, and your mind is filled with things you still have to do... Put them aside and just go to your room, or even better yet, an adoration chapel where our Lord is Present there in the Eucharist. And just *be*.

Be yourself with Him. You won’t think about the gifts you will receive and the gifts that you will give. But think of the gifts that you already have and express your gratitude to Jesus for them. In those first few minutes of quiet.

Then, simply say, “*Lord, on a busy day, lot of noise out there, I need simply to be still and be with You. All thoughts will come to my mind. I’ll dismiss them-- simply by saying Your Name: Jesus. And I’ll connect with You every night for the next three weeks. So that come Simbang Gabi (Evening Mass) and come Christmas, it’s going to have the deepest meaning possible.*”



You Can Begin Again

Because you see, Advent is about beginning again. If I look now at this past year of my life, which started on New Year's Eve... I ask: Do I have a deeper relationship with this Jesus that I worship at The Feast every Sunday? Do I feel as though I can complain when I need to complain to Him?

You know, 42% of the Psalms are complaint Psalms? Do I feel as though I can really be myself and not edit my prayer? Or do I feel during this last year that maybe I'd given Jesus my spare time? And my soul small change?

The beautiful thing about the first Sunday of Advent is the realization that no matter what this past year had been for you—whether it had been a lot of joy or a lot of suffering-- you can always begin again. Begin again by being still with Him.



First Reading: Isaiah 63:16B-17, 19B; 64:2-7

^{16B} You are our Father, O Lord our Redeemer. Your name is beyond all ages.¹⁷ Why have you allowed us to stray from your ways, O Lord? Why have you hardened our heart, so that we do not fear you? Return, for the sake of your servants, the tribes of your inheritance.^{19B} Oh, that you would rend the heavens and come down, with the mountains quaking before you, while you wrought awesome deeds we could not hope for, such as they had not heard of from of old.² They would melt, as if thoroughly burned by fire. The waters would burn with fire, so that your name might be made known to your enemies, so that the nations would be stirred up before your face.³ From ages past, they have not heard it, and they have not perceived it

with the ears. Apart from you, O God, the eye has not seen what you have prepared for those who await you.⁴ You have met with those who rejoice in doing justice. By your ways, they will remember you. Behold, you have been angry, for we have sinned. In this, we have continued, but we will be saved.⁵ And we have all become like the unclean. And all our justices are like a rag of menstruation. And we have all fallen away, like a leaf. And our iniquities have carried us away, like the wind.⁶ There is no one who calls upon your name, who rises up and holds fast to you. You have concealed your face from us, and you have crushed us with the hand of our own iniquity.⁷ And now, O Lord, you are our Father, yet truly, we are clay. And you are our Maker, and we are all the works of your hands.

Responsorial Psalm
Lord, make us turn to You; let us see Your face
and we shall be saved

Best Gift for Jesus

Second, what do you give to Someone—Jesus—who already has everything?

The most expensive gift that you can give to Jesus for Christmas is the gift of your grudges—little grudges, big grudges—those things we keep inside and want to get revenge for. And so these grudges are kind of like a car. They're fueled by anger and driven by pride.

Pray: *"Lord, I'm going to give You my grudges. I'm going to forgive persons that I haven't been able to forgive during this whole past year. Those against whom I want to get revenge-- so that they feel the same pain I felt."*

And Jesus is saying: *Let it go.*

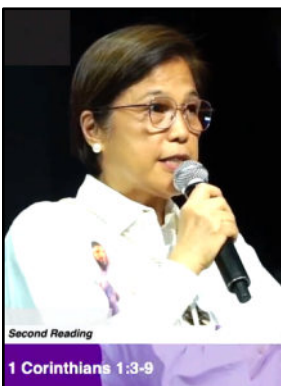
Maybe you can't approach them right away. Maybe they've been harmful to you and are dangerous to you. But if you simply say in that Quiet Presence: "I forgive him. I forgive her..." They are forgiven.

So, if you have an opportunity to say, "I'm sorry," or "I forgive you," you will already have done it in that Quiet Prayer. And once you say, "I forgive him, I forgive her, Lord," then they are forgiven.

And so you don't want to hang on to being their spiritual and emotional slave. Because you see when you don't forgive people, they got you. Especially somebody you don't like. Somebody who doesn't even want your forgiveness.

They got you. And you build a prison, and you stay in that prison, and you don't let yourself out because you're holding onto this heavy sack of rocks.

Give that grudge to Jesus.



Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

Brothers and sisters: ¹ Grace to you, and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. ² I give thanks to my God always for you, for the grace of God that is given you in Christ Jesus, ³ That in all things you are made rich in him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge; ⁴ As the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you, ⁵ So that nothing is wanting to you in any grace, waiting for the manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁶ Who also will confirm you unto the end without crime, in the day of the coming of our Lord

Jesus Christ. ⁷ God is faithful: by whom you are called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.



Be Not Afraid

And finally, a good way to begin again is by going to the Sacrament of Confession. You may have been away a long time. You may have committed some embarrassing sins. You may not have been able to forgive yourself for what you've done. Or maybe you're just afraid to approach because...“What is the priest going to say to me?”

Be not afraid. All the priests that hear confessions here at The Feast know not to lecture you, know not to ask you too many questions, know not to give you a hard time. But they know that God's grace was the first move in your heart that sent you there. And so, the priest is there to encourage you so that you leave the Sacrament of Confession today -- or whenever you go in these next few weeks-- with great joy. Knowing, again, that you can begin again.

I'm going to leave tomorrow night or Tuesday night, I think. It is for the States, and I go to Bethlehem, the Christmas City in Pennsylvania. And there I will be for Christmas. But I can't think of any way that I would rather finish up here at The Feast for this year than the two hours—10 a.m. to 12 noon—that I'm going to be hearing Confessions today.

And so, be not afraid. You can begin. And this Christmas can be the best Christmas ever.

So, be still and know He is God.

Merry Christmas!

Welcome!



BRO. JOHN BEN RODRIGUEZ:

Hallelujah! Keep praising God! Come on! Come on! Thank You, Jesus!

If you feel that God is here today, I want you to offer a big, big smile to the person beside you. And tell that person, “I’m so happy you are here!”

Imagine: It’s already December. The climate is so cool that it’s great to sleep and stay in bed. But you all chose to get up, take a bath even if the water is cold—because you want to be here. It’s because you want to experience something better than a restful, long sleep on a Sunday. You want the real rest that comes from Jesus and experiencing His Presence.

If you did that today, can you clap your hands for yourself? Amen.

So, welcome to The Feast where you are loved. My name is JB Rodriguez. Are there first-timers here? There you are! Welcome!

After The Feast, stay a while. Come forward, we want to shake your hands and pray for you. Also, we have a special gift for you.

We hope that you make this your home and we hope you will be blessed today.

Those watching online, if this is your first time to join us, we also hope that you make The Feast your spiritual home weekly. Please do come and join us here.

Who attended the Feast Conference? Whohoo! Who attended the FEASTCON Grand Feast?

Can you say it was an amazing and blessed event? Amen!

My favorite was the message that we are all pillars of the Church. If you are a pillar, it means that you are the foundation of the Church. You are important. What you do matters. So, your being here matters.

Like what Fr. Bob said, you’re giving to build the Church-- and the Kingdom of God matters.

So, don’t ever think that you don’t matter.



The FEAST FAMILY December 10, 2023 9

Love Offering

Today, I'm also inspired to share with you that some generous servants did something inspiring. We have two servants-- Cecille and Nelson-- who are working in a school located in Molino, Bacoor, Cavite. The school's name is Creative Education for Life Learning (CELL).



Creative Education for Life Learning

And our Feast servants who are employees in that school started a Feast there. They have inspired Grade 6 students in that school to hold a fund drive and the beneficiary is our Awesome Kids Ministry. The Grade 6 students collected items the Ministry can use.

