

# How Do We Respond to Paying Costs?

"Follow Me on Mission" Series, November 16 & 17, 2024 | Mark 6:30-44

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When is enough enough?

**Sometimes life feels like Jenga in reverse.**

Have you ever played Jenga?

Jenga is a game where you pile up a neat, orderly tower of blocks.

Then, one at a time, players remove blocks.

At first, it's not tough at all. But then at some point you start to realize that if you take out the wrong block or ONE BLOCK MORE, the whole tower is going to come crashing down.

Sometimes life feels like Jenga in reverse. Instead of thinking, "If I pull out one more block ..." you think, "If I put one more thing on, it's all going to collapse."

Enough is enough! Do you ever feel that way?

**We have lots of ways of saying that enough is enough.**

I've had enough.

I've had all I can stand.

I've had it up to here!

That's the last straw.

That's the straw that broke the camel's back.

**When is enough enough with the Kingdom of God?**

Two weeks ago, we said the Kingdom of God involves costs.

We must be aware of those costs and actually count those costs.

But when is the cost too much? When is enough enough?

One could say that the Apostles had had enough.

**The Apostles were coming back from their first mission trips.**

At the beginning of the Gospel according to Mark, Jesus began calling disciples. He called lots of disciples. Apparently, a lot of people said "yes" to that call.

Then in Mark chapter three, Jesus called twelve of that larger number to be Apostles. They would be with Jesus, and He would send them out to preach and push back the darkness.

Then earlier in Mark chapter 6, Jesus sent these twelve Apostles out in pairs with temporary authority to cast out unclean spirits, to heal, and to preach. They went out and did just that.

Then they went out just as Jesus said. It must have been wonderful. And exhausting.

Now they were back to report to Jesus what had happened.

**By this point, everyone had learned about the death of John the Baptist.**

While the Apostles were away, word came that John the Baptist had been executed.

We read the passage two weeks ago when we were together.

When the Apostles returned from their mission trips, they learned what Jesus had also just learned: that John the Baptist—Jesus’ relative, forerunner, and ally—had been killed. (Mt. 14:13)

**But the crowds would not stop.**

**Mark 6:31** says,

*... For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat.*

The Apostles were tired. Jesus and the Apostles were grieving.

They wanted some time to debrief, rest up, grieve, and recover from the sheer weight of it all.

But the crowds kept coming. They heard that Jesus was a great teacher, and they wanted to hear Him.

They heard that Jesus was a great healer, and they wanted to be healed.

Notice that there wasn’t even time to eat. Do you ever have days or seasons like that?

**So, Jesus invited the group to get away to a desolate place to rest.**

Jesus liked desolate places. Back in **Mark 1:35** we read that Jesus had a habit of going to places outside of town alone to pray and be with the Father and the Spirit:

*And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed.*

Jesus knew how important it was and is to get away, recharge, and connect with God.

Now Jesus is going to share that kind of time with His disciples and teach them how to do it for themselves in the future. The disciples had reached a point where ENOUGH is ENOUGH.

**That’s an important point because it shows us that we are more than machines to God.**

God doesn’t look at us as machines that work all the time or as tools through which He simply accomplishes His work and will in the world.

Jesus’ concern for His disciples is further proof of that fact. Jesus is reminding us that we are created for a relationship with Him and with one another.

You are more than a machine to God! You are a person He loves!

*But Jesus expected them to give still more.*

**The crowds followed Jesus and the Twelve.**

Jesus and the Twelve went by boat toward a desolate place along the Sea of Galilee.

From the shore, people saw Jesus and his disciples in the boat.

Word spread, and people came from far and wide to where they anticipated Jesus would stop.

When Jesus arrived, the crowd was already there.

**Jesus had compassion on them.**

Mark wrote that Jesus looked at them as sheep without a shepherd.

That phrase occurs several places in the Bible, and it means that the people are wandering around without a leader and that they are lost because they don't have good leadership.

