

## **The Abundance of Shared Poverty**

John 6:1-14

#17 in John Series

Peter Hiatt

April 10, 2010

### **Prayer**

So, Father, we pray that you would help us to preach. In Jesus' name, Amen.

### **Sermon**

In all honesty, nothing stresses me out quite like preaching.

For a variety of reasons, I believe I'm called to do it...

Like Jesus said to Peter, "Peter, feed my sheep."

Usually I feel like I have nothing to say and everything is black, and then at some point God will reveal a bit of himself and all is white. And then I panic, for I think, "God, how on earth, can I say that? How am I supposed to talk about you? I can't talk about you." Sometimes, it feels like a sermon goes poorly, like I work so hard and I just can't do God justice. I kind of felt like that last week, when I preached about surrendering all our moments for he makes all moments new, and then afterwards, I had trouble surrendering that moment.

Sometimes it feels like sermons go really well and someone will say "Awesome, that was exactly what I needed." I'll get thrilled for two maybe three seconds, then panic thinking "I hope they don't expect that next week!" "I have nothing to give."

I wake up in the middle of the night to this terrifying question:

"Hey Peter, how are you going to feed the sheep?"

"Hey Peter, what are you going to say to that couple that want a divorce?"

"Hey Peter, how are you going to inspire the staff and the board?"

"Hey Peter, how are you going to buy enough bread to feed everyone?"

Sometimes, I think about role models I like to emulate, like my old friend Tim Brewer.



Tim has been just about everywhere I've been, only a few years before I got there.

He would come speak at our high school youth group in the late 70's. He used to lead the CSU fellowship in Fort Collins, which I spoke at a couple of times when I was a student at CU. Tim led the high school

youth group at Bel Air Presbyterian, in LA, before I took his place a few years later. I still remember my youth elder saying to me: "Yeah Peter, that Tim Brewer, he just had a silver tongue, a silver tongue." And I so much wanted to be just like Tim.

Tim was a great communicator, but also a really good guy, affectionate, kind, compassionate, sincere, sensitive, warm. He became a senior pastor in my denomination just a few years before I did. He had a wife and three children, two were handicapped. In 1995, I spent a little time with Tim and my old friend Johnny Patterson. We hung out together at the Evangelical Presbyterian denomination's general assembly. Tim had recently lost his foot in an accident while hiking through a train tunnel.

At the general assembly, they prayed for him, he came forward as the whole assembly gave him a standing ovation. He said a few words, beautiful words. I looked in the general assembly notebook and saw that his congregation had grown to over 1300 people in average attendance; I was jealous.

Four weeks after the assembly, Tim was on vacation with his family at Hilton Head. One day in early August, Tim got up, left his family, and returned home to St Louis alone. He went to the garage, and ran a hose from the exhaust pipe to the interior of his car, turned on the ignition and asphyxiated himself, leaving behind his wife, three children, and a very confused congregation. He left a letter for his church and session (a public letter), which was sent to all of his fellow pastors in the denomination. In the letter, he apologizes and asks for forgiveness. I'll read just a few lines:

I know of nothing, which any of you could have done to change my situation. Out of the countless sins that I have committed in this life, it is my own wretched weakness of which I am most ashamed. God forgive me for not being any stronger than I am. Forgive me for being such an unfaithful shepherd. But never doubt that God's word remains true, even if the messenger has fallen. Upon that one hope, I have staked my entire life. Yours, in the name of our blessed Lord, our only hope in life and death, Tim.

I think Tim was haunted by a voice, "Tim, how are you going to feed the sheep? (The church your wife, your kids?) How are you going to feed your family? How are you going to make it all work?"

I suspect Bruce McBogg was haunted by the same voice. Some of you know Bruce.



He was part of this church, actually. I got to know Bruce when I spent a night with him sleeping on the streets of Denver. Bruce had an amazing testimony. In his youth, he had shot and killed a police officer. In prison, he met Jesus, and years later, he founded Christ's Body Ministries. He ministered to thousands on the streets of Denver and to some of you, I imagine. Five years ago, he hung himself from the balcony in his home. Like Tim, I loved Bruce. He was an amazing and beautiful man, but I know he struggled with that question: "How are you going to feed the sheep, Bruce?"

I bet you know that question:

“How are you going to feed your family?”

“How are you going to raise the kids?”