The students are here. Please stand up. Thank you for your generosity.



Everybody, let's applaud them.

What Matters

Generosity is flowing in God's House.

So, along that line, Brothers and Sisters, I'd like to invite you to stand up.

I want to thank every one of you because by doing this consistently-- tithing every month, writing down your prayers-- you are a pillar in God's Kingdom. When you do this, it matters. Because it blesses lives. It changes the trajectory of the people.

So, can you smile while you're holding your envelope? Take pride. Because God is smiling on your generosity.



Father, Thank You for this blessing. I pray that every hand holding an envelope offering to You receives immense grace. Lord, they have needs, they have worries. But I know that they are cooperating with Your Will. And where their capability stops, Your miracle begins. You will be with them. Their prayers will be answered. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

THE FEAST

Ways to Give
Help us continue this ministry

UnionBank
The Builder of the Light of Jesus Family
Mega Manila Feast Bay Area, Inc.
000-4000-24846

BDO
Light of Jesus Family Mega Manila, Inc.
003970143807

GCash
For GCash, and Online Giving visit:
thefeastpiccam.com/commit

Worship!

EXHORTATIONS



BRO. LEONARD OSTIA: We invite everyone to please stand as we come into Worship.

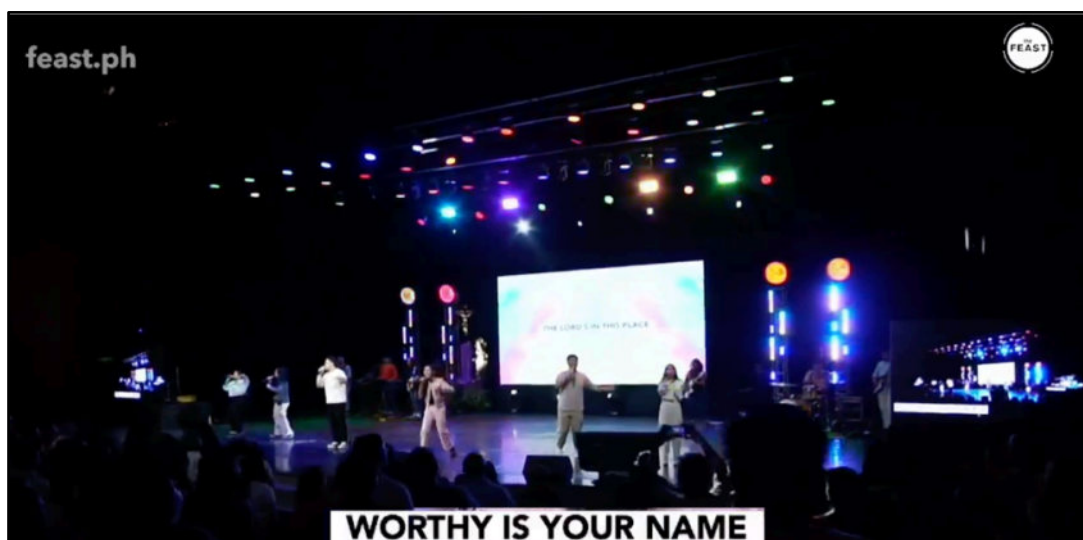
You know, let us all be glad and rejoice because the Presence of God is here with us today!

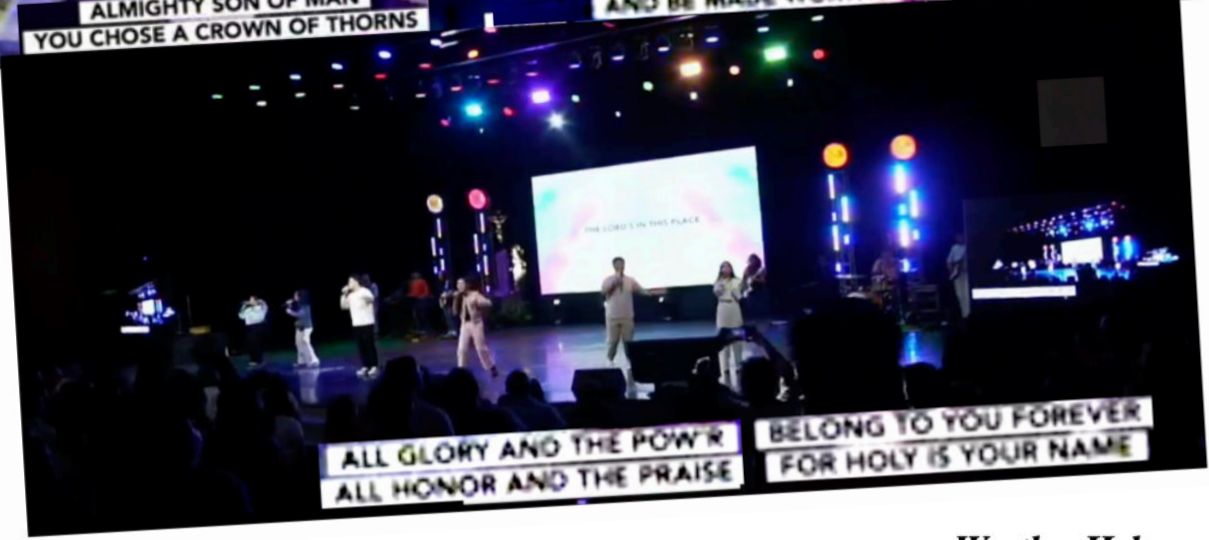
So, as we sing praise and glory to Him in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, let's worship!

SIS. ANNA DIMAANO

Lord, we know you are here. We know that You're listening. And so, we lift our voices. We lift our hearts. We lift everything that we have for You. For You alone are deserving of all our praises.

Come on, as our church, we sing *Worthy!*





Worthy, Holy
Feast Worship
By Vernon Lim
and Feast Music



BRO. JOHN BEN RODRIGUEZ:

Almighty Father, we come to You with hearts open. With expectant hearts, Father, we believe that You are God who answers prayers. You are God who causes miracles to happen in our lives. You are God who will let us end our 2023 joyfully. Because You are with us.

And today, Father, in gratitude, we want to say Thank You for everything that you have done for the entire year. We want to Thank You for everything that You are still to do in the remaining days of the year. And we want to Thank You not just for 2023 but also for the days ahead, the years ahead.

Eternity is set up for us because of Your victory on the Cross. No amount of shame, no amount of hurt, no amount of sin, no amount of fear, no amount of worry, no amount of anything in this world can take away Your goodness.


That's why we say Holy, Hallelujah, You are good!. You are our King. And we will continue to declare that You are God. Amen. And we sing...



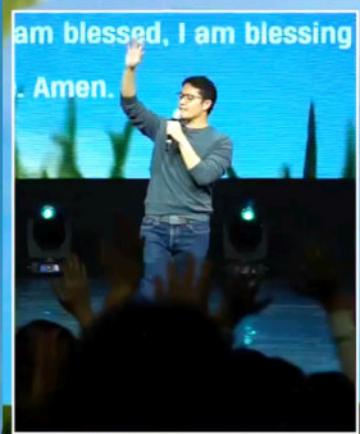
Praise You, Jesus. Thank You, God. You are King. You are victorious. Hallelujah!
Thank You, Father. Thank You, God.

NOVENA TO GOD'S LOVE DECLARATION OF ABUNDANCE


Now, we lift our hands as we pray our favorite Prayer:

feast.ph 


Today, I receive all of God's love for me.
Today, I open myself to the unbounded, limitless,
overflowing abundance of God's universe.
Today, I open myself to God's blessings, healing,
and miracles.



