

**[1]**  
**Jesus is Enough**  
**Mark 6:32-44**  
**June 26, 2016, Jeff Germo**

How many of you ever feel like you just don't have enough? You don't have enough to do the life you've been given? You don't have enough time. You don't have enough energy? You don't have enough money? You don't have enough skill, or talent, or strength. You don't have enough patience? You don't have enough love? You just plain don't have enough.

If you feel like that you are not alone. As a matter of fact, this last week was probably one of the hardest weeks of my ministry and I honestly wondered how I was going to get through the week. It was so busy. There were a lot of good things that happened and along with those good things were some very difficult things. It was a tough week and I kept asking God to give me the strength to make it through. "Just keep doing the next right thing — and then trust God."

There are times we all feel like that. And for some, the times when we feel like we *do* have enough for the task or the life God has given us are few and far between. Sometimes it seems like the resources we have been given to do our lives are not equal to the task. Can anyone relate right now?

We are nearing the end of our *Encounters with Jesus* series. We've taken a look at several encounters over the last few months. We have a couple more after this one. Today, though, after the service we are going to have a Remember and Celebrate picnic in the school field to think back and celebrate what Jesus has done in our lives through our encounters with him over the last few weeks as we have dug into his Word and allowed him to change our hearts. I've had several of you tell me that you have been moved through this series, so we have a chance to encourage each other today.

That is what an encounter with Jesus should do. He takes what we give him, even if we think it's not much and turns it into something useful for the service of others; and that is where our joy comes from.

In Matthew 11:28-30 Jesus said,

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**Matthew 11:28–30 (NLT)**

***<sup>28</sup>“Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup>Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup>For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light.”***

This is something we need to believe with all our hearts if we are going to grow to be more like our Master, Jesus. We need to believe he wants to teach us. We need to believe he is humble and gentle. We need to believe that if we *do* come to him and

allow him to teach us our souls will find rest because his yoke is easy and his burden is light.

We need to know that every encounter with Jesus *will* produce good fruit *if* we allow him to change us. But, how often do we just go through life as if it is a drudgery and as if we are on our own? It's so easy to forget these things Jesus wants to do in us when we are in the middle of a storm. What happens when we forget is we tend to play the victim and fail to learn from the experience. We forget that the storms of life are necessary to grow and that Jesus is big enough for the storm.

Today we are going to look at another grow opp that Jesus had with his apprentices. This one is a big one. It's one of Jesus' most well known miracles and he gathered a huge following because of it. Before we take a look at it let me fill in some of the background.

The big event that happened just before this encounter we are going to look at this morning is Jesus' cousin, John the Baptist was beheaded by Herod Antipas because of a stupid promise he made to a pretty girl dancing at a party. Herod was so pleased with how the girl danced and as a reward said he would give her anything she wanted, up to half his kingdom. She asked her mother what to ask for and her mother told her to ask for John the Baptist's head on a platter. That's kind of weird. You can have up to half the kingdom, and you hate John the Baptist so much that you would rather have his head.

Herod complied, even though he liked John the Baptist, because he didn't want to be embarrassed in front of the other guests. That's a bit strange too. He was more comfortable with John the Baptist losing his head than *he* was losing face himself.

About that same time Jesus sends out his twelve apprentices, two-by-two, to preach about the kingdom of God, and heal and cast out demons. And I think it's actually while they are out on this ministry trip that John the Baptist was beheaded.

Jesus' fame continues to spread. The crowds around him grow. They all want a piece of him. This event is one of the few that is in all four Gospels. And some of them tell us that after John the Baptist was beheaded Jesus wanted to get alone with his disciples to find some quiet so he could get some rest, recover and grieve.

We pick it up there. Jesus is going to feed several thousand people with just five small loaves of bread and two fish.

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**Mark 6:32–44 (NLT)**

***<sup>32</sup> So they left by boat for a quiet place, where they could be alone.***

So, Jesus' cousin, JB has just been killed. Jesus wants some quiet so he can grieve. In his humanness he is exhausted and in need. He just wants some alone time with his disciples so he can debrief and think things through.

***<sup>33</sup> But many people recognized them and saw them leaving, and people from many towns ran ahead along the shore and got there ahead of them.***

Jesus and his disciples head across the lake in a boat. Picture it in your mind. All four Gospels say that crowds from many towns kept following him. And Mark says they saw where he was going and ran along the shore watching the boat as they ran to make sure they could get there ahead of him. The only chance of quiet he has is in the boat with his disciples.

**[4]**

***34 Jesus saw the huge crowd as he stepped from the boat, and he had compassion on them because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things.***

John's Gospel says that once Jesus landed he climbed a hill with his disciples and sat down with them. So, likely what happened is they landed, climbed the hill, sat down to debrief. Then he saw the crowds. He looked at them and ***“had compassion on them because they were like sheep without a shepherd.”***

And he began to teach them about the Kingdom of God. Some of the other Gospels say he also healed the sick.

