January 22, 2016 Sermon Discussion Guide
Pastor Steve DeNeff
"Blessing: Living Between Ambition and Contentment"

Gathering
"Lord, may this scripture guide our discussion as well as our lives. Give us the grace to look at the gifts you've given us and recognize that it is enough."

Ephesians 2:4-10
4 But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, 5 made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. 6 And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, 7 in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. 8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9 not by works, so that no one can boast. 10 For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Prayer
- For our persecuted brothers and sisters across the world, *Lord, hear our prayer.*
- For reconciliation and love between those of different race and gender, *Lord, hear our prayer.*
- For those of us who are a part of College Wesleyan Church to recognize the gifts you have given as enough, *Lord, hear our prayer.*
- For the needs that we have shared together on a personal level,… *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Summary of the Sermon
- As a group, recall the key points of Pastor Steve's sermon.
- How did God stir you during the service? How were you challenged or changed?

Scripture
Take the time to read aloud the scripture that was preached. **Luke 12:13-21**

13 Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me."
14 Jesus replied, "Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?" 15 Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions."
16 And he told them this parable: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded an abundant harvest. 17 He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.'
18 "Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my surplus grain. 19 And I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry."'
20 "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?'
21 "This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God."

Major Sermon Discussion Points

- When Jesus fed the 5000+, on the hill that day there wasn't enough. The point of the story, however, is that what wasn't enough really WAS enough.
- Greed = *Taking* the gift God has given us and *multiplying* that gift without *blessing* that gift.
- **Bless** = To bless something is to live between what God has provided and what you say you need and to say, in that space, "This is enough."
- The landowner lived with a scarcity mentality, believing that "this is not enough." However, the number representing "enough" is always moving when working from a scarcity mentality.

- The cure for scarcity is not abundance, but **blessing**. Believing that God is up to something and what He has given right now is enough.

Next Steps/Moving Forward

- Do you tend to live with a scarcity mindset or a blessing mindset? Does your scarcity mindset come from a fear of running out? Could a scarcity mindset come from boredom with what we have? What fuels your scarcity mindset?
- What do you tend to covet or desire more of? What isn't enough right now?
- What would change if you blessed those things you need more of and told God, "This is enough?"

Closing Prayer

Pray as you feel led as a group following your discussion or confess the following prayer individually or together:

(Psalm 23)

1 *The Lord is my shepherd;*
I have all that I need.
2 *He lets me rest in green meadows;*
he leads me beside peaceful streams.
3 *He renews my strength.*
He guides me along right paths,
bringing honor to his name.
4 *Even when I walk*
through the darkest valley,
I will not be afraid,
for you are close beside me.
Your rod and your staff
protect and comfort me.
5 *You prepare a feast for me*
in the presence of my enemies.
You honor me by anointing my head with oil.
My cup overflows with blessings.
6 *Surely your goodness and unfailing love will pursue me*
all the days of my life,
and I will live in the house of the Lord
forever.
Amen.