

Share, Share, It's Fair

What is one of the first things we are taught to do with others? As young children we are taught to share our toys with our siblings or with other children who are playing with us. Sometimes this proved to be a battle, either with us or with our children/grandchildren. I know that at Christmas, any toys or games were addressed to the Nesbit family and not one child in particular. This cut down on any sibling squabbles over the game. One of the phrases taught to young children is “Share, share; it's fair!”

This can translate into adulthood. When we develop friendships, we often share what we have with our friends. How many of us go to someone's house without at least offering what they can bring to add to the dinner? Sometimes this is simply a courtesy and we hope they won't want us to bring something. When it is a smaller dinner gathering, I like to tell people to just bring themselves. Of course, if they insist I try to find something that they can do without causing them to go out of their way. We may joke about it when I invite them to dinner and they inquire if they can bring something. I will sometimes say, “The dinner!”

But we do like to share and contribute. I think this comes from being in a large family where things were much better when everyone contributed.

For those of us who are married, have been married, or have a partner, we know that we share our belongings with that person. And, if we had or have children, we are certainly “sharing” or providing for their needs. For those not actually raising the grandchildren we know that this takes on a much different standard.

Let’s take a look at our scriptures when it comes to sharing. The standard for the Jewish community at the time was that people were supposed to care for others who could not care for themselves. Jesus showed them this in the way he washed their feet and fed the five thousand after the Sermon on the Mount. He fed thousands with a few fish and a few loaves of bread. People were amazed at this. What we have to do is to look at who was fed and what the prerequisites were behind those who received something to eat that day. No one was interviewed about what they had brought, well, except the young boy

who had a few fish and a few loaves of bread. The disciples did not hand out applications for the crowd to fill out based on their ability to pay or their household income. They were simply fed.

It was on this standard that the early Christian communities were founded. Everyone shared what they had so that no one was in need. In later accounts we found that not everyone was willing to do his or her part and this was addressed accordingly. Our very brief reading from the Acts of the Apostles brings us this information. What we miss, though, is that they came to this through the Resurrection gifts of faith, hope, grace, and love.

I certainly hope that we can share the gifts from our spiritual Easter basket with our friends, families, and those of us who are in need. We want to share our spiritual, financial, and physical resources with those who cannot provide for themselves. In the spirit of Jesus, let us all be reminded to share what we can and when we can. As appropriate, let us share without qualifications so that members of our community will not want for anything.