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***35 Late in the afternoon his disciples came to him and said, “This is a remote place, and it’s already getting late. 36 Send the crowds away so they can go to the nearby farms and villages and buy something to eat.”***

The disciples assess the situation. There are thousands of people; 5,000 men plus their families. If every man had a wife and a couple of kids, you do the math. There were a lot of people there. The disciples are very obviously and naturally concerned, so they, for some reason they think that Jesus must not have thought things through, so they give him a directive. “We do not have the resources to do this. Send the crowds away. Let’s not make their problem our problem.”

***37 But Jesus said, “You feed them.” “With what?” they asked. “We’d have to work for months to earn enough money to buy food for all these people!”***

How many of you do that with God? You say you want to follow Jesus. He says, “Okay, here is something for you to do. Do that thing.” Whatever that thing is. And you say, “I can’t. I don’t have the gifts. I don’t have the resources. I don’t have the energy. I don’t have the time. I don’t have the patience. I don’t have. I don’t have. I don’t have.

**[6]**

***38 “How much bread do you have?” he asked. “Go and find out.” They came back and reported, “We have five loaves of bread and two fish.”***

So, the disciples go throughout the crowds asking if anyone has any food. They return to Jesus with their report. ***“We’ve got five small barley loaves of bread and two small fish.”*** John’s Gospel tells us that it was a young boy who had the food. Just a young boy with a meagre supply. It wasn’t much, but he gave it all. Now, he could have said, “No, it’s all I have and I need to keep it for myself. If I give it to you, I will go hungry.” Or, he could have hidden it thinking, “It’s not enough. It would be silly for me to offer this. What good will it do?”

As a matter of fact, that is exactly what Jesus' apprentices said. John's account says,  
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John 6:9 (NLT)

*<sup>9</sup> "There's a young boy here with five barley loaves and two fish. But what good is that with this huge crowd?"*

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Mark 6:32–44 (NLT)

*<sup>39</sup> Then Jesus told the disciples to have the people sit down in groups on the green grass. <sup>40</sup> So they sat down in groups of fifty or a hundred.*

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*<sup>41</sup> Jesus took the five loaves and two fish, looked up toward heaven, and blessed them. Then, breaking the loaves into pieces, he kept giving the bread to the disciples so they could distribute it to the people. He also divided the fish for everyone to share. <sup>42</sup> They all ate as much as they wanted, <sup>43</sup> and afterward, the disciples picked up twelve baskets of leftover bread and fish. <sup>44</sup> A total of 5,000 men and their families were fed.*

We think we don't have enough. And we don't. But, what we do have we can offer to Jesus and he will multiply it. I see this happening at CRBC continually. I often hear people saying things like, "I don't have much, but what I do have I want to give to the Lord." And what I see happening is Jesus multiplying your efforts.

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**Jesus multiplies what we humbly and authentically offer to him.**

I got an email last week in which I saw this principle so clearly. I asked Natalie, who sent me the email if I could share it with Ruthie and the staff and she gave me the go ahead. I read it to them and had a hard time getting through it without wearing uncontrollably. I was so moved by how Jesus has used CRBC to touch the life of this woman and how her simple faith is being multiplied as she humbly gives what she has to Jesus.

I asked her if I could read it to you and here is how she answered,

**"I am comfortable with you reading it, just so long as I don't have to stand up or wave lol. Yes I'm that type of shy. I'm elated it has affected more than just me. I'm still in awe of the love and support of God's love when He works through people who are dedicated to His messages. Though He takes as well as He gives, there's always a bigger picture that we don't yet see. If someone told me 20 years ago how the next few decades would unfold, I wouldn't have gotten my 12 year old self out of bed. But He's always at work and knows best. The faith I have is ever present. I don't expect instant gratification or change in myself in my journey, it will take time and work, but little by little such changes add up to create the new, and the church is a constant presence that continues to support and encourage my path, whatever that may be and wherever it will take me."**

So, here is the email she sent me. It's quite long, but very engaging, so get comfortable and see how Jesus has moved in Natalie's life.

