

A Modest Story, An Ageless Lesson

When Jesus spoke to the multitudes, He often told a parable—a simple story to illustrate a moral or spiritual lesson. In Matthew’s Gospel, the apostles asked Jesus why He spoke to the crowds in parables. Jesus replied that knowing the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven may be understandable to the Apostles but not to ordinary people for “they look but do not see and they hear but do not listen.” (Matthew 13:13) And so Jesus taught everyone about God’s commands with clear, simple stories that help us all to understand even if we are not well-versed in the knowledge of divine law.

The four books of the apostles contain over 60 parables, many of them unique to the author. Some of these familiar stories focus on stewardship and demonstrate how we should use our time, talent and treasure to contribute to spiritual growth in our church, our community and among the people of the world. During 2018 the Stewardship Committee will examine several well-known parables and explain how these lessons may relate to our daily life and relationships in this 21st century.

In John’s story of the feeding of the multitude (John 6:1-15), it appears on the surface to be an example of Jesus’ compassion for a tired and hungry crowd. He blesses two fish and five barley loaves to feed five thousand. Biblical scholars can cite numerous examples of the symbolic significance of barley and fish, the child who provided them and, of course, the miracle itself that Jesus performed. While the symbolism of the event is interesting and rich in cultural tradition, for us today we should be grappling with the number

of people who are starving both physically and spiritually. Over 800 million people worldwide do not have an adequate supply of food. Even more people are yearning for fulfillment that material things cannot satisfy.



It’s a daunting task that awaits us. None of us is a miracle worker who can single-handedly eradicate hunger but if we work together, we can achieve remarkable results. Think of a time when your family or friends faced a crisis, big or small. It was not solved by siblings competing against one another. For with competition there always has to be a loser. The take-charge individual who is going to solve the problem by himself ends up by himself. The successful resolution is a cooperative

effort in which each member of the family contributes what is within his/her capabilities. It is a fix that works, that brings families and friends closer.

Also as families and stewards of our faith, we can contribute our two fish and our five loaves to a local food bank or soup kitchen, for example. This kind of simple act is something we can do on a regular basis to help those in need. Eventually, those who are in need become self-sufficient and join in numbers to help others who are without. And a miracle of a few will be enjoyed by the multitude. It’s love vs. hate, hope vs. despair, that motivates Christ’s stewards in times of failure and success. We must see what we look at and listen to what we hear.



Written by Ray Huss, member of our Stewardship Committee