Jesus had compassion on their situation and decided to teach them and minister to them.

### **Jesus told the disciples to feed the crowd.**

The hour had gotten late, and the disciples were watching the crowd and time.

They knew that the people would be getting hungry, so they assumed that it would be time to disburse the crowd. The people would need to go different ways to villages and settlements around them in order to get the food they would need for the night.

But Jesus surprised them. Instead of allowing them to disburse the crowd, Jesus told the disciples to feed the crowd themselves.

The disciples protested that even almost a years' worth of wages could not feed them all.

There was no way for the disciples to make this happen.

All they had, when they looked, was five loaves of bread and two fish.

### **Pause here to reflect: Despite being exhausted, the disciples and Jesus were back at work!**

The Apostles were tired from their mission trips and in need of rest, reflection, and recharging.

Jesus and all the Apostles were grieving the loss of John the Baptist, the way that evil sometimes seems to win, and the implication that their own lives were not safe if John's wasn't.

That's a weighty moment, and it is a moment worth taking time to process.

Instead, everyone was back to work.

Just at the moment when Jesus and the disciples needed rest, they had to work.

They had to set aside their needs to meet the needs of the crowd.

When they reached that place where ENOUGH is ENOUGH, they had to give STILL MORE.

### **But that's when Jesus showed His compassion and glory.**

Jesus showed us His compassion; He had compassion on the crowds, not frustration. He saw them as sheep without a shepherd, and He knew that they needed the Good Shepherd.

Jesus showed us His glory. He took the bread and the fish. He looked to heaven, the source of all power and goodness. He blessed the bread and the fish. He started breaking the bread and distributing the fish. Everyone ate. Everyone got more than a bite too; they ate until they were satisfied. Then there were twelve baskets full of leftovers. That's the glory of God; God can make something out of nothing, He can make much out of very little. Only God can do that. Jesus is God in the flesh. That's what we're seeing, even though the disciples did not understand it yet.

When God pushed the disciples past the point of ENOUGH is ENOUGH, that's when God's compassion flowed, God's power worked, and God's glory showed through.

*We are the ones who claim that enough is enough.*

**Sometimes we say that enough is enough with our Time.**

Sometimes we say that we've given all the time we're going to give. You find this happening among people who have been involved in ministry for years. We sometimes get to a place where in bitterness we say, "It's time for someone else to do their part."

Sometimes we say that life is taking all of our time and that we have nothing left to give to God. I watched that happen in the past with a family I loved. Their kids were involved in sports. Dad was heavily involved with his kids' sports teams and leagues. He coached. He ran the league. He said that he would serve in ministry and give his time to God once his kids were raised. He didn't have any time left after spending it on sports. I always wondered what message that sent to his kids because he told them with his words that he loved Jesus, but he showed them with his actions that he loved sports. Saying enough is enough with our time costs us dearly.

### **Sometimes we say that enough is enough with our Money.**

I don't know what you think about money and giving.

Sometimes we say that enough is enough, we don't want to hear about money.

Sometimes we say that enough is enough, we don't want to give any more.

Sometimes we say that enough is enough, we don't have anything left to give!

Our thinking about money and giving gets so distorted.

Let me share a few principles with you.

First, everything we have comes from God, and it belongs to God. God gives us everything we have—including money—as a trust that we get to use and manage on His behalf. So, let's start by saying "thank you" to God for the generous ways in which He cares for us every day.

Second, giving back to God is an obligation for each one of us as Christians. It's an act of worship, an act of trust, and an act of obedience.

Third, giving is fun. When we give, we get to make wonderful things happen in the Kingdom of God. When I was a young man, I was talking about giving with someone I trusted, and I was basically asking the question, "How much do I have to give?" He helped me to understand that I was asking the wrong question. The right question is, "How much CAN I give?" Giving is a joy and an opportunity to change the world.

Saying enough is enough with our money hurts us.

