The Joy of Enough — Week 1

Header

Series: The Grateful Giver: Living with Open Hands and a Full Heart

Week 1: "The Joy of Enough" (All Saints Sunday, November 1, 2026)

Sticky Statement: More is never enough. Christ always is.

Main Point: Gratitude begins when we believe Christ is enough—just as the saints before us did.

Application Point: Name one place where you're chasing "more" and ask God for contentment instead. Then thank God—and someone—for a saint who showed you that Christ is enough.

Key Text: Philippians 4:11–13

Supporting Texts: Philippians 2:5–8; Psalm 23:1; Proverbs 30:8–9; 2 Corinthians 9:8–11; Hebrews 12:1

Me

You know, every year right after Halloween, I make the same mistake. I tell myself I'm going to be disciplined with the leftover candy. I make a plan. I'm resolved. I'm steadfast. And then, inevitably, somewhere around 9:30 p.m., I find myself standing in the kitchen—lights off, pantry door open—eating miniature Snickers like I'm hiding from the authorities.

With six kids, our house the day after Halloween looks like a candy distribution center. And since Halloween was *last night*, some of you are living this sermon in real time. I see you. No judgment. Mostly because I'm in no position to judge.

I always tell myself I'll stop after "just one more." But you know how that goes. "Just one more" is never enough.

And it's not just candy, is it? There's something in all of us that always wants "just a little more." A little more money in the bank. A little more time in the day. A little more applause. A little more certainty. A little more control. The treadmill of "more" keeps running, and we keep sprinting on it, wondering why we feel tired, anxious, and spiritually stretched thin.

Here's what I've learned—at the pantry and pretty much everywhere else: **More is never enough.**

That's why we're starting this new series today—*The Grateful Giver: Living with Open Hands and a Full Heart*. For the month of November, we're going to explore the kind of generosity and gratitude God wants *for* us, not *from* us. We're going to talk about living open-handed—with joy instead of scarcity, with hearts shaped not by "more" but by Christ Himself.

And it's fitting that we begin on All Saints Sunday. The saints who've gone before us—the giants of the faith, and the ordinary saints from our own families and this congregation—found their joy not in "more," but in Christ being enough. Their lives whisper to ours: *It really is possible to live with a full heart, even when your hands feel empty.*

We

If we're honest, this whole "wanting more" thing isn't just my late-night candy problem. It's our shared human condition. We live in a world that has perfected the art of making us feel one step behind. One pay raise behind. One Amazon delivery behind. One kitchen renovation behind. One perfectly curated life behind.

We buy bigger houses to hold our stuff, then rent storage units for the stuff that won't fit in the bigger house. And we still feel like we're running short.

So we measure ourselves endlessly:

If I just had a little more savings…

If my schedule were a little less crowded…

If my family were a little more put together…

If my body were a little healthier…

We live with a low-grade hum of "not enough"—like that old refrigerator in your grandmother's kitchen. You don't notice it until you stop and listen. But it's always there, quietly draining our peace.

For some of us, the hum is about time. Our calendars shrink faster than a phone battery at 3%, and we think, *If I just had a little more time, then I could rest… or pray… or breathe.*

For some of us, it's emotional. We give and give, and then wonder why we feel empty.

For some of us, it's financial—that sense that we're one unexpected bill away from unraveling. So we tighten our grip, because clenched hands feel safer than open ones.

And for some of us, it's spiritual. A quiet restlessness. The feeling that we're doing a lot *for* God but not really living *with* God.

Then on a day like All Saints Sunday, we remember people who weren't ruled by that hum—people who didn't have perfect lives, perfect health, or perfect families, yet somehow drew from a deep well of contentment in Christ. And something inside us whispers, *I want that, too.*

But we don't know how to get there.

We don't know how to slow the treadmill.

We don't know how to silence the hum.

We don't know how to stop chasing "just a little more" and start living with "enough."

We all want contentment. We all want peace. We all want to live with open hands. We just don't know how to get from here to there.

And that's exactly where God meets us.

God

Let's go to our main passage—Philippians 4:11–13. These are famous verses, the kind that get printed on coffee mugs, T-shirts, and Christian weightlifting belts. ("I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me"—usually quoted right before somebody tries to bench-press half a Buick.)