Hello Jeff,

My name is Natalie, I regularly attend service at CRBC on Sundays, and my six year old son attends Power House and Christ's Kids. This past Sunday the service was emotionally overwhelming (in a good way). Though Steve was running the service I felt the need to e-mail you. At risk of sounding like a stalker (i'm really harmless, you just so happen to be in the same store as me) I was at the thrift store today and it may have been you in front of me paying for your finds, he sounded like you, and looked like you. So much went through my head at that moment because this past Sunday is still clear in my heart (about patches and mixing old wine with new). I wanted to share with you how much the church has enriched my faith and renewed my trust in God. The thing is I'm very reserved and awkward, like how can I say "Hey, Jeff, wow! I'm Natalie, so nice to meet you. Has CRBC turned my spiritual life around, or what!?" go on a breathless excited spewl only to discover 'oops, wrong gentleman, enjoy your day and your awesome purchases' and pray to forget what just unfolded.

I grew up in northern BC where the church was strict and scary, the moment I had a say in whether or not I would go, I stopped. Though I never strayed in my love and belief in God and Jesus I had little to no desire to attend another church, painting all with the same brush from early experiences (unfair, I know). There was so much judgment, intolerance for others and impossible rules I felt maybe there was a miscommunication somewhere between the pastor and the Bible? Any church that wasn't us is bad, disagreeing with us is bad, questioning us is bad, mainstream music was evil, coffee was evil, smoking was evil (tho i agree with that last one, cigarettes, not the smoker tho). But my parents were hooked to the church and their teachings.

I moved to Campbell river 3 years ago and wasn't looking for another church, but very open to a sign that I would find one. Well, true story, I'm driving and what does my 4 year old son see, a bright flashing sign, literally, sitting there and blinking on Dogwood. He asked what it said, "power house" hmm, youth group? Ever the social butterfly he asked to attend.

Naturally I had my reservations, my husband said he'll be fine and it's good to have him around more kids his age. He's familiar with Jesus, we pray and I read him bible stories, but I knew that wouldn't be enough to sustain his involvement with God. I put it off and put it off and put it off, and what did my son do? he learned to read, specifically "everyone welcome". so I agreed to let him go, but made it clear, the moment I feel a bad vibe or hesitate, that's it. Maybe he'll find another bright sign or a pretty picture at another church.

Well I met a wonderful lady named Leora who was very welcoming and warm. My son had fun, and it became a regular attendance. It didn't stop there. Now my son wanted to go on Sundays. God is very patient indeed, because it was about 20 years since I last went to a church, and 2 years since my son noticed the CRBC sign.

So last November I agreed to attend and opened up to the idea of designating myself to a church. I haven't been feeling the same since. My heart was restless, scared and angry before I went to CRBC. And I hope it's OK to say why that is.

In 2005 I lost both my parents Christmas Day. They were both sick, and we had time to prepare. Even though they belonged to a strict church, they loved and gave everything they had to those that needed it, without question.

I grew up with 6 siblings and any combination of relationships with each other was always strained, and hasn't been the same since my parents died. It wasn't greed, because my parents didn't have anything to leave behind. It wasn't favouritism because they loved us all equally. But I think because maybe we all turned from their church we felt no tolerance for each other. We were easy to anger and slow to forgive. This conflict created a rift we felt we brought upon ourselves with hurtful words as well as unsaid words that could have repaired damage. None of us are close to our aunts or uncles or cousins. We never had grandparents.

We were all alone. Then in 2014, after years of severe spousal abuse and raising a low functioning autistic son by herself with little to no help from family (we had all moved away by that point), and few resources for families with autistic children, my sister Angie committed suicide after taking the life of her 16 year old son, Robert. She was 39. There was absolutely nothing quiet about this incident, it made national news, our estranged families wanted even less to do with us. Comments and anger from strangers became a daily event. I prayed — a lot. I wasn't asking for a miracle, I was asking for strength to be a mother, to get out of bed, and let the media storm wash over me like water off a duck. I figured I had 30 years of surviving hard times, so the odds were in my favour that I'd survive this too.

That was my first broken heart. When my parents died my heart was heavy each day we knew drew closer to their time. We knew it was coming and said what we needed to. When I got the call about Angie, it took everything I had to not fall apart. We didn't believe it to be a possibility. A huge part of me wanted to believe her ex husband did it, so that I could have someone else to blame, and he'd face some sort of mortal justice while we were alive. It felt like a tiny me was standing on top of this ripping heart, and the stitch holding it all together was coming undone like a shoe lace, and I was trying very hard to pull it together so it wouldn't completely separate.

She was the only sister that talked to every one of our siblings. She felt we needed to tolerate and accept each other because our time in this life is short. We didn't listen. She was our physical God's love, she was forgiving, patient, selfless and funny. It hurts me to describe her like that because of how her life ended. She was painted into a corner with her son. She was told he would be placed in a home with addicts and mentally disturbed people for the lack of homes for autistic people. She couldn't let that happen. If he were abused or neglected he'd have no way of telling her. She was told by the ministry the only places available were far far from her home. And even then the waitlist was years long.

