

# For the Pastor and Worship Team 2008

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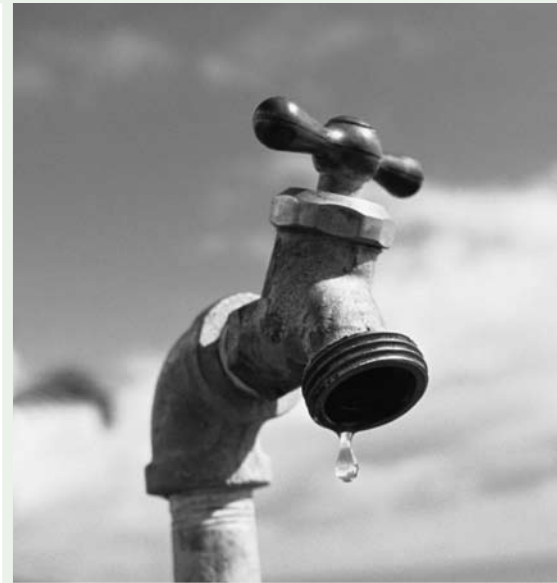


## WHAT'S INSIDE:

**Two Sermon Outlines**  
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**A Moment for Meditation**

"Do not neglect to do good  
and to share what you have."

HEBREWS 13:16A



## Logo Introduction

Dear Pastor,

In 2008, One Great Hour of Sharing introduces a new logo and tagline "sharing resources • changing lives." Here's a bit of the background on the logo creation. Use this to "unpack" the logo with your congregation during worship, Sunday school, or in small groups.

The logo is round to reflect the circular flow of blessings that come from helping and being helped. The two figures (do you see them?) represent the partnership nature of One Great Hour of Sharing programs and ministries—it's not us helping someone—it's us working together in partnership with others to accomplish God's work in the world. We recognize that those who share and those who receive benefit equally. The figures are arranged in a circle, or globe, to reflect the global nature of our work. They are organic and free-flowing to represent the flexibility to respond to whatever is needed. As the figures connect, a heart shape is formed in the center to remind us that true giving comes from the heart.

We are called to join our brothers and sisters throughout the world to relieve suffering and demonstrate God's love. It is our hope that this logo will remind us of that.

Blessings,

Lisa Rothenberger  
World Relief Officer



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l i v e s

# Sermon Outline 1

## THEME Choosing the Good We'll Do

### SCRIPTURE

Hebrews 13:1-2, 5-6, 16 (NRSV)

Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it.

Keep your lives free from the love of money, and be content with what you have; for he has said, "I will never leave you or forsake you." So we can say with confidence,

"The Lord is my helper;

I will not be afraid;

What can anyone do to me?"

Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

### CONCEPT

"Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have." Christians are oriented to doing good and to showing love. We energetically care for shut-ins, cook bereavement meals for grieving families, volunteer in our children's schools and youth groups, provide helping hands in domestic violence shelters and soup kitchens, write letters to our legislators, send mission teams out to build homes, and teach Bible schools. Sometimes there is so much good we want to do, so many opportunities for doing good, that we are stymied about which good thing to do. Like a deer caught in the headlights, we stand still, unsure which option to pursue. Perhaps that is why the writer in Hebrews prods us back into action, back into what our hearts desire, by reminding us, "Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have."

Jesus understood the human condition and gives us another chance when we neglect to do good. In the Garden of Gethsemane, he instructed his disciples to keep awake while he wrestled deeply in prayer. He needed their active presence. But, he came back from praying to find them fast asleep. He woke them, commenting, "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." (Mark 14:32-38) Jesus understands that sometimes we don't carry through with what we really want to do. Jesus gave the disciples another chance to be present with him in his suffering.

So Jesus gives us another chance to be present with him, in the lives of his brothers and sisters of today. Each year we receive the One Great Hour of Sharing offering. Annually, we are given the chance to be present with God's children, to share God's concern for them by giving them the help they urgently need. As God has given us multiple "other chances," so we help others have another chance for a healthy, educated, positive life. And why do we choose to give to One Great Hour of Sharing, when a number of organizations address disaster relief, worldwide poverty, hunger, and development? Because through One Great Hour of Sharing, we send our help specifically in Jesus' name. We share not only the material goods that people need to sustain life, but enrich those lives because the recipients know the help comes from the Church. What a reminder that they are not alone, that "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid!" (Hebrews 13:6)