I am blessed, I am blessing
Amen.

feast.ph 

Today, I open myself to God's Word
so I become more like Jesus every day.
Today, I proclaim that I am God's Beloved.
I am God's Servant. I am God's Powerful
Champion.
And because I am blessed, I am blessing the
world.
In Jesus' name. Amen.



Talk



BRO. JOHN BEN RODRIGUEZ:

The message for Talk 4 today is this: *Trust His Generosity*.

Who among you has already eaten at a buffet event? Probably in a hotel restaurant. And as you know, in a buffet, some items are in demand. It could be the steak. It could be the Lechon. In the Japanese section, it could be the Salmon Sashimi.

My wife and I, we love the Salmon Sashimi. So, one time, we were eating at this buffet, and we knew that this item was in demand. So, we lined up already because the serving plate was freshly refilled. I was fourth in the line. When the third person was already getting the Salmon Sashimi, I noticed that he was kind of excited. He was taking everything!

I was telling myself, "We love Salmon Sashimi..."

Imagine me already excited, waiting for my turn-- I was already mixing my soy sauce with Wasabi on the side, and a little calamansi ... But when it was already my turn, there was no more Salmon Sashimi!

And I became furious. I hated that person. How dare he... My God! He did not leave some for me. He could always go back if he wanted some more because the serving plate would be refilled.





Scarcity vs. Abundance

Why am I sharing this? Because I believe that God designed Life in Abundance. There are blessings all around.

But sometimes, scarcity happens. And scarcity is mostly man-made. Some grab, some take advantage, others don't allow you to receive the blessing for you.

Has it happened to you in real life? At a buffet? Or maybe in your office – credit was taken away from you. You did all the work and someone took credit.

But God is reminding you today that there's no scarcity. His supply will never run out. I think that's the problem with people today. Even if there is abundance everywhere people only see scarcity.

So, they scheme, struggle, and squabble, constantly. They grab.

Even if there is abundance everywhere, people only see scarcity--so they scheme, struggle, and squabble constantly.

And you know what? today we will learn that thinking in scarcity creates enemies. Because when I see scarcity, the next time I'm at a buffet, even if there's someone behind me, I will get everything because that's my share. That's scarcity thinking. And when others do that to you, that's scarcity thinking also. And you create enemies—enemies that must not be there in the first place if you have the right mindset of abundance.

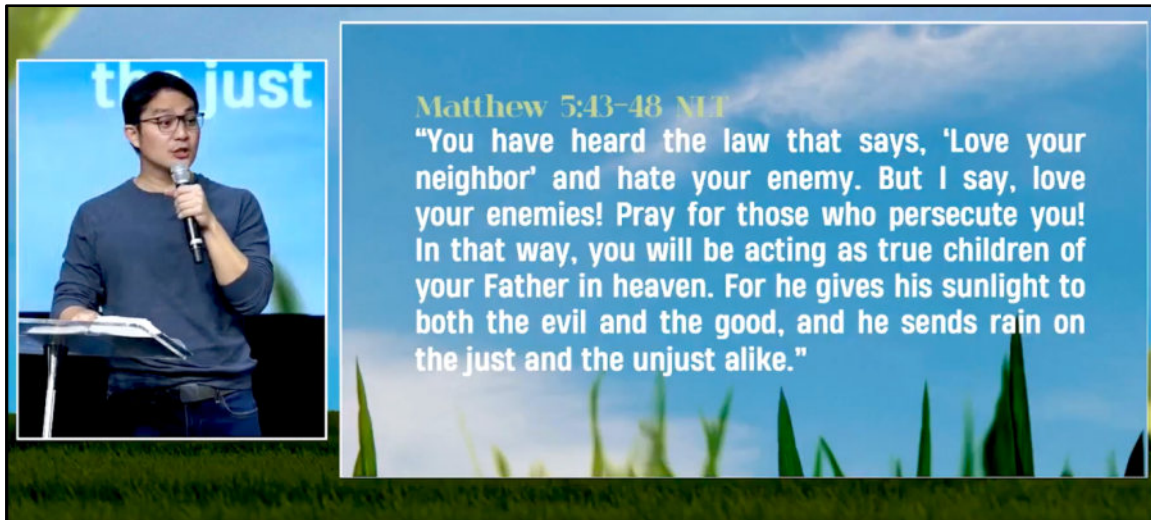
Thinking in scarcity creates enemies.

Do you have enemies? Today, Jesus God will teach us how to handle our enemies.

Let's praise the Lord today and sing:

*Thy Word is a Lamp
unto my feet
And a Light unto
my path.*



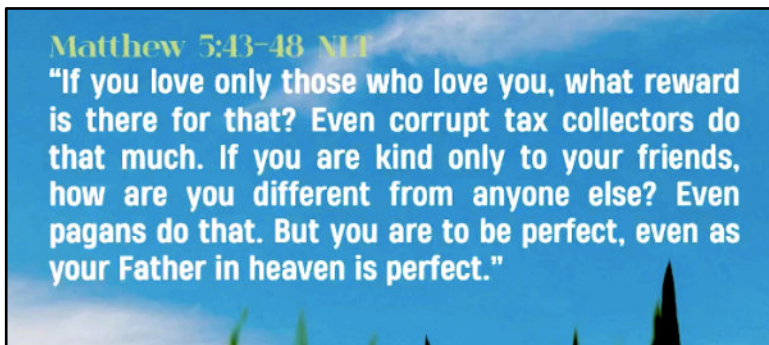


Tough Call

So, we're reading a passage today from Matthew 5: 43-48.

I know some of you are already saying, "May we skip that part? May we go to the good part?"

But we must follow it. Let's continue:



It's a tough call.
 Lord, may we love just those who are lovely? Just ignore the enemies? ☺ So, I'll have peace of mind?

Why love our enemies? We must. God is inviting you to do that today.

And later on, you'll know why in our talk.



Put your hand on your heart. Let's pray:
Jesus, teach me to trust in Your goodness even when things seem unfair. You are bigger. You are in control. And most of all, You love me. Amen.

Let's raise our hands to the Word of God:

*Thy Word is a Lamp unto my feet
 And a Light unto my path.*

Bible Teachings Misinterpreted

We have so many practical lessons in the passage that we read today.

But before we do that, may I indulge you in something? May we be Bible nerds a bit? I know you have been enjoying this Talk because this has been our journey in The Feast. Now we are going deeper.

And I want you to applaud yourselves because if you have been here since January, you have already completed the five books of the *Torah*. We've journeyed through them the entire year. I am excited because the context of the passage we are reading is very rich. Let's dig deeper so you'll appreciate this series more.

By the way, we have a Bible Nerds podcast. If you want deeper knowledge about the Bible, go, listen to it, find it on Spotify. Bro Bene, Tisha, Mon, Bro. Mike Vinas, and Bro. Bo Sanchez are there. They are writing the talks now based on a deep understanding of the Bible. Let's applaud them for what they're doing because they are blessing us. My faith has deepened since that deep dive into the *Torah*.

So, let's go...