“How are you going to provide for all of your employees?”

“How are you going to speak life into the people around you?”

“How are you going to create life in the image of God?”

“How are you going to do it?”

John 6: 1-6

*After this Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, which is the sea of Tiberias. And a large crowd was following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing on the sick. Jesus went up on the mountain and there he sat down with his disciples. Now the Passover (Passover, that’s hugely important. It’s Passover time. Remember that!) the feast of the Jews, was at hand. Lifting up his eyes, then, and seeing that a large crowd was coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, “Where are we to buy bread, so that these people may eat?”*

Jesus asked where are we to buy bread, Philip?

Not where are you to buy bread, Philip.

*He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he would do.*

To test him (*Peirazo* or *Piradzo*) normally translated *tempt*. Scripture says, “*God tempts no one to evil.*” And yet it certainly appears that Jesus tempts his disciples to good. He tests them, but I don’t think it’s to see what will happen. He already knows what he will do. Perhaps he wants them to really know something, not just up here, with their head, but down here, in their heart. I mean, experience something, like death and resurrection every moment. Well, anyway he said this to test him, for he himself knew what he would do.

John 6: 6-12

*Philip answered him, “Two hundred denarii would not buy (be sufficient) enough bread for each of them to get a little.”*

Philip is practical. He does the math. Two hundred denarii was about thirty thousand dollars.

*One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, said to him, “There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are they for so many?”*

Five is *pente* in Greek. Pentecost is the “*Harvest Feast*,” the fiftieth day after Passover. That’s seven weeks of seven days, seven sevens of fifty.

*Jesus said, “Have the people sit down.*

In the synoptic gospels, it’s recorded he had them sit in groups. Now this is fascinating. This is the only miraculous sign that’s recorded in all four gospels outside of the resurrection.

*Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, about five thousand in number (Pentakischilioi, five thousand men, fifteen to twenty thousand people.) Jesus then took the loaves and when he had given thanks, (eucharisteo, in Greek, where we get the word, eucharist.) he distributed them to those who were seated. So also the fish, as much as they wanted. And when they had eaten their fill, (they're stuffed) he told his disciples, "Gather up the leftover fragments, that nothing may be lost." (apollumi, in Greek, it's also translated perished or lost.)*

He wills that no broken bread be *lost*.

Later in this chapter, Jesus says, *"This is the will of Him who sent me that I should lose (apollumi) nothing of all that he has given me, (How much has God given his Son? John 13:3 "All things") but raise it up on the last day."*

Well, if Tim and Bruce were given to Jesus, will he raise them up on the last day?

Some say that if you commit suicide, you are "lost," and I suppose that you are. But, I wonder if any of those fragments (fragments of bread broken), if any of those were in Tim or Bruce? I saw them eat it and it doesn't stay lost. And why, why, why do we think Jesus ever stops "seeking and saving the lost", the *apollumi*?

We stop.

Does Jesus stop?

Or is he the same yesterday, today and forever? No matter what, we don't want to be lost at all, not even for a moment. But Jesus said *"Gather up the leftover fragments that nothing may be lost."*

John 6: 13 (ESV)

*So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five (pente) barley loaves, left by those who had eaten. When the people saw the sign that he had done, they said, "This is indeed the Prophet who is to come into the world!"*

In the wilderness, Jesus feeds the multitude with manna and meat. And now he asks me: "Peter, how are we going to feed these folks at the Sanctuary?" And do you know what I hear at three in the morning? "Peter how are *you* going to feed those folks at the Sanctuary?" And Satan whispers, "Yeah, Peter, how are *you* going to feed those folks at the Sanctuary?" He hopes I'll answer, "I'm not sure, but you just watch me try!"

I think Jesus wants to hear me say, "I can't, but you can, so we can." Philip did the math and said, "We can't." Andrew said, "Well, we do have this kid's lunch, but what is that among so many?" What is that? What was that? Well, what that was, was all that Jesus needed, and all that Jesus needed was just all that they had. Now, I suppose that, in reality, Jesus didn't *need* anything (I bet he could've just created a Burger King and a strip mall there *ex neo*—on the spot. But, he didn't.