# Children's Chat 1: Acts of Kindness

### SUPPLIES

Bible Passage & Aesop's Fable (see below)  
Coin  
OGHS Coin Box

- ▶ Welcome the children and read Hebrews 13:16a — "Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have."
- ▶ Ask the children what the Bible verse means to them. Do they think they're too small to make someone else's life better by doing kind things and sharing what they have?
- ▶ Read the Aesop's fable, The Lion and the Mouse (adapted)  
Once upon a time, a Lion was sleeping when a little Mouse began running up and down all over him. The Lion soon woke up, reached out his huge paw, and grabbed the Mouse. Just as the Lion opened his big jaws to swallow him, the Mouse cried out, "Pardon me, O powerful one! Please forgive me for disturbing you. If you will be kind to me, I will never forget it. And one day, I may be able to do something for you."

The Lion was so tickled at the idea of the Mouse being able to help him that he opened up his paw and let the Mouse go. A few weeks later, the Lion was caught in a trap. The hunters who had caught him wanted to take him alive to the King, so they had tied the Lion to a tree while they went to look for a wagon. Just then, the little Mouse happened to pass by, and seeing the Lion's sad situation, went up to the ropes and soon gnawed right through them, freeing the King of the Beasts.

"I was right," said the little Mouse. "No act of kindness, however small, is ever wasted."

- ▶ Show the children a coin, and talk about how "little" the coin is. Then explain how putting a little coin in the Coin Box (which they may have received in Sunday school) each day can add up to lots of "little" acts of sharing and kindness, and when everyone's gifts are combined and given to One Great Hour of Sharing, we can make a big difference in the world.
- ▶ If time permits, describe some of the brief stories of the ways OGHS helps people. (See the OGHS Map Activity if you need more stories and photos.)
- ▶ Close with a prayer, thanking God for our little hands that can make a big difference in the world through small acts of sharing and kindness.

### OTHER STORY OPTIONS —

**God's Incredible Creatures: The Gift of Sharing, Heather Soleim**

Sammy the squirrel has found the largest acorn ever, and he doesn't want to share it. On his quest to hide the acorn, he meets a few of God's incredible creatures. Each one seems to have a special gift and soon Sammy learns that he too has gifts and discovers the gift of sharing.

**The Kindness Quilt, Nancy Elizabeth Wallace**

Minna (a young rabbit) and her class read Aesop's The Lion and the Mouse in class. The teacher asks the class to perform an act of kindness, and then draw a picture of it to share with the class. Because she performs many acts of kindness, Minna cannot decide which to illustrate — so she creates a quilt of pictures. Her classmates add their pictures to the quilt, and soon the whole school gets involved and the quilt moves into the hallway, where it covers a wall with many acts of kindness.



## Order of Worship 1: Choosing Good

### CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader Come, worship in community—

**People** The community of the saints.

Leader Saints?

**People** Yes, saints! Called by God, in covenant with God,

Leader a consecrated people,

**People** living God's love in the world,

Leader demonstrating that love in practical service.

**All** Come. Let us worship with hearts and praise and service.

### OPENING PRAYER

Our hearts come heavy with concerns for our own family members and friends and for those far distant from us who also greatly need your presence and who need our help. Our hearts come joyous with your love and concern for us, and joyous with the good we have done this week in keeping with your will. We come to you, O God, in many conditions. We come to worship you. Amen.

### PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Leader O God, the enormity of what we have done,

**People** the enormity of what you have asked us to do that we have not done,

Leader the seriousness of our sins,

**People** the consequences to others of our disobedience,

Leader weigh heavily on our hearts.

(Pause for silent reflection)

Leader We ask your forgiveness,

**People** your grace and mercy.

Leader We ask for a turning of heart,

**People** a turning to you and a cleansing of our hearts and spirits.

**All** We humbly and earnestly ask your forgiveness, O God.

### WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Leader God is a God of justice and high expectations, yes; and yet also a God of compassion and understanding. Understanding ourselves now to be forgiven by God—each of us forgiven to the depths of our being!—let us reach out to the world with compassion and understanding and choose to bring news of God's grace to the world.

### LITANY (adapted from Hebrews 13)

Leader God has said,

**People** "I will never leave you or forsake you."

Leader So we can say,

**People** with confidence!,

**All** "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can anyone do to me?"

Leader Thus made bold by God's love,

**People** We will be God's helpers in the world.

Leader Let mutual love continue:

**People** Show hospitality to strangers.

Leader Do good.

