

**PLENTY TOO MUCH SERIES PART 1**  
**A PTM PERSPECTIVE: GRASPING THE GREATNESS AND GOODNESS**  
**OF OUR PLENTY TOO MUCH GOD**

5/24/2020

**I. Introduction**

- A. Happy Memorial Day everyone, so thankful to our veterans and their families who've sacrificed so much for our freedom!

We are starting not only a new sermon series today but our church wide campaign called, "*Plenty Too Much*" based on the book I wrote. A campaign is where we challenge everyone to focus together on a 40-day growth plan to grow our faith and love in Jesus. It involves listening to sermons, joining a life group, praying in agreement, giving and serving others in need, and memorizing Scripture.

This week's Scripture is from Eph. 3:20 in the NLT, let's all say it together.  
*"Now all glory to God, who is able, through the mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think."*

- B. The focus of this series is learning to experience the abundance of God for every area of our life. Today we want to see how that starts with our perspective of God. The more accurately and bigger we see God in our hearts, the more we will be able to receive his plenty too much abundance for every area of our lives. It all starts with grasping the greatness and goodness of God in our lives.

When the Bible speaks of who God wants to be in our lives, it so often uses a language of superlatives. God isn't just good; he is the *Author* of every good and perfect gift. He doesn't just give us peace but "peace that passes all understanding." He doesn't just give us joy but "joy unspeakable and full of glory." He doesn't just promise to bless our children but to bless our children to a thousand generations.

The title of my book is actually a word of praise from an African Pastor about this very thing! It was in one of those settings where he was testifying about the goodness of God in his life. It was as if he was saying, "If God had just saved me that would've been more than I deserved. But he didn't just save me, he delivered me from my addictions. If God had just delivered me that would've been more than I deserved but he didn't just do that, he filled me with the Holy Spirit, gave me an amazing family. He ends up declaring, "O God you love us plenty too much!"

- C. Why choose to do a campaign now while we have all of the challenges of this COVID 19 epidemic?

1. I think it is important to share this message now more than ever because most everyone is feeling a sense of lack and not having enough of

something. It may be health, finances, self-control, peace, joy, endurance. For me, I've especially noticed lately that it has been patience. Recently, I was stuck behind a slow truck, driving in the only lane open over Transmountain Road. It was like I was foaming at the mouth; I was uptight and going crazy about having to go so slow. I just cried out, "Lord I've run out of patience, I need your patience!"

2. The feeling of not enough is at the heart of the epidemic of fear and hopelessness going on in the lives of people all around us. I've heard it said that poverty is not lacking things; it is the fear of not having enough that causes us to cling too tightly to what we have and live in panic about the future. We see that a poverty mindset is one in which we may hoard or continually imagine circumstances where we suffer terrible consequences because we don't have enough or believe that we aren't enough to handle things. I like the quote of Mark Twain where he said, "I have lived through some terrible things in my life, some of which actually happened."

So many people are actually paralyzed by this kind of anxiety right now. This leads to a feeling of hopelessness and it also robs us of our sense of purpose and calling. As I've said, many people may survive the pandemic but lose their purpose and calling, living as lonely survivors not seeking first the Kingdom of God and seeing God's blessing.

3. In your outline I gave you a little survey to invite you to answer a question. In light of the crisis we're going through, which of the following would you say you sense most of the time: (Please circle one)
  - a. Never enough
  - b. Barely enough
  - c. Sometimes enough
  - d. Mostly enough
  - e. More than enough

**II. The Scripture we want to read today is from John 6, the story of Jesus feeding the 5000.** This is also the theme story of the book. As we read it, we want to contrast the perspective of two different groups. Jesus and the little boy had a plenty too much mindset and the disciples and the people had a not enough mindset. It centered around their perspective of who Jesus was in their midst. The disciples were focused on what they had instead of *who* they were with. They put the problem between them and God instead of putting God between them and the problem.

- A. The big idea of this lesson is that the bigger we make God in our heart, the greater the abundance we will be able to receive from God in our life.  
A.W. Tozer said "What comes into our minds when we think about God is the

most important thing about us.” It will impact how we think about everything else in our life.

I heard one preacher say that over the years he has noticed two kinds of people: those he called “Big Godders” and those he called “Little Godders.” He said if you have a big God then you have small problems, but if you have a small God then you have big problems because you see problems stacked up against your ability to handle them rather than God’s.

Our vision of God really does effect everything, not only how we respond to problems but how we pray, how we expect and are able to partner with God in helping other people’s needs, and whether we live our life with fear or faith. I believe there has never been a time in history when it has been more important that we walk by faith instead of fear.