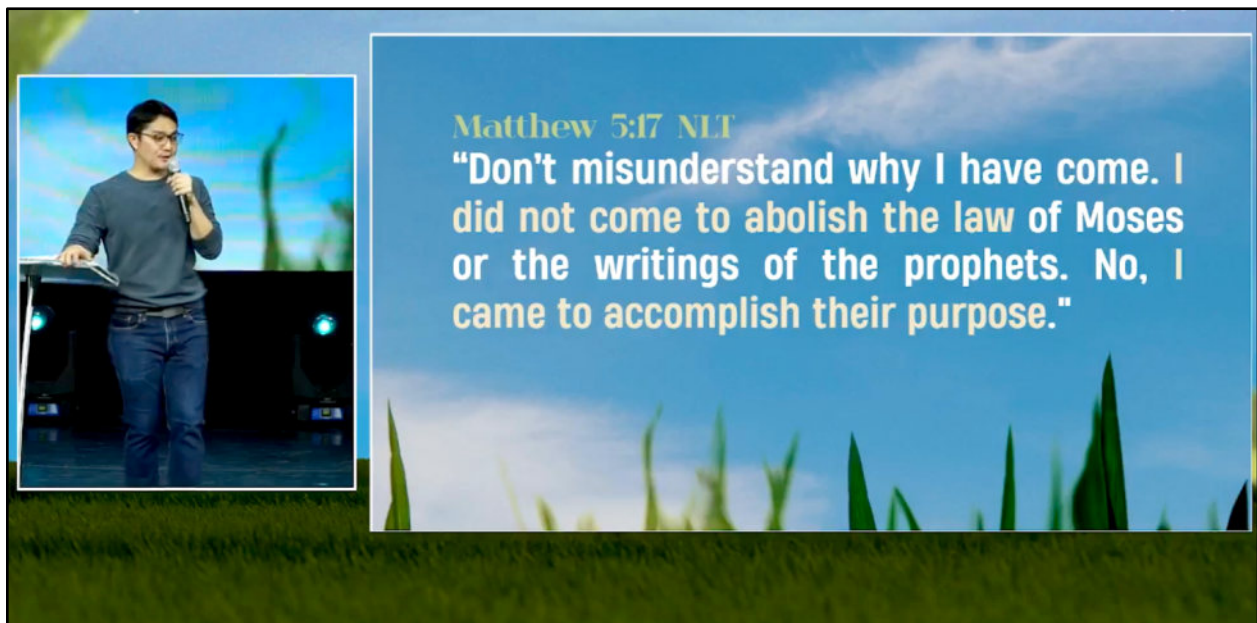
The passage that we read is part of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. The Sermon was the first official preaching of Jesus after the Temptation in the Desert. His Desert experience was preparing Him to preach to thousands and it was the beginning of His Ministry. So, one issue Jesus addressed in His Sermon on the Mount was the way that Jews were misinterpreting the teachings.

We married people don't like misinterpretations of communication with our spouse. Because it means trouble.

That was what was happening—the people were misinterpreting the *Torah*. So, here, in Matthew 5, you will notice that Jesus is saying, several times, as we heard earlier, the words *You have heard what the law says...*

He was quoting and hyperlinking Old Scripture from the *Torah*, and then saying something revolutionary after. Because He was trying to correct the misinterpretation: *Hey, this was the original teaching but you're understanding it in a different way.*





Misinterpretations

One misinterpretation is about *murder*.

Jesus told them: *You have heard that you must not commit murder. It's part of the Ten Commandments. (Thou shall not kill). But I say to you, if you are angry at someone, that is tantamount to murder.*

Another is *adultery (Thou shall not covet thy neighbor's wife)*.

Jesus told them: *If you are committing lustful thoughts about a woman, then you are committing adultery in your mind.*

So, He was revolutionizing the way the teachings were first understood.

His intro to the Sermon on the Mount was Matthew 5:17 (*above*).

Another term used was *essence*. Jesus was trying to teach that more than the letter of the law, what is its *essence*? What is the true meaning?

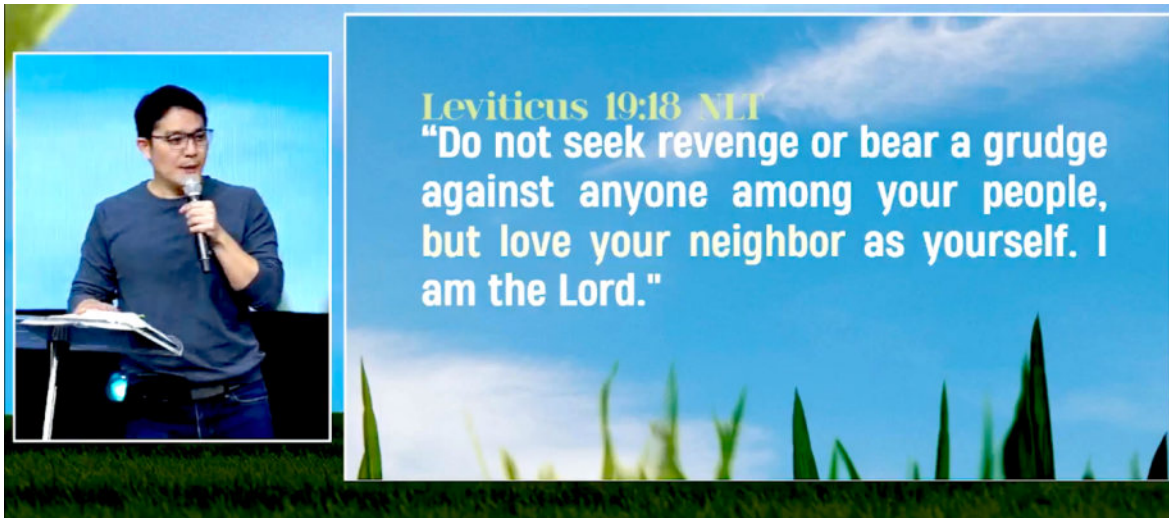
If we go back to the teaching *Love your neighbor and hate your enemy...*

Have you heard *love your neighbor* before? Yes. In Leviticus 19:18.

Have you heard *hate your enemy* before? This is not familiar:

'Love your neighbor' and hate your enemy.

Because *hate your enemy* was not in *Leviticus*. But why did Jesus say that?



Jesus Teaches the Right Way

This is the original verse (*above*). See, there's no *hate your enemy*.

But Jesus was trying to tell the people: Hey, because you've been telling each other *love your neighbor and hate your enemy*... we learned that in Talk 2: the Enemy was trying to change the definition of what is good and bad. So, for the Jews, they think that because *Leviticus* says that *anyone among your people, love your neighbor-- so, therefore, if they are not part of our people, we are not required to love them*.

So, they did not love the others and went into wars with them. Because they believed that God was okay with that.

But Jesus was trying to change that thinking. He said *loving your neighbor* includes *others*—even those not part of your circle. You will love them even if they are not your *type*, even if they are irritating, even if you don't *feel* them.

And Jesus continued:

But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you! In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven.

This is what Jesus was teaching as the right way: Do not exclude them. Do not ignore them.

Because it is easy to say, "Pray for your enemies." I can easily say, "Yes, Lord, I will pray for their demise. I want them to suffer."

Because sometimes you really feel that way. "I don't feel that they deserve prayers of blessings."

Jesus Points to Nature

I love that Jesus said:

For he gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good, and he sends rain on the just and the unjust alike.



Have you noticed something?

Even in our Talk 1, when Jesus wanted to illustrate *plenty*, and illustrate the character of His Father, where did He point to?

He pointed to Nature. Because Nature, the creation of Nature, reveals

the identity and design of God. So, when the person worried about lack, Jesus told the person: Look at the birds, they do not work. God feeds them. Look at the lilies. They do nothing but they are dressed with beautiful flowers.

But you might be saying, “Bro. JB, the birds, they don’t have electric bills, right? So, I’m tempted to look at the bills.”

God is saying, “Look at the birds and do not worry.”

He’s not saying, “Look at the birds and imitate them. Do not work.”

God is just saying, “If I can provide for the birds, why can’t I provide for you? You are more important than a bird.”

So, at this time, Jesus was pointing to Nature again. He said that the sunlight shines on both good and evil, the just and the unjust alike. Meaning, God provides for everyone. There is enough supply for everyone. You need not fear even if you have enemies.

Would you agree with me that our general feeling is bad people should experience bad things? We all want that. Do you agree?

Who watched *Avengers 1*—the first *Avengers* movie?

You know, the scene I love very much? The scene between Loki and Hulk.