**People** And share what you have.

**All** For such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

### INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." Being part of that world, and feeling that amazing love, we choose to respond with gifts of our own, gifts of love for the world.

### DEDICATORY PRAYER

Through these gifts, O loving God, we go where we cannot travel. We witness where our voices cannot be heard. We speak in languages which we have never learned. We love those whom we have never seen. So bless your realm through our love, represented by our gifts now dedicated to you. In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

### CHARGE AND BLESSING

Let us go now as Spirited Christians, powerful in doing God's will, energetic in extending the love of Christ. Choose to be builders of justice and agents of God's hospitality for all. Amen.

## Sermon Outline 2

### THEME What Would Jesus Do?

#### SCRIPTURE Isaiah 58: 1-12 (NRSV)

Shout out, do not hold back! Lift up your voice like a trumpet! Announce to my people their rebellion, to the house of Jacob their sins. Yet day after day they seek me and delight to know my ways, as if they were a nation that practiced righteousness and did not forsake the ordinance of their God; they ask of me righteous judgments, they delight to draw near to God.

"Why do we fast, but you do not see? Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?" Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day, and oppress all your workers. Look, you fast only to quarrel and to fight and to strike with a wicked fist. Such fasting as you do today will not make your voice heard on high. Is such the fast that I choose, a day to humble oneself? Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush, and to lie in sackcloth and ashes? Will you call this a fast, a day acceptable to the Lord? Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin?

Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up quickly; your vindicator shall go before you, the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard. Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am. If you remove the yoke from among you, the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil, if you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday. The Lord will guide you continually, and satisfy your needs in parched places, and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters never fail. Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to live in.

*NOTE: The Message offers a helpful interpretation/translation of this passage.*

#### CONCEPT

Despite the ancient similes, this passage rings with a powerfully relevant message. The prophet reminds us how we go to church and seek God's blessing, yet we fail to fight against the injustice we see, hear or read about every day. The prophet cries out that the honor and sacrifice God desires is not sackcloth-and-ashes, but a life of action: fighting on behalf of the oppressed, feeding the hungry, helping the poor.

And God honors that action. In the beautiful passage of reward, God promises help to the giver. But perhaps even more compelling is the change God grants in the giver. S/he will become a beaming bearer of light, a nourished and nourishing garden, a spring of life-giving water "whose waters never fail."

Doing good and sharing what we have must be more than a Christian "task" if we are to please the God we worship. Only in a life of action on behalf of others can we reflect our God in the world — a reflection that delights God far more than all the words our lips can utter.





## Children's Chat 2: Water

### SUPPLIES

The One Great Hour of Sharing poster. There are two included in this year's materials— one of a young girl drinking from a cup and the other of a smiling man carrying grain over his shoulder.

### OUTLINE

- ▶ Ask the children to describe water. What does it feel like? What does it taste like?
- ▶ What are your favorite things to do with water? (jump in puddles, go swimming, take a bath, go fishing or boating, splash a friend or sibling, drink it, make watercolors for painting, run through the rain or a sprinkler, etc.)
- ▶ What does your family use water for? (watering crops, washing vehicles, watering the lawn, water for pet fish or other animals, flushing toilets, washing dishes and clothes, cooking, etc.)
- ▶ Water is so important and necessary to life that Jesus described relationship with God as "living water"! The church uses water in baptism, as a sign of that person's becoming a Christian.
- ▶ Show the picture of the water tap in a field. Some places in the world have very little water or the water they do have is polluted and cannot be used. How would your life be different if you didn't have water?
- ▶ Explain that the One Great Hour of Sharing offering will help people get clean, good water—by digging wells, providing containers for hauling and storing water, and water purification tablets.
- ▶ Show the picture of the girl drinking from a cup or the man smiling broadly while carrying a bundle of grain. Explain that their villages got water because of money given to One Great Hour of Sharing. By giving to the offering, we can share God's love with people and concern about them and help them get the water they need.
- ▶ Close with prayer: Thank you, God, for water and for being the "living water" that gives us life. May people in need know how much we love you and how concerned we are about them as the money we give to One Great Hour of Sharing brings them water and the other basics of life that they don't have. Amen.



## Order of Worship 2 (with communion): Like a Spring

### CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader Holy God, we come to worship.

**People We delight in drawing near to you.**

Leader We bring offerings of praise.

**People We long to please you.**

Leader Make our sacrifices acceptable in your sight.