Robert's tantrums left holes in the wall, broken furniture, Angie's broken bones and broken heart. Robert was 220 lbs, non verbal, violent and unpredictable. Angie was 100 lbs, and when she wasn't calling the cops on her violent and unpredictable addict of an ex husband she was alone. The RCMP asked me to describe her life. The only thing that came to mind, was that should I ever do something in this life that lands me somewhere so dark, lonely and vengeful as Hell, it would be Angie's life.

No amount of money from us could have protected her or cured Robert. But for years we tried to fix her problems, because for years she helped us without a thought or expectation that she would receive anything back in return. After we said goodbye, I tried to repair the damage between me and my remaining siblings. I tried talking to them, e-mailing them, writing them letters and remembering their birthdays and calling at Christmas.

If I thought things were bad before, they only got worse. I have nieces and nephews and in-laws I haven't met. I couldn't pin point which towns they live in all over BC. I was so angry that they weren't doing what I felt they needed to be doing (patches, expectations, mixing of wine). I let it eat away at my relationships with other people. I tolerated less, I wasn't patient or kind. I was always looking for the negative. I allowed my relationships with my husband and kids to sour, I rejected friends before I feared they would reject me. I became unreliable at keeping plans, I was quick to judge and took a lot of joy in finding faults and pointing them out.

This past Sunday Steve was talking about the Pharisees and their rules, and how following the rules alone doesn't mean you don't need Jesus. I can continue to follow the ten commandments and it won't do anything to help how I feel or how I can repair my family.

We need Jesus. I've always known that, but this past Sunday, I realized just how much anger and hate I have inside me, because I'm trying to patch things up and make my world into this neat and tidy mould, but all along I'm just trying to fit a square into a circle and call them family.

I learned from my time so far at CRBC that it's hard. Life is hard. It takes a lot of work to follow Jesus and walk with him. It takes a lot of work to practice the teachings of the Bible. A few Sundays ago I remember "who are we to judge? Jesus walked with thieves and [tax collectors], he worked through shady characters to get his work done. He was God's Son, and even he didn't judge, so who are we?" I've dug myself into this comfortable spiritual hole, where I can see faults and judge them, I can hide and turn my back when something doesn't go my way. It's going to take a lot of work to get out and create new habits that are positive and a reflection of God's love.

I honestly don't know how my son turned out to be so social, accepting and patient. I don't know how many times we drove past that sign, and I said "maybe next week". The Bible, seems so simple, every time I hear [a sermon at CRBC] I'm like, "how easy and wonderfully put! The lesson, it's gotta be common knowledge!" But knowledge and practice are two very different things. I can know a tomato is a fruit, but put that in with my fruit salad and it's not gonna taste so great. What CRBC has that I found so much, in

my past experience lacked, was acceptance, that we're not perfect, it takes work, and that's OK. Growing up, mistakes weren't OK. Asking questions and confessing weaknesses was not OK.

At the end of service this past Sunday they played "Come as You Are". And like anyone of my generation I fell in love with the song and googled the lyrics to find various versions and make myself a playlist on youtube of just that one song. I feel relief, acceptance, tolerance and love, every time I hear that song. It's like an epiphany that everyone else got earlier than me.

My son's birthday party is this Saturday and I'm inviting some of my husband's estranged family. I dreaded it since my son's last birthday (I carry a lot). After church I was so emotionally charged I couldn't share with my husband what I heard and felt. I waited until I felt I digested it enough to form a sentence without shaking my head. The thing about my husband is he's open, but not open enough to attend church. He grew up catholic, and learned about the witch hunts, the residential schools and oppression, so he shied away from it and hasn't been in a church since he was a kid. But I share with him the notes I take, the realizations I have and the personal goals I have for myself. He's very supportive. Until he decides on his own or receives a sign (apparently that was my sign, the dogwood sign, I don't know why we couldn't share, it's big and nice enough), i'll continue to pray and share with him.

Wow that turned out longer than I thought, but I wanted to share with you how much CRBC means to me and how I came to believe again, and follow my son and his eager heart. Enjoy your week. Best regards, Natalie

I have yet to meet Natalie. She is supposed to introduce herself to me today after the service. Jesus has used her to impact me profoundly, and he is going to continue to use her to come alongside others who need Jesus. He is going to multiply what he has given her. He has already done that this morning.

Friends, that is why we do what we do. That is why CRBC is here. That is why we give our finances. That is why we give our time, and our energy, and our talents. That is why we will never stop being on mission for Jesus. He wants to use us and our stories to bring freedom to others.

You may think you don't have much to give. Just offer what you have to Jesus. Come to him with open hands and hearts and humbly and authentically offer it to him to use for his glory, and he will multiply it more than you could imagine. That is what happened and will continue to happen with Natalie's story.