“I am God,” Loki said.

And what did Hulk do? He pulled Loki up like a rag doll and smashed him on the floor.

And I was so thrilled, I was telling Loki, “Buti nga sa iyo. -- Serves you right!”

We want our enemies to suffer like that.

Like the Salmon Sashimi Issue...

Our insane logic:

When God blesses us when we don't deserve it,
He's being generous;
But when God blesses others who don't deserve it,
He's being unfair.

This is our insane logic. When God blesses us, we don't deserve it—He's being generous. But when God blesses others who don't deserve it, we say He is being unfair.

Admit it. That's how you feel.

But I want to proclaim the truth to you today. God loves every sinner. You and me included. Amen.

So, the next time you are in your office and your most hated colleague comes in with a brand-new LV (Louis Vuitton) bag, Jimmy Choo shoes, and she's glowing with a tan because she had a recent trip in Boracay-- with her foreigner boyfriend...

And she says, "Good morning, I got promoted!"

You know this person lies, manipulates, claws her way around, even sucking up to the bosses to gain their favor.

And you say beneath your breath, "Lord, it's okay that she has an LV. Okay she's wearing Jimmy Choo shoes. Okay she went to Boracay. Okay she got promoted. But Lord, *why* does she have a boyfriend and I don't? She even has an *ex*--me, I don't. Waaa!"

You need to catch yourself. That's scarcity thinking. You're making an enemy.

Because you're saying, "Lord, she got all the blessings, then there must be none left for me."

Like the Salmon Sashimi I was talking about earlier. But always be reminded that the supply is unlimited.

So, my question to you today is this: Do you want to break free from that scarcity mindset? Do you want it?

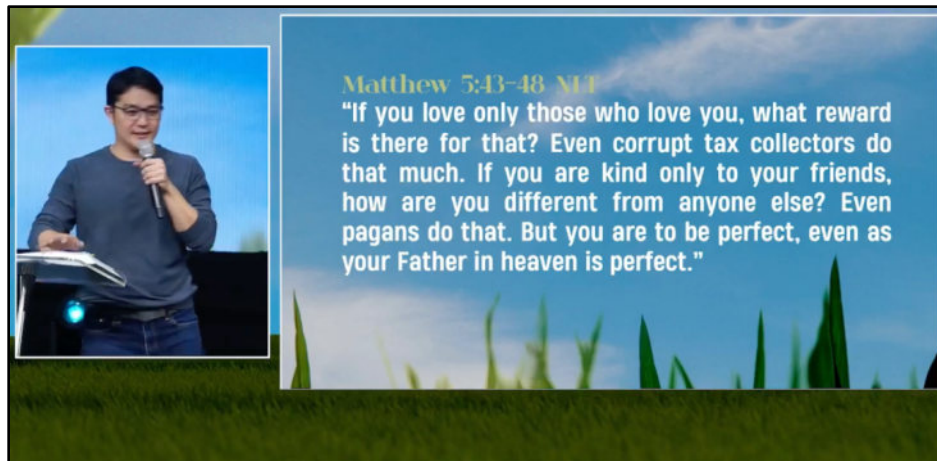
Then follow what Jesus is saying.



Truth:

God loves every sinner. You and me included.

Do you want to break
free from a scarcity
mindset?



God's Call

This is God's higher call for us. God is calling you to Perfection.

Most of us have difficulty grasping the idea of perfection and the command here. Even I-- when I was reading this-- I told God, "Lord, I cannot be perfect."

You want to know why?

I make mistakes. And if you ask the husbands here, they will disagree because they will say, Bro. JB my wife is perfect. She's perfectly beautiful, she's perfectly angelic and kind-- when she is sleeping. But do not mess with her when she's awake. You will meet the dragon.

Perfection is difficult for us because we think that it means not making a mistake. So, we don't even try because we know that somewhere along the way, we will make mistakes.

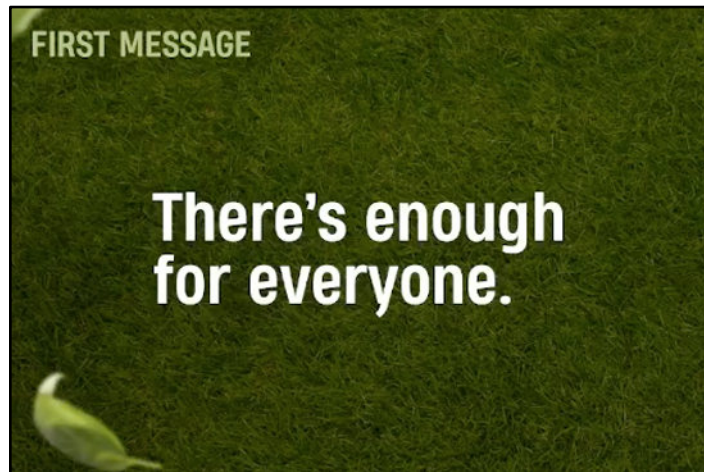
But I love that we're teaching you here that the Bible we are reading is an English translation already. It is derived from the original Hebrew and Greek.

And look at the Greek word for *perfect*: *teleioi* which means *without gap* or *whole*. In another translation, it means *complete*.

Greek word for perfect: *Teleioi*, which means *without gap* or *whole*.

So, God is not asking you to be perfect by following Him – because it is impossible. God is asking you to be *whole*. And *complete* by following Him. Would you agree with me that you can be complete and whole even if you're making mistakes? Amen. Because that is what Jesus is doing, and that's God's invitation for you.

That is why you can fail in loving your enemies but you can try again—until you become *whole*.



Different Kids' Game

So, let's go back to my buffet analogy, and let's learn the practical lessons here.

The First Message of our passage today is this: *There is enough for everyone.*

There was this researcher who did a study in one remote tribe in Africa. So, when the anthropologist was already done with his research in that area, he wanted to do a farewell game for the kids because he had become close to them.

So, what he did was he bought fruits, put them in a basket, and tied a red ribbon on the basket. He put the basket under a tree.

Then, he gathered all the kids in the tribe and told them, "Okay, we'll move away from this tree, we'll stay some distance from the tree, and when I say *Go!* everyone runs to get the basket. Whoever gets to the basket first will have everything."

So, the anthropologist counted: "1...2...3..."

When he said *Go!* the kids did something different. They held hands, they smiled, and they ran together. Naturally, they arrived at the fruit basket together. So, they sat around the basket, got the fruits, passed them around, and everybody was happy eating.

Wow.

So, the anthropologist asked a little girl, "Why did you run that way?"

The girl said, "How can one of us be happy if all the others are sad?"

In their language, it's called *ubuntu*.

The little girl said,
"How can one of us be happy
if all the others are sad?"



What Is Life About

You know what? Our thinking of *self* is based on Western philosophy:

Our usual thinking:
"I think therefore I am."

I think, therefore, I am. By Rene Descartes, French philosopher, scientist, and mathematician.

Or: *What's in it for me? Am I happy? What's the significance?*

Those are not bad per se-- because it's important to know yourself and discover your gifting, your calling, your happiness.

But the African idea of *self* is *ubuntu*:

I am because we are. Because my existence does not matter for myself alone. Because my existence matters for others.

Ubuntu: "I am because we are."

The first message of the passage today, Brothers and Sisters, is this:

Life is about belonging to a community and serving that community.

Let us applaud the servants here at The Feast because they make it possible for you to attend here every Sunday and you get out so blessed by the Word of God.