**All Show us the way you would have us go.**

### OPENING PRAYER

Holy and gracious God, we welcome this new Sunday and this hour — a moment to refresh our spirits in your house and at your table, an hour to celebrate your love and generosity to us. Open our hearts and our ears, that we may hear your message for our lives. Open our eyes and our lives, so that we may better reflect you in the world beyond these walls. Amen.

### PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Leader Loving and patient God, we come to you with troubled hearts.

**People We've quarreled and blamed and sought advantage over others.**

Leader Our consciences are guilty, too.

**People We've treated others unfairly and neglected to do good.**

Leader Our hands aren't so clean, either.

**People We have held tightly to our resources and failed to share our blessings.**

Leader We have forgotten whose we are, and who we represent.

**All Grant us the blessing of forgiveness, and the grace to move forward on a new and righteous path.**

### WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Leader Children of God! You shall call and God will answer!

**People We are forgiven. A new path awaits!**

Leader Listen for the voice of God, for God will guide you continually.

**All We will listen. We will follow.**

### LITANY

Leader We've been busy, busy, busy at worship and Bible study!

**People But is this the sacrifice that God desires?**

Leader Then what is the right thing to do? How do we get God on our side?

**People Get rid of unfair practices! Fight for the oppressed! Cancel debts!**

Leader But we obey the letter of the law.

**People Do you share your food with the hungry? Open your home to the homeless? Help someone pay their electric bill?**

Leader But I put something in the plate each Sunday...

**People Be generous with those in need. Speak out on their behalf. Take action to reflect God in the world.**

Leader And that will please God?

**All Then your light shall break forth like the dawn. You shall be like a spring of water, whose waters never fail.**

### INVITATION TO COMMUNION

As we prepare to approach Christ's table, to share in the feast of the people of God, let us stop for a moment to remember other feasts Jesus celebrated —

- ▶ the feast at the wedding in Cana, where Jesus turned water not only into wine, but into the best wine offered by the host
- ▶ the feast of the loaves and fishes, where a few shared and all went away full
- ▶ the meal from wheat gleaned on the Sabbath; the festive dinner in the home of Lazarus, Mary and Martha; the breakfast on the shore of Galilee after his resurrection.

When Jesus was around, no one went hungry. So as we remember the feast in the Upper Room, let us also remember our responsibility to act on behalf of the one who died for us — the one who calls us to go into the world to heal the sick, house the homeless, feed the poor, and fight for release of the oppressed.

*continued on next page*



*Order of Worship 2 continued*

### **COMMUNION PRAYER**

Gracious God, you have been generous to us. Even when we suffer and feel stretched, we know we are far better off than many who share this world with us. Give us hearts so full with remembrance of your blessings that they spill over in the desire to share our bounty. Help us remember more often our abundance than our lack, and open our eyes to those who need our kindness. Let this feast nourish us to be Christ in the world.

### **INVITATION TO THE OFFERING**

A spring of water, whose waters never fail, gives freely — bubbling over in its abundance and knowledge that God's gifts will never run dry. In the spirit of that spring, let us bring our offerings — giving not just a Dixie cup's worth to One Great Hour of Sharing, but a Big Gulp full. Let's return our gifts to the source, who promises to bless and multiply them to enable us to bring help and healing to a hurting world.

### **DEDICATORY PRAYER**

Generous and loving God, we thank you for the resources you have entrusted to us, and we return to you a portion of those gifts to further your work in the world. Join our gifts with others, bless and multiply them, so that all of your children may live in health and safety, rejoicing in each new day and sharing what they have to make our world look more like the world you desire.

### **CHARGE AND BLESSING**

Jesus has left the building! Follow him into the world, bringing light where there is darkness, offering water where there is thirst, serving food where there is hunger, and fighting for freedom where there is oppression. Rejoice in your blessings, and do not neglect to do good and to share what you have.

### **A Moment for Meditation: God's Chosen Fast**

By Rev. Bob Santilli, ABC Pastor

*"Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke?" Isaiah 58:6, TNIV*

Paul writes, "If I give over my body to hardship, that I may boast, but do not have love I gain nothing." (1 Cor. 13:3) Deeds without the right motives are futile. But it is also true that right motives with wrong deeds are worthless.

We seek to please God by giving of ourselves. But we must give ourselves to what pleases God. Isaiah tells us what these are: loosing chains of injustice, to set the oppressed free, to share our food with the hungry, to provide shelter for the wanderer, to clothe the naked and to pay attention to the needs of our own families (Isaiah 58:6,7).

*How blessed to choose to do for God that which God chooses for us to do.*