He chooses to use what is given, and what is given by one of the very ones he's fixin' to feed. He chooses to use everyone that day. But notice that Jesus didn't multiply Andrew's lunch or Philip's lunch. He multiplied this little boy's lunch and used Philip and Andrew to do so. In fact, he used them and the disciples, like servants waiting tables. They each had a basket filled with fragments left over. (In that

society, in that day, the waiters lived on what was left over, the fragments that were left. What was left was left for the servants.) So, my job and Frances' job is to facilitate all of us in feeding each other, as God multiplies our stuff. We all give the stuff and God multiplies the stuff. But the picnic is everyone's business. Maybe that's because Jesus wants everyone to share his joy. He just loves to throw parties.

Well, Jesus points out, "Philip you can't feed twenty thousand people. But give what you have. Andrew, little boy, give what you have and I will multiply it. I will make a banquet.

So, this is point one.

1. Give what you have and God makes the banquet.

Go to church, even more go to house church or something like it, and sit down in groups. Perhaps even form a small group, a breakfast group, whatever! I mean, don't wait for your house church pastor or whatever, just grab some people and form a small group. Just get together for lunch, or dinner, or breakfast every now and then. Or go bowling. But somewhere along the line, sit down in groups and give what you have: money, insight, gifts, talents, perspective, your testimony. And Jesus multiplies it and makes a banquet.

Give what you have. Yet what do we give, when we have nothing to give? I think Tim felt like he had nothing. I think Bruce felt like he had nothing.

This is point two.

2. When you have nothing to give, give your nothing.

That's precisely what Philip was not prepared to give: his nothing. He said, "Nothing can be done." For "we have nothing to give." Ironically, when we have nothing to give, everything can at last be done! At least Andrew came along and said, "Well, here's nothing." "It's all we've got, but here it is: Nothing—just five loaves and two little fish. It's easier to share your something than your nothing, your strength than your weakness, your wealth rather than your poverty. THIS WAS SHARED POVERTY.

John points out that the fish were *opsarion* – little fish, like sardines. And the loaves were barley loaves. Barley was the food of the poor. The Rabbis said "Barley bread is the food of the beasts." Five Barley loaves and little fish given by a *paidarion* – a little boy, a little slave boy. The boy's lunch was poverty, but Jesus produces an abundance from shared poverty.

Ever been to a party where everyone displays their wealth?

You have, haven't you. It just sucks.

Ever been to a party, though, where everyone admits they're poor?

Soren Kierkegaard wrote,

*Last night, I went to a party. Everyone admired my wit and sophistication. All agreed that I was most entertaining. And I returned to my apartment, closed the door, held a gun in my hands and thought about blowing my brains out.*

A party like that is death. But shared poverty is like a banquet of grace.

Some years ago, a survey was taken of elderly citizens in London. They asked them to name the happiest point of their life. 60% answered, "the blitz." That was the time, during WWII, when Nazi planes dropped tons of explosives on London every night, and these people would huddle together in bomb shelters, in small groups, while they listened to the sound of all their earthly possessions being burned away by the fire from above: "The happiest period of their lives."

Before we moved back to Colorado, we lived in a little house on the side of the church where I worked. We had one little bathroom. There were five of us at the time, two of which were just learning to use the toilet. I distinctly remember one morning, just before we moved to Colorado into our luxurious new house with three toilets and five sinks, as usual, I was sitting on the throne, John on one knee, Elizabeth on the other. We were reading *Where's Waldo?* as Susan put on her makeup at the sink right next to us and Becky roamed the linoleum looking for things to put in her mouth. Suddenly it hit me: "I'm really gonna miss this place."

The abundance of shared poverty.

You know, that's what an AA meeting is: an abundance of shared poverty.

That's what a real church is: an abundance of shared poverty.

That's what suicide is *not*. Suicide is poverty that's not shared, a moment of poverty un-surrendered. Ironically, it's refusing to die by seizing control of your own death—refusing to die to yourself.

Like Bill Mahr said, "Suicide is our way of saying to God, "You can't fire me! I quit." Suicides won't surrender control of their death, for they feel responsible for their life. But surrendered death, surrendered poverty, is life. It's the start of the great banquet.

As a new pastor, (a youth pastor), in California, I lead a small group of High School boys in a Bible study every week. It was brutal. It was just organized death. I mean, if you've ever worked with kids you know how it was. You know, "Uh, I don't know." It was just death. I shared every talent, every gift, every brilliant insight I had and still it was dead, until one evening when it came time to share prayer requests.