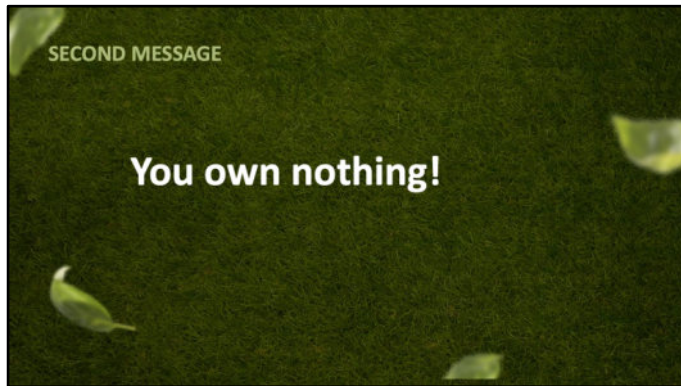
So, God's message in this passage is that you need to hold hands with others when you run toward a goal, and when you reach it, you sit down and eat together, You celebrate.

Wasn't that fun? The kids did not grab, no crab mentality, everybody arrived together and helped each other.

So, God is reminding you today: God's fruit basket is for everyone. It is enough for everyone.

God's fruit basket
is enough
for everyone.





Scarcity thinking breeds entitlement.



The funny thing about scarcity thinking is that it breeds *entitlement*. Because it's *scarcity*, you feel that you are entitled to have the one that's for you.

And I believe this thinking is prevailing in Filipino culture. You notice, if someone is marking his birthday, we are like, "Uy, it's your birthday, give us a treat, blow out!"

That's what people usually say, right? So, some of us are now wary about putting our birthdays on Facebook.

I think it should be otherwise. On your birthday, people should come and say, "How may we make this day easy for you? How may we help? How may we be of service to you today?"

But you hardly say that. And I see *entitlement* so ingrained in our culture.

One time, my daughter, three years old, already in school, and her teacher asked us to sing a Filipino nursery at home. So, I chose a video on *Sitsiritsit Alibangbang* which I thought was just an ordinary nursery rhyme... Sing with me:

Sitsiritsit, alibangbang, salaginto, salagubang. Ang babae sa lansangan, kung gumiri parang tandang.

Next:

Santo Nino sa Pandakan
Putoseko sa tindahan
Kung ayaw mong magpautang
Uubusin ka ng langgam

When I reached these lyrics, I was shocked. I did not know this when I was young and it was the first time I sang the song again after a long time.

When these lyrics came to mind, I stopped the video.

Because I didn't want these words subconsciously being put in the mind of my daughter—that when you need money, you're *entitled* to borrow from others.



No Entitlement, See God's Generosity

You know, many have been quarreling because of debts. One approaches you for a loan, you feel for the person, so you give what she's borrowing. But when you text her a message already asking for her payment... your message is relegated to the *seen-zone* (message seen but no reply). Then you will see on her Facebook page that she just had a hair rebond!

People feel entitled to receive favors. People have forgotten that everything they have is a gift. Everything is from the generosity of God's hand.

You know that: People feel entitled. Siblings are fighting over a property they are to inherit: "I was the one who took care of Mama and Papa. This property should be mine. The lot in front is mine. You may have the back part."

You quarrel, you grab. Because you feel you're entitled to own everything.

Even I am not exempted from this temptation of entitlement. One time, I was entering our condo building, and I thought we had a new security guard.

He started questioning me: "Are you a resident here??"

Naturally, I was pissed off. I am a unit owner. I just paid the full amount of the unit this year. Then this guard dares question me.

So, I told him my unit number – frowning to show I didn't like his question. But as I was in the elevator going up to my unit, I felt God speaking to me: "Why do you feel entitled to be respected by the guard?"

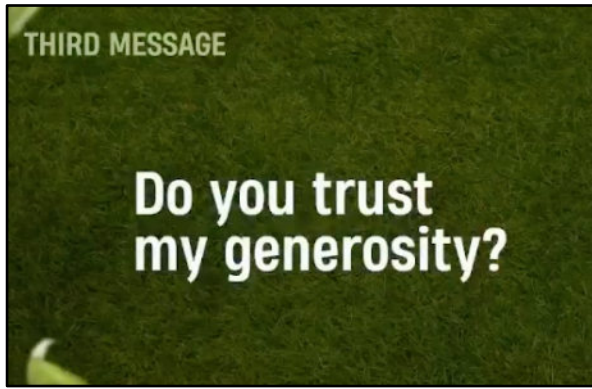
And I said to the Lord, "Indeed, Lord, why should I feel entitled?"

Because my ego was hurt. As I was reflecting deeper, God was making me realize: "Didn't you know that he was just doing his job?"

And it dawned on me: "Indeed, Lord, I want that if there is an unfamiliar face here, the guard should strictly question where he is going. Because when our guard is strict, that means it's safe for my family and me to live here.

So, if you rid yourself of your entitlement and scarcity mindset, you begin to see the working of God in His generosity.

People have forgotten that everything they have is a gift, received from the generosity of God's hand.



My question to you is this: Are your possessions, titles, and achievements teaching you to be entitled?

“Ah, I am the director, I should be entitled to a parking space. “

“I am this... When I arrive, my coffee should be hot and ready for me.”

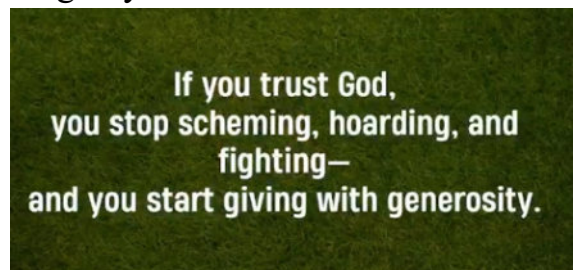
I’m not saying people must not serve you if you are a leader—that’s part of the protocol. But when you are becoming demanding and entitled to it, you might be losing vision of how God’s generosity is working in your life.

In this passage, God is asking you, again, this question: Do you trust my generosity? Yes.

I believe that is everyone’s top-of-the-mind answer. But the question is, if you really trust God, you will stop scheming, hoarding, and fighting and you will start giving with generosity. So, when the going gets tough-- when challenges come in your life-- that’s when your real answer comes out.

I thought-- when I was reflecting on this passage about enemies--that I didn’t need it. Because I’ve been serving God since I was in college, so naturally, I’m kind of patient with people, I’m quite tolerant. I’m understanding, I’m compassionate.

But that changed when I learned how to drive. Because guys, road rage is real. Sometimes, there are situations when I’m driving that I’m tempted to curse. I want to shout at that person. I want to pursue the person. I want revenge. I want to become a vegetable... a patola because gusto kong pumatol 😊





Changed Mindset

I remember one particular time, I was driving to bring my wife to work. I was in my lane. It was a relaxing Sunday drive, we were listening to Worship music, conversing.

Suddenly, out of nowhere, this bus came cutting me off. So, the Worship music background disappeared. My head was filled with rage. I pursued the bus.

After a minute, I was driving in front of the bus. And you know what I did? I stopped in front of the bus for one to two minutes, smiling, arms akimbo. He-he. Revenge is sweet. So juicy sweet, I was telling myself.

My wife was already getting my attention: “Babe,

Babe, Babe, stop that! You’re a preacher!

I told her, “No preacher, preacher here. Justice!”

Then when my anger was already settling down, I realized how wrong of a thing I did. Oh, my God! I’m a preacher...

I believe that’s why even Master Yoda—you know Master Yoda, *Star Wars* fans-- said that fear is the product of the dark side. Fear leads to anger, anger leads to hatred, hatred to *sufferring*!

My fear that justice would not be served allowed me to have the scarcity thinking that I’m entitled to bring justice in this situation. I took matters into my own hands. And that’s what happened.

So, after that, I was saying sorry to God and telling Him, “Lord, what should have been the right thing to do?”

I go, drive after the bus, stop in front of the bus, then get out of the car, smiling, walk to the bus driver, and tell him: “Bro, may I invite you to a coffee date? Let’s talk about God.”

It will not happen because naturally, I’d caused harm to the person already.

