

GOIN' GREEN: REUSE
Matthew 6:19-21

The Bazaar that was held here yesterday offered a week's worth of wonderful fellowship getting ready. In addition, it offered us the opportunity to get rid of some stuff that we don't need and possibly others could use. Jesus offered us life abundant ... not life affluent as culture promotes. This need to accumulate or get more didn't start with us. Once, when Jesus was speaking to a crowd, a person called out, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me." Jesus resisted getting entangled but had a word for the wise, "Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions" (Luke 12: 13, 15) How many landfills do we need? How much can the earth absorb of our excess? More importantly, is there anything we can do about it?

When we speak of being good stewards of God's creation one way of doing that is by reusing. My question to all of you this morning is: What are some ways to REUSE? Re-gifting, giving clothes to clothes bin outside, bringing out deposit bottles and cans to church which not only recycles the product, but contributes to our budget, serving leftovers, buying items from garage sales or church bazaars, buying clothes from consignment shops, using washable table cloths and napkins instead of paper or plastic, using washable coffee mugs instead of styrofoam, buying plastic covers for food that can be washed instead of using plastic. These are all great ways to be good stewards of our environment. Sometimes it is in the everyday way of doing things where we are able to make the biggest impact.

John O'Donohue from his work "Anam Cara" speaks to this and shares these inspirational words: "The heart of the matter is, you should never belong fully to something that is outside yourself. It is very important to find a balance in your belonging. You should never belong totally to any cause or system. Frequently, people need to belong to an external system because they are afraid to belong to their own lives. If your soul is awakened then you realize that this is the house of your real belonging. Your longing is safe there. Belonging is related to longing ... Longing is a precious instinct in the soul. Where you belong should always be worthy of your dignity. You should belong first in your own interiority. If you belong there, and if you are in rhythm with yourself and connected to that deep, unique source within, then you will never be vulnerable when your outside belonging is qualified, relativized or taken away. You will still be able to stand on your own ground, the ground of your soul where you are not a tenant, where you are at home ... 'Where your treasure is, there is your heart also'."

Sometimes there are experiences in our lives that never leave us. Those experiences may be REUSED, if you will, to make the world a better place. This morning I would ask Cyndi Stonebraker to come forward to share such an experience she had in her life and how she continually reuses that experience to share with others.

(Cyndi shared her story about being hungry and explaining about how we can fill 40 bags of food for families in Niagara Falls. She

wants to make sure nobody ever feels the pangs of hunger and how we can help by sharing food with others.)

Last Sunday afternoon I had an opportunity to share some food with friends. I received a phone call in the afternoon advising me that my friends' 29 year old daughter had died the night before. When I answered the call I was in the process of making a casserole. I took the casserole over to my friends home and expressed my condolences. My one friend hugged me and immediately she shared with me, "how do people without faith cope?" What she was saying is that FAITH is her TREASURE. One way of sharing our faith or our treasure is by affirming what we believe. This morning I would ask all of you to join me in a modern affirmation of faith... because where our treasure is, there are our hearts also. Amen.