As usual, the requests were about chemistry tests and relatives with the flu, until we got to Brian Millar (the quiet kid, who I thought was never listening). Brian paused for a moment and then said, "Sometimes . . . I feel like killing myself." It was the greatest gift he could've given, and he gave it. I mean, he didn't give it in order to control the group, didn't use it in order to gain control. He didn't expect us to fix it. He just gave it. He just gave his poverty, his thoughts of death, and our group absolutely came to life—like the blood of Jesus flowed out of those boys and into Brian and out of Brian and back into those boys and we became a body! Last I heard, Brian was doing mission work in Southeast Asia.

The abundance of shared poverty.

Have you been to the website [postsecrets.com](http://postsecrets.com), or seen the books? In 2004, this fellow, named Frank, invited strangers to "artistically share their deepest secret", put it on a post card, and mail it anonymously to him. So far, one half million post-cards have come to Frank Warren's mailbox. Most of them are shared poverty, "confessions" is the Biblical name. People are desperate to share them, for when we hide (hold on to) our secrets, they eat at our soul and empower the evil one, who inhabits those secrets. But sharing them sparks a wild, wonderful hope that maybe, maybe we'll be loved in the place of deepest shame.

Here are a few:

"I always say that I don't believe in God . . . no one knows that I pray to him every night, 'Dear God, don't let me die alone.'"

Here's another: "When I was a little kid, some girl on the bus asked me if I believe in Jesus. I said, 'No.' Now every time I pass a school bus I can still hear her say, 'Then Jesus gon' send you to hell.'"

Next: "When my friends go on diets, I discourage them. This is because I really just want them to be fatter than me."

This is another one: "For some reason, when people talk about Jesus, I picture Waldo in my head." (That's rather profound, "Where's Waldo?" Where's Jesus? Dying with us, suffering with us?)

How about this one: "I use a bracelet of Jesus to hide my cutting scars."

And this, you can see it kind of up in the corner. You can barely read it: ". . . I am lost."

Check this one out, actually it's a letter sent to Frank:

*"Dear Frank, I have made six postcards all with secrets that I was afraid to tell the one person I tell everything to, my boyfriend. This morning I planned to mail them, but instead, I left them on one pillow next to his head, while he was sleeping. Ten minutes ago, he arrived at my office and asked me to marry him. I said yes."*

Here's a real shocker for our terrified little souls. And that is, that even though Jesus hates sin, he finds confessed sin profoundly attractive. He finds our surrendered shame to be deeply sexy. He is the great bridegroom and in that place of shame, he produces the fruit, which is life, the beginning of the banquet of life, the great banquet of life, the abundance of shared poverty.

Jesus said, "Blessed are the poor in Spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of God."

The kingdom of God is a banquet, is a party.

I remember Bruce McBogg hugging crazy, old bag ladies at the bus stop and speaking to winos in the park. It was absolutely beautiful. I think he spoke from decades of pain and his poverty of spirit. The love he displayed was a banquet of grace. And then I remember Bruce speaking to me about time management courses and business seminars that he had developed and wanted to offer. I think he saw me as a success and, with me, he wanted to share his "strength," but that strength was weak and his weakness was so very incredibly strong.

I don't know, but I suspect that in a moment, the enemy blinded my friend Bruce to that glorious truth, the abundance of shared poverty. Bruce's strength could feed no one, but with Bruce's poverty, Jesus fed thousands. Bruce's poverty is Christ's body broken. It still is Christ's Body Ministries.

In Tim's suicide note he wrote, "When a minister becomes depressed, there are few places he can turn for help (at least not without ruining his ministry.)" Maybe so. But, maybe surrendered depression could become his ministry—be his ministry. At general assembly that year, he told my friend Johny, "I've never felt weaker in all my life" and Johny said, "Why don't you go to the elders?" And Johny told me Tim replied, "I've seen what they do to the weak – they'll crucify me." I doubt that's true, but those things do happen, and suppose it did? Is crucifixion the end of life, or just the beginning? I think it must be the shared poverty that results in the great banquet. Not the end, but really just the beginning.

Well, perhaps you shouldn't share your poverty or confess your sins to just anyone. Not everyone sees their value, and yet, even if the swine trample your pearls and nail you to a cross, surrendered poverty does not return void, at least not when it's surrendered to God in Jesus' name.