But you need to know what kind of letter this is, because it changes everything. Paul is in prison—chained, confined, and not sure whether he'll live or die. And the church in Philippi, the church that had backed his ministry from the very beginning, has just taken up an offering and sent it to him by the hand of a man named Epaphroditus (ih-paf-roh-DYE-tus).

Philippians 4 is Paul's thank-you note. The most famous verses on contentment in the Bible were written inside a thank-you note for a financial gift. Contentment, gratitude, and generosity are tangled together right here on the page.

Here's what Paul writes:

> "I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all this through him who gives me strength." (Philippians 4:11–13)

Let's walk through it slowly.

"I have learned to be content…" The word *content* is the Greek *autarkēs* (ow-TAR-kays). It was a favorite word of the Stoic philosophers. For them, it

described the person who had trained himself not to need anything outside himself—so self-sufficient that nothing could shake him. Paul borrows their word, baptizes it, and moves its center. The Stoic says, "I am enough." Paul says, "Christ is enough."

Then: "I have learned the secret." In Greek, that's one word—*memyēmai* (meh-MOO-ay-my). It's the language of initiation, what people said when they'd been brought into the inner circle of a mystery religion. Paul is saying, "Contentment isn't my personality. I wasn't born with it. I was initiated into it, one hard lesson at a time." That's good news for those of us who weren't born with it either.

And look at the classroom where he learned it: "any and every situation." Shipwrecks. Prison. Beatings. Church folks sending him spicy emails. If I rewrote this verse for my life, it would say, "I have learned to be content… as long as the Wi-Fi works, traffic is light, and my kids are cooperating."

Then Paul gives away the secret: "I can do all this through him who gives me strength." Not bench-pressing. Not acing every life goal. *All this*—hungry and full, plenty and want. Christ's strength holds steady even when life does not.

But why is Christ enough? Paul already showed us, two chapters earlier. [Jesus] "did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing" (Philippians 2:6–7), and He went all the way to the cross. Jesus is the one person in history who had every right to clench His fist around "more"—and He opened His hands. He gave Himself away, for you. If God has already given you His Son, the deepest need of your life is already met.

That's why Psalm 23 can say, "The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing." In Hebrew, that last phrase is *lōʾ ʾeḥsār* (loh ekh-SAHR)—"I will not lack." It doesn't say, "The Lord is my shepherd; I have everything I want." It says, "With Him, I lack nothing."

So here's Paul's whole point in one sentence, and I want you to remember it: **More is never enough. Christ always is.** Say it with me: **More is never enough. Christ always is.**

Now watch what that does to a person's hands. Paul tells the Philippians, "Not that I desire your gifts; what I desire is that more be credited to your account" (4:17). God isn't after your money. He's after your joy. And then the promise: "My God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus" (4:19).

Paul says it again in 2 Corinthians 9:8: "Having all that you need, you will abound in every good work." "Having all that you need" is *autarkeia* (ow-TAR-kay-ah)—the noun form of the same word Paul used for *content*. God gives us enough so that we can be generous. And that generosity, Paul says, "will result in thanksgiving to God" (9:11). Christ is enough, so we open our hands—and open hands fill the world with thanksgiving. That's a Grateful Giver.

Hebrews 12:1 says we are "surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses"—the saints, whose lives still testify. Then it tells us to "throw off everything that hinders" and "run with perseverance the race marked out for us." There's a difference between a treadmill and a race. On the treadmill of "more," you run hard and go nowhere. The saints ran a race—with a finish line, and Christ waiting at the end.

Saints like Pattie Phelps. I could have used any of the saints we named today, but I am using Pattie because I just recently officiated at her funeral and the stories of her from her lovely family are still fresh in my memory. Pattie, loved Jesus and for her He was enough. Before marrying Lou, she had buried two husbands previously. I cannot imagine the toll that takes upon a person. She had every right to complain. But she did not. She trusted in the Lord. He was her strength. She raised her family, and in time she found love with Lou again. She ran her race, the good parts and the bad. She kept her eyes on Jesus, and He was waiting for her at the finish line.

You know saints like that. You've buried saints like that. You've loved saints like that. Their lives are sermons that keep preaching long after they're gone.

Christ doesn't remove every circumstance, but He fills every circumstance. And when Christ fills your life, you finally discover the joy of "enough." That's where gratitude begins—the same place it began for every saint we remember today: **More is never enough. Christ always is.**

You

So here's the question for you—not your neighbor, not your spouse, not your kids—you: Where are you chasing "just a little more"? Where is that hum of "not enough" stealing your peace?

