

Enough Is Enough Already!

It's one of those lazy Sunday afternoons. You know the kind I mean. You've been to church, had a great lunch, and now it's raining so you're off the hook for that yard work you've been meaning to get to. Seems like a great time to settle back with a book, watch the game, or maybe do a little scrapbooking.

Just when you're really beginning to get into this day of rest thing, one of your kids wants a snack. Okay, no big deal. A couple of minutes later you're right back where you left off. Except that now your other kid can't find her new game. This takes a little longer, but it finally turns up under the couch.

Ah, peace and quiet once again! Or not... Now the kids are complaining about being bored. And your spouse keeps trying to talk to you about something or the other that you couldn't give two hoots about. And now the kids are fighting and somebody hit somebody else but it's not really their fault because somebody was being mean and wouldn't share and then the phone starts ringing and suddenly a loud shout fills the air:

Stop! Enough is enough already!!

You didn't really mean to yell like that, but, well, how much are you supposed to take? And, frankly, it's not just enough, it's actually quite a bit more than enough!

Been there? Done that? How about with your material life? Do you ever get tired of being assaulted incessantly by ads? Of being told, sometimes subtly but often not, that you need bigger, better, newer, more? Of being bombarded by irresistible "free" offers, great discounts, special sales for "preferred" customers on which you must hurry and act now or...or what? Or you'll turn into a pumpkin? You'll lose all of your friends and maybe even your hair? Your relationship with God will be forever destroyed?? Do you ever turn them off, tune them out and shout "Stop—I have enough already!!"?

It's a war, you know, and we're the enemy. It's us against all of the retailers, manufacturers, advertisers, etc. We have something they want—our money. To get it, they have to con-

vince us that they have something we want. But most of us in this country already have enough. In fact, most of us already have more than enough.

Try this little experiment. For one week, save all of the ads, catalogs, and such that you get and would normally go through. But for this one week, just set them aside without really looking at them even if they're screaming "Three days only!" or "Limited time offer!" At the end of the week, go through them and ask yourself this simple question for each thing that you find yourself thinking you'd like to buy: "Did I miss not having that this past week?"

Have you ever read the book *Catch-22* by Joseph Heller? Someone commented to him at a cocktail party, "Joe, see that guy over there? He's a hedge fund manager, and he made more money yesterday than you have made on all the books you have ever published." Heller reportedly paused and then replied, "Yeah, but I have something he'll never have, enough."

How liberating it must feel to be so content! But how does one get there? I can't speak for Mr. Heller, but for me Philippians 4:12-13 holds the answer. Paul writes: "I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through Him who gives me strength."

There are times when I believe I feel that sense of contentment, of having enough. There are times, though, when I find myself doing battle with the "wants," and many times the "wants" win. But I'll keep on trying, and with God's help I'll be able to win more than I lose.

How about you?

I'm here to help you improve your financial life. It's free and confidential. Just call the Budget Guy, Allen Gunter, at 292-4035, or send an email to BudgetGuy@shpc.org.

For a wonderful look at what the Bible says about money, check out the Crown Financial Ministries Small Study Groups - call Margaret Fetty at 288-9034 for more information.