I heard about an Eskimo who was going ice fishing with a lot of other fisherman out on a frozen lake. All of them carved out a “manhole” size hole in the ice. This man got out his chain saw and carved out a whale-size hole. When the other’s asked what he was doing, he said, “I know all of you are fishing for fish that are the size of a manhole, but I’m fishing for Moby Dick.”

I don’t know how many times I’ve seen it proven that a person’s expectation does determine their visitation. People who have lots of God moments, and God sightings in their life have a “God expectation mindset.” You ask them, “Why do you always win people to Christ or see healings, or miracles?” The answer is very simple: They are expecting to. I like to say, “You too can believe that all things are possible to him who believes.”

The Pharisees of Jesus day were always focused on behavior, trying to see people change by changing their behaviors on the outside. In John 6:28-29, when the crowd came to Jesus they asked, “*What do we have to do to do the works of God?*” Jesus answered, “*The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.*”

1. Jesus always changes lives from the inside out. Behavior is the fruit people see in our lives but beliefs are the root of those behaviors. All of us have beliefs and assumptions that are filtering and controlling what we see and what we can receive from God in life. Those assumptions are often unconscious. We have just accepted a set of beliefs on what people have said or on the basis of natural observations in life.

I recently was reading through the story of Joseph and the birth of Christ. There were several references to angels in the story including references to angels appearing to Joseph and speaking guidance in the night. I thought to myself I wonder why I haven’t ever had that kind of experience? Then it came to me; somewhere in my past I had accepted an assumption that

this was something that happened back in Bible days and wasn't something I should expect today. I believe my assumptions could very well be why that hasn't happened to me.

2. In Matthew 13:54-58 we read about Jesus going to his hometown. The people gathered because they heard he had been doing miracles. But instantly they looked at Jesus from a human perspective and said, "This is just the carpenter's son." In verse 58 it says that Jesus could do no mighty miracles there because of their unbelief.

In my book I have a chapter called, "Honey I shrunk the Lord." It refers to the story when God told Moses he was going to provide enough quail for the 3 million or so Jews in the wilderness to eat for a whole month. Moses kept telling God that was impossible. God responded with the words, "*Are my arms too short that I cannot do this.*"

Because God's power is infinite, every finite problem is equal for him to handle. It's impossible for anything to be difficult if God is Almighty! We don't need to ask if God can do this; we need to ask God how we can let our faith stretch so we can believe and see what he wants to do in our lives.

- C. An important point is, also, that we don't just have natural beliefs but that we have an enemy of our soul who loves to hack our minds with lies. In 2 Cor. 4:3-4, we read that the god of this world has blinded or put a veil over unbelievers' minds, so they can't see the glory of the gospel displayed in Christ Jesus. These lies are called strongholds that prevent us from experiencing God's love and involvement in our life. Adam believed one of these in the garden. When God came looking for him, Adam said that he couldn't come into God's presence because he was naked. God asked him the question, "Who told you, you were naked?" Of course, it was the devil telling him he was unworthy to ever come to God again.

In a similar way, like an onion, we all have layers of lies that need to be removed and replaced with true beliefs about God. In our life groups we will be discussing a tool I'm giving called, "Beliefs Assessment" that helps us identify lies that need to be replaced to be set free, to let God be as big as he wants to be in our hearts and lives.

### **III. What is the key thing God wants us to believe about him that could completely shift our thinking towards a plenty too much mindset?**

We read in John 6:35 the answer Jesus gave. **He said, "*I am the Bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.*"**

Another way of saying it would be- "I am the *Source* and *Sustenance* of your life." We don't just exit. Jesus would explain the reason he died and rose was so that he could live in us and we could live in him. He doesn't just give us a little bit of happiness; he gives

us his own joy. All that is in Jesus is in us and all that is in Jesus is available to pour out to others through us.

This revelation changes us from a poverty to a plenty mindset. I like to tell the story of my grandsons having a squirt gun fight. The youngest sibling is named Noah and he got tired of trying to win with his little squirt gun, so he went and turned on the faucet and used the hose as his squirt gun. He won the war because he had a whole different kind of source.

This kind of abundance can create a whole *new* normal. That's the word for this season. Things aren't supposed to go back to normal; we are to claim a whole new normal. Trying to love your family better is not a new normal, letting God be the *Source* and *Center* of your family will create a whole new normal, God working and loving through us with a supernatural degree of love.