And that's point number:

3. Give your poverty in Jesus' name; confess your sins in Jesus' name.

If that boy had just given his fish and loaves to the five thousand, out of guilt and shame, that might be nice, but they'd still all go home hungry. He gave his lunch in faith, hope, and love, to Jesus, and everyone went home stuffed to the gills.

To give in the name of Jesus is to give to the Jesus who lives in the one to whom you confess your weakness (sins):

Your confessed weakness draws grace out of the one to whom you confess. Your surrendered poverty produces wealth through another.

I mean, you felt it...even while we were reading some of those post-secret cards? Didn't you feel it? Compassion. Mercy. Grace, kindness, love. Didn't you just want to just hug them and say, "Aw, you're not lost!" That's Jesus, rising in you. It draws the life of Jesus out of another; the blood of Christ out of others; the great bridegroom rises in them. Give your poverty in the name of Jesus and you give to Jesus rising within them. And you give Jesus to them; not your gifts, abilities, talents, and strengths; not yourself. You give Jesus. You testify to Jesus.

Jesus inhabits your emptiness. He shines in your darkness. His glory is revealed through your surrendered failure and sin. In fact, you really can't share Jesus without sharing your own poverty. You can't testify to your savior unless you need saving. You really can't sing "Amazing grace how sweet the Sound" unless you also sing "that saved a wretch like me." Grace.

Tim wrote, "It is my own wretched weakness for which I'm most ashamed." And yet, his "own wretched weakness" is where Christ is most truly, gloriously proclaimed.

Do you see why Satan tempts you to so desperately hide your shame? Because that's where Jesus is glorified. Paul wrote, "*I will all the more gladly boast of my weaknesses.*" In 2 Corinthians 11, he lists these weaknesses and in verse 28, he writes: "*And apart from other things, there is the daily pressure of my anxiety for all the churches.*" (That question, "How will I feed this crowd?") (Anxiety: and Paul tells us "*anxiety is a sin.*")

Next line, (2 Corinthians 11:29.):

*Who is weak and I am not weak? Who gets tripped up, and I don't get angry? If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness. I will all the more gladly boast of my weaknesses that the power of Christ may rest on me."*

The power of Christ is body broken and blood shed. It is love poured out as grace. Paul writes, "*we have this treasure in earthen vessels to show the transcendent power belongs to God.*" - treasure in clay pots.



Hide the crack pots and you hide Jesus. We have this treasure in barley loaves, little fish, and peasant boys. We have this treasure wrapped in weakness.<sup>1</sup>

I think Tim believed that most of the time, but for a time, perhaps only a moment, Tim listened to the Accuser. The evil one said, "Tim, you have nothing to give, so stop giving." Meanwhile, Jesus calls, "Tim give yourself, give your nothing, and you will discover you're giving me."

That's number four.

4. Give Jesus – Jesus is the abundance of shared poverty.

2 Corinthians 8: 9

*"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake, he became poor, so that you by his poverty, might become rich."*

God has a weakness: It is Jesus. It is God's love for us, his heart for us. It makes him vulnerable to us, weak.

Ephesians 2: 7

*"He made himself nothing, taking the form of a slave (a slave boy)."*

He chose to become weak, so we would see his heart and surrender to his love. He is love. And on the cross, he became weak for us. He absorbed all our weakness, all our poverty, all our sin, and he surrendered it to his Father, who is love. He became nothing and surrendered our nothing! But, that is not nothing. That is faith, hope, and love—God is love. So that is not nothing! That, in fact, is everything!

When the little boy gave his poverty, (gave his nothing), he gave the greatest something: faith, hope, and love. I think He gave the very Spirit of Jesus. In other words, the Spirit of Jesus inhabited that offering (gift) of weakness, and turned it into Pentecost.

Check this out:

- Jesus was crucified in weakness.
- He is the seed, sown in weakness, but raised in power.
- On Passover, Jesus surrendered his weakness, like a seed. He gave up his Spirit on the cross on
- On Pentecost, fifty days after Passover, his Spirit filled the church with resurrection power.
- That gift of five (pente) barley loaves looks like nothing, and yet that nothing contains the Harvest Feast that is Pentecost.

---

<sup>1</sup> In *The Wounded Healer*, which might also be titled, *The Hungry Waiter*, Henry Nouwen writes, "Thus ministry can indeed be a witness to the living truth that the wound, which causes us to suffer now, will be revealed to us later as the place where God intimated his new creation."