This week, I'm asking you to do two things.

First, name your "more." Pick the one place where you feel you don't have enough, and bring it to God every day this week. I'll even give you the prayer. It's from Proverbs 30, and it may be the most honest prayer in the Bible: "Give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread" (Proverbs 30:8). In other words: *Lord, give me enough—and teach me that it's enough.*

Maybe your "more" is money. Every bill, every grocery run, every unexpected repair sends your anxiety into orbit. Instead of gripping harder, pray that prayer.

Maybe it's time. You're stretched and overbooked. Block off ten minutes a day to be still with God—ten minutes of open-handed quiet. Your soul needs that.

Maybe it's emotional energy. You're running on fumes. Practice noticing grace instead of pressure—gifts instead of gaps.

For those of us who are Methodists, our founder showed us what this looks like. When John Wesley was a young teacher at Oxford, he earned about

thirty pounds a year. He found he could live on twenty-eight, so he gave two away. The next year his income doubled. He still lived on twenty-eight and gave away thirty-two. The third year he earned ninety and gave away sixty-two. Even when his income later passed a thousand pounds a year, he kept living simply and gave the rest away.

Wesley had settled the question of "enough." And once he did, everything else became something he could give. You may not do what Wesley did. But you can do what he did first: decide that Christ is enough. Because **more is never enough. Christ always is.**

Second, thank a saint. Remember, Philippians 4 is a thank-you note. So this week, write one. Think of someone who showed you that Christ is enough—a grandparent, a Sunday school teacher, a friend, a pastor. If they're living, send them a note and tell them. If they've gone on to be with the Lord, write it anyway—and then thank God for them out loud.

And if you're here today and you're not sure what you believe about God, or Jesus, or any of this—I'm really glad you're here, and I have something for you too. You probably already believe that less anxiety and less striving would be good for your life. So run the experiment. Pick one place where you're chasing "more," and choose contentment this week—not because you fully believe yet, but because you want a better way to live. Test it. See if it bears good fruit. And if Christ really is enough, you may find He meets you there in ways you didn't expect.

Don't try to fix everything. You don't need to become a spiritual superhero by Tuesday. Name one "more." Thank one saint. That's it.

We

So imagine with me what would happen if we, as a church, truly embraced the joy of "enough." Imagine a community where the hum of "not enough" finally went quiet—not because our circumstances became perfect, but because Christ became our center.

Imagine families where contentment replaced comparison, and gratitude became the default setting instead of anxiety. Parents who taught their children not just how to achieve more, but how to rest in the God who provides. Marriages where spouses weren't trying to squeeze fulfillment out of each other, because both were drawing strength from Christ. Friendships marked by generosity instead of jealousy.

Imagine a church—our church—where open hands and full hearts shaped everything we did. Where people gave not just money, but time, encouragement, compassion, and presence. Where St. Paul's became known all over Staunton as the people who live with quiet confidence and gracious generosity—because we actually believe Christ is enough.

And imagine this: years from now, this congregation gathers on another All Saints Sunday, and someone reads your name. What would you want them to remember? I hope they'd say: *They lived with open hands. They gave like people who had enough. They knew what the saints knew.*

More is never enough. Christ always is.

Closing Prayer

Gracious and loving God,

On this All Saints Sunday, we thank You for the men and women who ran the race before us—those whose lives testified that Christ truly is enough. Their faith, their courage, and their quiet confidence remind us of the life You long to shape in us.

Lord, You know how often we chase after "more." More security. More control. More approval.

But today You invite us into something better: the steady, quiet joy of contentment. Your strength is enough for whatever we face, and Your presence is enough for whatever we lack.

So, Father, teach us the joy of "enough." Show each of us the places where our hearts are restless, and meet us there with grace. Give us neither poverty nor riches, but our daily bread—and the faith to call it enough.

Give us courage to loosen our grip and open our hands, the way Jesus opened His hands for us.

Make us a church marked by gratitude—people whose hearts are full because You fill them. Make us generous with our time, our gifts, our compassion, and our love.

And as we walk this week, help us carry the witness of the saints and the promise of Your strength. Because more is never enough, and Christ always is.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, our Shepherd and our Enough. Amen.