### **What are the implications of this?**

- A. In the areas where we feel inadequate, we will start to experience God's adequacy. God told Paul when he was struggling with a thorn in his flesh, "*My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.*" (2 Cor. 12:9)

This reminds me of Moses when God called him to lead Israel out of Egypt. He had so many excuses; he stuttered, was too old, didn't have any help... He said, "I don't even know who to tell them sent me." Here God tells Moses his name, "*I am Who I am.*" I love that because Moses was saying, "I'm not, I can't, no way." God basically says, "You may be the great 'are not' but it's ok because I'm the great *I am.*"

- B. It means having confidence that God is the source of our peace since he is in control. There is so much fear because people are grasping to know what the future holds. The fact is we don't know and can't know what the future holds but we can know *who* holds the future. God is in control no matter who is in the White House or what is going to happen with the economy...

There are a lot of conspiracy theories about what is and what is going to happen. But God has a conspiracy theory, a plot to undermine what you see. It is called Jeremiah 29:11, "I know my plans (no matter what is happening on the outside his plans will win) My plans are to give you a *hope* and a *future*, to prosper you, to assure you that in your case Hope Will Win!"

He not only knows the way; he is the way. I heard about a man in a city asking a taxi driver if he knew the way to a certain hotel. The taxi driver said, "Better than that, I am the way; jump in and I will take you there." We just have to stay *in Jesus* and *He* will be sufficient in this journey.

- C. For me perhaps the greatest truth of God's abundance as my Source was the revelation that he is the Source of my self-worth, my standing, and my ability to have confidence and be comfortable in my own skin. Perhaps the biggest struggle I went through growing up was hating myself. I tried all kinds of ways to feel approval and good towards myself but nothing helped.

Then I discovered the source of all love was God's unconditional love for me. God loves us not for what we do, but because of *who* he is and what Jesus did. He is the source of eternal love; loving us before the world began. In Jesus, God made a way to love and accept us as if we were Christ himself.

In John 17:21, 23, Jesus was talking about unity and said, *"May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you sent me... I in them and you in me-so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved **THEM even as you have loved me.**"*

I love that because it tells us that the Father loves us like he loves Jesus. In fact, the picture is that God has put us in the middle of the Trinity in a way that as the Father loves the Son, he is loving the son with us in the middle. Sometimes we do what I call a "sandwich" hug with our grandkids. Sharon is on one side and I'm on the other and we put a grandchild in the middle and squeeze each other with them in between us. That is what is happening with Father and Jesus right now in a way that we are the beneficiary. What is so powerful is that the Bible says, *"perfect love casts out fear"* (I John 4:18). To begin to believe that you have the Father's love in this way, takes away the power of fear to control us, because we know, *"If God is for us who can be against us."*

- D. The last thing I will mention is to know Jesus as our source is to know that we have the authority and power, in Jesus' name, to open the gates of Heaven on behalf of others in need and ourselves.

I share in my book how this revelation became real to me in a graveyard in the Philippines. As I was holding this small child the Lord spoke to me, "What would you do if she were your daughter." I told him I would take care of her. The Lord then told me that she was his daughter and he would do anything for her, I just needed to ask. I tell the story of asking for provision for 1000 kids to feed and help. Through a miracle offering I received in Japan, we were able to start 10 feeding centers. The big thing was that I discovered God was just waiting to show us that he wanted to open the storehouses of Heaven to meet the needs of those who hurt the most and have the least on Earth. He is not limited by what he can do, but by what we are willing to ask and expect him to give through us. The reality of this changed my life and was at the core of why I believe God wanted to birth this church.

Today, the Lord wants to stretch your heart and vision of who God is and who he wants to be in your life. If God seems small or far away the important question to

ask is, “Who moved?” Have we moved ourselves away from realizing and receiving the vast wealth of who he is as a personal experience and possession of our life? Have we dared to stretch our hearts and minds to ask the Lord to help us perceive how big, wide, high, and great his love is for us and what he is eager to do in and through us for the world around us?

The key thing God wants from us is our response. Max Lucado gave an illustration of a rock and a sponge. God’s abundance of love, grace, favor is all around us like the Pacific Ocean. He wants to soak and saturate us with his goodness and love. The question is, “Will we respond like a rock or a sponge?” He wants us to hunger and yield ourselves to him, stretching our faith and belief as far as we can to worship and prepare our souls to grasp how great *He* is.

### **Conclusion**

There is no better way to respond to God and stretch your heart and vision for God than to be “all in” with this spiritual growth campaign. Soak in the messages, memorize the memory verse, get together with people to share about the goodness of God and stretch your heart in praise and testimony. Begin to set your sights on what God could do through you for others. Each of these things will make your awareness of God grow bigger and your ability to receive the PTM goodness of God grow stronger.

God bless you.