You see, this story, and John 6 are all about Passover, which turns into Pentecost.

- It's all about Jesus Christ and Him crucified, which is communion and then the great banquet.
- It's all about shared poverty, which turns into the abundance of the new creation.
- And I expect to see Tim there, and Bruce there, for Jesus shared in their poverty, so they could share forever in his wealth. I suspect that they won't stay lost. I expect to see them there at the feast on that day, and yet that day is now, when we surrender our poverty in Jesus' name to the hands of love.

Every moment you can consume your poverty in fear, which is death. Or you can surrender your poverty to the hands of love, which is life.

We desperately need to believe in the hands of love.

## Communion

So, on the night that Jesus was surrendered (*paradidomai*, in Greek) the day that Jesus surrendered (*paradidomai*) his Spirit (John 19: 30) to the Father, the day that Jesus surrendered himself into the hands of love, he took bread and broke it, saying, "This is my body given to you. Take and eat. Do it in remembrance of me." And in the same way, he took the cup, saying, "This is the new covenant, the eternal covenant in my blood, poured out for the forgiveness of sins. Drink of it, all of you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Well, like I was saying, I don't know how to feed the sheep. (I'm insufficient). I don't have enough time, enough talent, enough smarts, enough experience, enough education, enough stamina, and enough ability to feed all of you. I don't have enough money to buy enough bread to feed all of you. And yet, I do have this (Peter points to himself); we do have this.

And you know, it was only after Peter denied Jesus and then surrendered his poverty through bitter tears, after the resurrection, by the Sea of Galilee, it was only then that Jesus said, "*Peter feed my sheep.*" So come to the table:

And surrender your poverty.

And then feed the sheep (your neighbor).

We're going to do this morning. We're going to feed the sheep (the crowd) with Jesus. And this is how you're going to do it. We'll commune a little bit differently, okay? So, there are going to be three stations, and when you come forward, you're going to tear off a piece of the bread and you're going to dip it in the cup. All the cups are juice this morning. And if you don't want to do this, that's fine, you can just stay kind of where you are. But, I hope you come forward. All the cups are juice. You tear it off, and then you're going to turn around and you're going to feed the person behind you.

What are you going to feed them with? The broken body of Jesus that descends into your very heart. Okay? And then that person, you're going to come forward tear a piece of the bread, dip it, turn around and feed the person you and it may get messy. It may get confusing, but that's what it's like in a body that's coming to share together. Okay?

And also, for the first people now, the communion servers, listen up. One of you is going to have to hold both of the things, and you're going to tear off a piece of the bread and you're going to give it to the first person in line. And then, the last person in line, you need to feed the communion servers. So everybody

gets fed. And Jesus multiplies our stuff, especially our weakness, into an abundance of shared poverty, called the church. In Jesus' name, let's worship. Alright?

### **Benediction**

So, if you ever wonder, "What's church?" That was it! What you just saw. Now that was a sacrament, so it was substance, but it was also sign—a representation of what every relationship is supposed to look like in the church.

This is your assignment: Go home, and think about what you just saw, what you just gave to another person, and what you just received from another person. That's the church. It will blow your mind, if you really think about it. And sometimes people will ask me, "Pastor, I'm new to this church. What would you like me to give? What can I give? What am I supposed to do?"

If you've been around a little bit, you know we need all kinds of things: money, time, all sorts of stuff. But the reality is that most of all, we need this (I mean this in all seriousness): First, is that you surrender your poverty to God. Secondly, that you go to house church or you grab some people here. It doesn't have to be house church, but it needs to be some other people. It doesn't even have to be in this body. But, you grab them, and somewhere in your life, somewhere along the line, you sit down, in groups, and you surrender to them your poverty. You share your poverty; for you see, that's how the body comes together. That's how the body is built. It is in an abundance of shared poverty.

If we can help you do that, great. Go form a small group. Do whatever. But give Jesus to the person next to you. And receive Jesus from the person next to you. Believe the gospel - for it is an abundance of shared poverty that never ends. In Jesus' name, Amen.

*Disclaimer: This document is a draft and has not been edited by the author. Therefore, there may be discrepancies. Some discrepancies may be minor; some may have to do with theology. When in doubt, please refer to the audio version of the sermon on this website and don't be shy about informing us of errors.*