### **Sometimes we say that enough is enough with our Obedience.**

I think by now we all are beginning to realize that being disciples of Jesus means obeying God.

I think by now we are also beginning to realize that obedience always comes with a cost.

And we don't always like paying the costs.

When the costs start to escalate, that's when we start saying, "Whoa! Enough is enough!"

Once I was counseling a young couple considering marriage. I found out in the course of our conversation that they were living together. I pointed out that this is not part of God's plan. They said that they couldn't each afford to live apart.

That's saying that we are willing to obey if the price is right, if the cost isn't too much.

But saying enough is enough with our obedience isn't actually obedience at all.

### **Sometimes we say that enough is enough with our Risk.**

Last week we said goodbye to a family heading overseas to serve God as missionaries.

I know that before they left, there were people who challenged them about where they were going and what they were doing. There were people who said that they were going to live in a place that's risky. And there were some of us who told them that they should not take that risk.

But that means that the thought in our minds is that there is a point where we say to God, "Enough is enough! That's too much risk. If the risk is too high, then I'm out!"

In fact, as you have processed your own decisions about things like going on mission trips, you may have said, "I kind of feel God tugging at me to go on a mission trip, but it's too risky." In fact, you may have already said to God, "Nope. I'm not going on a mission trip, so don't ask!"

If you've said that to God, God doesn't take orders and limits from us. Saying enough is enough to God about risk means we don't trust Him and that we are not willing to obey Him.

### **Where are you telling God that enough is enough?**

Jesus expects us to give everything for the Kingdom of God.

#### **Jesus and the Apostles gave when they had very little left to give.**

They were tired. They were grieving. They had been surrounded by crowds.

The demands of the crowds were rising. The expectations of people were rising; some people in the crowd were ready to make Jesus king by force. But opposition was rising as well.

They had very little left to give; it would have been easy to say, "enough is enough."

But they kept giving, and that is when Jesus' compassion and glory shone through.

#### **But understand: Jesus is calling us to obedience, not to abuse or manipulation.**

Jesus is not telling us to allow people to abuse us. There are abusive people, abusive situations, and abusive demands. Jesus did not give in to those Himself, nor is He calling us to.

Jesus is not telling us to allow ourselves to be manipulated either. Jesus could spot manipulation from a distance, and He refused to give in to it.

Jesus is not calling us to give in to abuse or manipulation.

But Jesus is calling us to obedience. To Him, to His Father, and to the work of the Holy Spirit.

Obedience can be costly. Obedience can and will change us and change our lives. It must.

#### **But in this passage as well, Jesus reminds us that with Him there is always enough.**

Jesus took five loaves and two fish and fed a multitude.

It reminds us of the time when the Israelites were wandering in the wilderness. They were hungry in a land with little food and thirsty in a land with very little water. And God provided. God provided water from a rock. He provided bread from heaven and plenty of meat.

God was teaching His people that He can provide us with everything we need. And God was teaching His people to lean on Him. Every single day.

That's why Jesus tells us in the Lord's Prayer, to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread." Give us today what we need for today—bread, shelter, water, money, time, strength, ability to obey, Your very presence. Give us what we need for today, our daily bread.

And Jesus is reminding us in this passage that He will always give us exactly what we need! We will never face a day when we don't have everything we need to get through that day.

When we are tempted to say, "enough is enough," Jesus responds, "I give you enough." There is always enough with God.

### **Jesus gave everything for the Kingdom of God and for us.**

Jesus set aside Heaven to come to Earth and take on human flesh.

He lived a perfect and sinless life in front of us and showed us who God is and what God wants for us and from us.

Jesus gave us His life so that we could be forgiven, so that we could have new life, and so that we could have eternal life.

Jesus gave everything for the Kingdom of God and for us.

### **What is God calling you to do?**

Don't say, "enough is enough."

Instead, say, "God, you are enough. I give everything for You."