So, God was telling me, “In that situation, you cannot do anything -- but it doesn’t mean that it’s unfair... If you love yourself, I also love that person and that person is also my child. I can find ways for that person to change. Just pray for that person.”

And this changed my mindset.

Who among you is experiencing road rage once in a while? If the person beside you raises his/her hand, “Let’s start changing. Chill. Don’t put justice into your own hands because it may worsen the situation.”



The Right Thing To Do

I believe that when you realize the generosity of God, you will be compelled to do what is right. Just like what Zacchaeus did in Luke 19. Zacchaeus was a tax collector and tax collectors were known to be corrupt. But when he experienced that true goodness and the abundance of God, he said this:

Luke 19:8 NLT

“I will give half my wealth to the poor, Lord, and if I have cheated people on their taxes, I will give them back four times as much!”

He felt ashamed as he realized God’s goodness.

God is telling you that abundance is enough for yourself and others. So, you need to love your neighbors as yourself. And *others* include your *enemies* too.

After that road rage incident, I began to be more courteous and kinder.

I have other enemies when I’m driving: the traffic enforcers. Because some of them are scheming... Some of them want to extort money from you. I am old enough to detect what’s on their agenda.

So, one time, I had to go to the City Hall. As I was driving, an enforcer flagged me down.

I said to him, “If I have a violation, just issue me a ticket. Sir, it’s okay.”

And you know what the enforcer did? He chose the most expensive violation and issued me a ticket for that violation.

Because I told him, “I won’t give a bribe. Just issue me a ticket.”

I ended up paying much and I was delayed in my scheduled trip to the City Hall.

So, I was praying, “Lord, what do you do when people are scheming to take advantage of you? Is it right to love them?

I think not—because I ended up being abused. So, what’s the proper thing to do?

What do you do with people who are scheming to take advantage of you?



Something Better

Another situation came just about three months ago -- in between the intersection of Quirino and Adriatico, before you go to Roxas Boulevard. The leftmost lane is for vehicles turning left.

I was in the left lane but I didn't turn left because I was going to the Philippine International Convention Center (to preach at The Feast).

I was preoccupied with rehearsing my talk... I went straight... And out of nowhere, an enforcer came out-- with his friends. Three enforcers ganging up on me. And as clear as day, I could tell their intention—they wanted to extort money from me.

I don't know why it always happens that an enforcer magically pops out when it's Sunday and I am about to preach... Maybe it's the enemy...

But I was praying, *Lord, how do I properly love these enemies without also sacrificing myself in a way that they can abuse me? Lord, I need Your guidance. I pray for them. I pray also for me.*

So, my instinct was—I think it was God's leading—to respect their authority. So, when I opened my window, I addressed them, “Sir, I'm sorry. I know it's a left-only lane. I was preoccupied...”

And they asked for my license. I gave my license. And for a good two minutes, what they were telling me was, “Sir, what will happen here... Sir, what should we do...”

They were going around in circles. And I knew where it was leading to... They were waiting for me to offer: “Hey, Sir, here's P500. Have breakfast at McDo... Thank you...”

But I knew I could not do that. I was going to preach...

So, you know what I did? I offered something better. I told them, “Pasensya na po kayo—Please bear with me. Even if I wanted to give you what you want, it couldn't be. I am a preacher.”

I hoped their conscience would nag them...

I continued: “But you see, if you have prayer intentions, I would really love to pray for you...”

Pray for your enemies, right?

How To Deal with Enemies

You know what happened? Suddenly, the enforcers all stepped back.

They were like surprised, and told me, “Sir, we’re not asking, a... We’re not asking... We’re not asking...”

And I felt God was saving me from that situation. Wow.

This is the way to deal with your enemies. Treat them with respect and love. But also, establish your boundaries so you can also love yourself. And believe that God is there in the situation.

That incident ended up with the enforcers waving goodbye, saying, “Bye... Bye, Father.”

And I was happy because probably, it was a moment for them to realize that God was watching them and what they were doing.

They were not judged by what I did. I did not engage them in debate. Because I also knew the specific rule that says that swerving is not a violation-- unless you abruptly interfere in the path of other drivers. I could claw my way citing that rule.

But God led me to do what is right: loving my enemies.

And I believe God is inviting you today to do the same. Maybe you’re tired of fighting your battles – because it shouldn’t be a battle in the first place.

Maybe you’re tired of saying, “Lord, my enemies grab stuff from me. That cannot be anymore. I will find a way so this will not continue.”

But God is revealing to you today that there’s a better way—which involves loving others, praying for them.



A Better Way

There's a better way of protecting and preserving the love you have for yourself. And it can only be done with Jesus.

That's why whenever you feel that you're discouraged with what's been happening, always look at Jesus on the Cross.

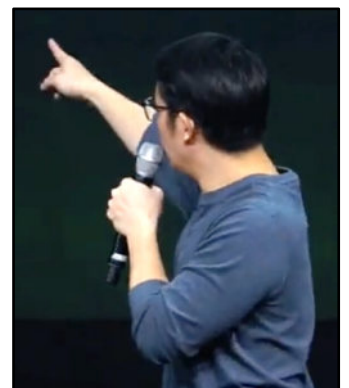
Because in Jesus' death, God reveals His boundless generosity: "I will give this much for you. So that you can enjoy life.

So can we all stand and declare that He is a generous God. As we worship today, I want you to believe that God knows your battles. And He doesn't want you to fight it alone.

He wants you to include Him in the battles of your life.

So, Father, we pray for Your guidance and Your anointing. May You lead us to do what is right. May You protect us from harm and danger. May You protect us from people scheming to take advantage of us. And may we resolve our conflicts beautifully—with the help of Your grace and love. Amen.

Let's worship God as we declare that He is sovereign. Amen.





Commitment

Almighty Father, today, we pray that You teach us again to believe in Your immense goodness and love.

Father, some of us here have been fighting our battles for too long. Taking things for ourselves because someone took things from us in the past. But we believe today, we want to trust You. That Your supply is enough. There is no lack, Lord God when we are with You. There is no lack of financial provisions. There is no lack of forgiveness. There is no lack of grace. There is no lack of peace...

My prayer today, Jesus, is that I may open my heart to receive Your abundance. Make us ready for it, Lord. So that when the New Year comes, I will do it with much gladness. Lord, make me ready to receive every good thing that You want to bless my life. Lord, make me ready to receive the breakthrough and the transformation that I need in all aspects of my life. I can be victorious over death. I can be victorious over sin. I can be victorious over hurt. I can be victorious over worry. I can be victorious over fear. I can be victorious because of You. That's why today, Lord, I declare I need God. I need a Savior who fights my battles with me. Today, I dedicate and I commit my life to You, Jesus, the King of Kings, my Lord, my God, my Savior. Amen.





MERCY MINISTRIES

*God blesses those who are merciful,
for they will be shown mercy. --Matthew 5:7*

MERCY 2023! Special

IT'S December, the last month of the year. During this merriest season of our year, we go down memory lane, reminiscing blessings from our Good God.

So, *The Feast Mercy Ministries* is looking back to our features to celebrate our Mercy 2023! We continue our Special with a story in our Second Quarter, about a scholar of our Pag-asa ng Pamilya Foundation. Here, be inspired again by the sharing of Krissan Medilo in *The Feast Family* June 11 2023 issue...

Excerpts...

PAG-ASA NG PAMILYA FOUNDATION

Gift of Education

By KRISSAN MEDILO

HI! Just call me Kriss.

As this photo shows, I am in my school uniform—the uniform of students of Systems Technology Inc. (STI) in Santa Rosa, Laguna, where I am taking up Tourism Management.

I am here as a Pag-asa ng Pamilya scholar, big thanks to our founder, Bro. Bo Sanchez.

You see, my father Christopher works as personal driver of Bro. Bo. So, eventually, Bro. Bo kindly introduced me to Pag-asa.

Here is my father (in green shirt) with Bro. Bo. In the middle is my father's co-driver Ardie.



Pag-Asa Blessings

The Pag-asa scholarship is God's gift I am deeply, forever, grateful for. We are a family of humble means.

Before I became a Pag-Asa scholar, our life was difficult. Early on, my father had a job which he left for some reason. So, then, his income was cash he earned when he won in basketball games. Winning meant we would have food on the table.

To augment my father's income, my mother Anabella to this day works as a tailor, sewing curtains and stuff.

My parents struggle to sustain our family, where I am the eldest of four children.

Here we are, from the left: brother King John Dominic; sister Kate Ann Pauline; our youngest, King James Patrick; mother Anabella; yours truly; and father Christopher.

Everything changed when a friend introduced my father to Bro. Bo who eventually hired him as his driver—and that led me to Pag-asa.

I count many blessings since I became a Pag-Asa scholar. I'll name four major benefits.

First, of course, the Pag-asa grant has enabled me to pay my tuition fee every semester, plus buy my school materials. So, I am already graduating August this year.

Here I am with my STI classmates after our class.



Blessings After Blessings

Second, Pag-asa Blessing, Bro. Bo not only helped me become a Pag-asa scholar. He and his family have embraced my family and me as practically part of their family. They arranged for us to have a house of our own in San Pedro City, Laguna. And they brought us along when they go on trips, visiting tourist destinations. So, we got to visit the Enchanted Kingdom. And we got to join their company outing in Boracay, Cebu, and Bohol. I got to ride a plane for the first time.

Third, I've been inspired to fend for myself. In addition to my Pag-asa scholarship, I can add income for my family by working. I once worked as a nanny for my godmother's children. I also worked as a sales associate.

Now, I am working as a part-time Customer Service representative at Alorica Makati, a work-from-home setup that started at the onslaught of the Coronavirus Disease (COVID) Pandemic.

Fourth, and the best, Pag-asa is a Mercy Ministry of the Light of Jesus Family, which has helped me in my faith journey. I've been able to learn more about the Bible. My favorite verse now is Romans 5:8: *"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."*

I learned that even when we are in our darkest moments, God is there to save us. He is our joy and happiness.

I always pray. I trust that everything God does in my life is for my good.

I really thank God and I take this opportunity to say thank you to Pag-Asa.



Pag-asa ng Pamilya, founded in 1979, helps to uplift indigents through education. The foundation has granted scholarships to deserving students so they can finish school and be able to help their family.

At left, Bro. Bo meets with Pag-asa scholars.

Pag-asa indeed has helped me with my school finances which have led to many other blessings that have improved our family life.

Glory to God!



Thank You!

The Feast Family, now organized as the Feast Mercy Ministries, is a spin-off ministry of the Light of Jesus Family founded by Bro. Bo Sanchez. Earlier named as Kerygma Family, The Feast Family is a unique online, non-physical, borderless, international community of friends who support each other's personal growth.

Partner beneficiaries of the Feast Mercy Ministries flourish because of your generous support.

Thank you for being with us. We pray that you find your daily source of inspiration from the resources that we send to you. We pray too that you may consider giving to The Feast Mercy Ministries. No gift is too small.

Thank you very much in advance for your gift. Our prayer is that God will continue to reward you as you give.

FOR EXISTING DONORS:

Thank you for the Love. Your monthly donation helps us continue extending support to our Light of Jesus spin-off organizations, including our partner beneficiaries. Your gift will sustain our operations and, we hope, help us reach out to the persons our Lord has called us to make disciples and give them renewed hope.

Be a Feast Family member. Write or call us. Now.

Email Address: jocelyn@kerygmfamily.com

Website: <https://kerygmfamily.com>

Our Partner Beneficiaries

Jeremiah 33 Foundation
is a shelter for minor girls particularly victims of sexual abuse.



Grace To Be Born
is a halfway home for pregnant women in crisis.



He Cares Mission
provides shelter and pastoral care for street children.

Pag-asa ng Pamilya Foundation
grants scholarships to indigent students.



Jesus Christ Cares for Cancer
provides financial assistance and pastoral care for indigent cancer patients.

The Light of Jesus Pastoral Care Center
ministers to those who are emotionally and spiritually wounded.



H.A.I.L. MARY is acronym for Healthcare Assistance for Indigents and Lepers of Mary, adopting the Blessed Mother as the patroness of its mission to eradicate leprosy in Abra within 8–10 years.



The Light of Jesus Disaster Recovery Ministry
provides evacuation assistance, relief goods, financial aid, and other needs of calamity victims.



The Light of Jesus Prison Ministry
brings Jesus to the Correctional Institution for Women to give them hope for a new life of dignity.



Anawim Lay Missions Foundation provides a home for poor elderly who have been abandoned by their family and have nowhere else to go.

CHOOSE HOW YOU WANT TO GIVE

1. Donate ONLINE (through credit card) Go to www.kerygmfamily.com and click 'DONATE' box Paypal I US Donations.

2. Pick Up from Your House or Office (Metro Manila Only) Cash or Checks Address Checks to Shepherd's Voice Radio and Television Foundation Inc. and call Joy at (+632) 725 -9999 loc 112 or text (+63) 922-828-9890 and we'll pick them up from your home or office.

3. Mail 12 Post-Dated Checks to Our Office for US and CANADA: Address Checks to Kerygma Family, 848 Rainbow Blvd # 1937, Las Vegas, NV 89107. For Other Countries/Philippines: Address Check to Shepherd's Voice Radio and Television Foundation Inc. and mail (registered mail) to Shepherd's Voice, 60 Chicago St., Cubao, Quezon City, Philippines 1109.

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FAMILY ONLINE NEWSMAGAZINE

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Founder: Bo Sanchez

Mercy Ministries Chairman
Hermie Morelos

Editor-in-Chief
Cynthia U. Santiago

Chief Photographer
Edmundo L. Santiago

**Feast International
Region Head**
Vic Español

Reporter-Writer
Cybill P. Bayto

Multimedia Staff
Ronaldo Antonio U. Santiago
Dylan Anthony A. Santiago

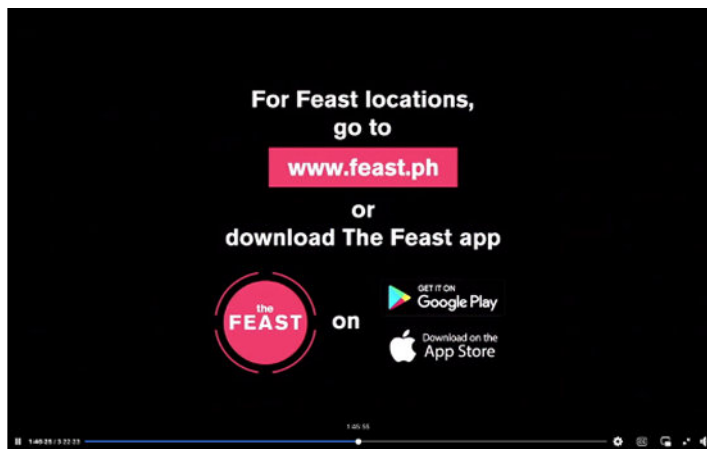
Media Ministries Head
Randy Borromeo

Contributors
The Feast Builders

Finance Officer
Rowena Cequeña

Publication Consultant
Chelle S. Crisanto

Human Resources Manager
Erika Ventura



For comments, article contributions, write or call us:
Email Address: cusantiago@gmail.com
Landline phone numbers: 8725-9999, Fax 725-1230
Mobile phone: 0998-953-0657

Go and make disciples of all men.

— Matthew 28:19

