



AND he said unto me, *My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.* (2 Corinthians 12:9-10)

There is never a sufficiency in the world. Those who have amassed great fortunes are not satisfied therewith – they seek more always. The treasures of the world cannot satisfy the insatiable thirst and hunger that lies deeply nested in the heart of man. Misery adheres to both rich and poor alike. In fact, misery and dissatisfaction probably rules the hearts of the wealthy to a far higher extent than it does the poor. The poor have no time to covet the wealth and status of others since they struggle day-by-day for a morsel of food. Those whose only hope is in God, draw near to Him in knowing their great need. The wealthy presume to have no need other than more wealth. Wealth becomes their little god.

The great Russian writer, Leo Tolstoi (Count Lev Nikolayevich Tolstoy), authored a short story entitled, *'How Much Land Does a Man Need?'*

To summarize in my own words:

There was a man (named Pahkom) born into peasantry in Russia who, from his childhood, dreamed of having enough land that he nor his family would ever be in want. Growing up very poor, he labored daily with his father to grow crops sufficient to provide a

humble provender for the family. His father passed on to his reward in the process of years and left the small farm to Pahkom. Pahkom immediately set out to realize his dreams. He doubled his labors to increase the small yield of his farm. He forewent marriage in order to save for his dream. He went without the comforts of life in saving. Eventually, he had saved enough to buy another plot of land, and another, and another. Finally, Pahkom had a large tract of land and was the envy of his peers. But Pahkom hungered for more land.

From a wandering old gypsy, Pahkom learned of a race of Cossack's in the Steppe region of the south of Russia who practiced a strange tradition of giving a man all the fertile land he could walk around in one day from sun-up to sun-down. Of course, a worthy gift would be required of the appellant. Pahkom, moved by greed and envy for the land, sold his possessions and embarked upon the journey to meet with the Cossacks.

Upon arrival, he met with the leaders of that race of Cossacks and offered his gift of rubles as a token of his desire to compete in that strange contest for land. The deal was sealed with the kiss of the Cossacks, and Pahkom was to meet with the clan on a hill outside the small village of their meeting just before sunrise the next morning.

Pahkom came prepared with boots and stakes to mark his property as he walked to claim it. As the sun first peaked above the horizon, Pahkom started off smartly. From the hilltop, he admired the verdant green pastureland between the knoll and a clear-water stream at the base of the hill. "If I can have that pastureland as well as the stream, I shall want no more," Pahkom thought to himself. He skirted the pastureland carefully marking his plot with the stakes he had brought, and finally came to the stream. But looking beyond the stream, he observed the pastureland beyond to be as luscious as that which he had already claimed. Motivated by an ambitious lust, he decided at noonday to cross the stream and claim that land as well.

As he reached the knoll of the far pasture, he noted that the sun was sinking low on the horizon. He decided he must head back to the starting point at once. He moved smartly in returning to the stream that bordered his first plot of pastureland, but the sun had sunk quite low by now. If he was to successfully claim his land, he must hurry so as to arrive at the starting point before the sun sank below the horizon. He walked very rapidly but soon realized his speed was not sufficient. He began to run as the Cossacks on the far hillside cheered him on. Yet, the sun was almost descending below the horizon. With all his vigor, he sped toward the marker, but suddenly, came this terrible pain in his chest. Just as he reached to touch the starting marker as the sun set, he fell six feet short of the goal – dead as a doornail.

The answer was sadly given by this foolish grasp for more. All a dead man needs is six feet for his grave!

I remind the reader that all are dead men until they come to know Christ as Lord and Savior. But there is a sufficiency in Christ that the world cannot afford. The realization of our own insufficiencies, inadequacies and unrighteousness is the first step in knowing our need for a Savior.

The most powerful and richest of Israel at his day was King David. The Lord had blessed him with abundance beyond imagination. Yet, he lusted after another man's wife. This led to the murder of the woman's husband. The prophet of the Lord, Nathan, declared the Lord's displeasure unto David: "8 And I gave thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things. 9 Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight? thou hast killed Uriah the

Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon.” (2 Samuel 12:8-9)

Without a close walk with the Lord, there can never be the soul’s satisfaction. As Paul counseled: *“2 Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men: 3 Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart. 4 And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: 5 Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God;” (2 Corinthians 3:2-5 (KJV)*

My wife and I have faced many challenges in our efforts to serve the Lord and His children. We have been rejected by fellow Christians, rumored about conducting a ‘kindergarten church’ since most of our members are children or teenagers. At some points, I became discouraged, but my wife said, *“Don’t feel abandoned or discouraged. Have we lost an arm or a leg. Do we have food to eat and a place to sleep? Do we not have more than our dear Lord who had only a stone upon which to lay His head.”* Put in that context, I realize that we were more highly blessed to have those children under our care to teach the Gospel than most of those churches who coveted our small ones. Many have grown up to be doctors, architects and engineers – but they also remain devoted to our Lord Jesus Christ. They are also our children whom we love.

When we become discouraged with ‘things’ that we do not have, stop and remember the ‘things’ that we do have. Even if we have lost an arm, we still have another. Even if we are poor, we still have hearts capable of being brim-full of love for others.

That which man can provide is never enough. In the Gospel of John, more than 5,000 hungry pilgrims were fed with an abundance beyond man’s ability to provide. A young boy had brought only five loaves and two fishes.. *“8 One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, saith unto him, 9 There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?” (John 6:8-9)*

Andrew spoke correctly. What is this small provision of man for so many to be fed? With God, that which we have will always be enough whether we realize that fact or not. He can multiply the 57 cents of a little girl to build a large stadium, or the few loaves and two fishes of a lad to feed five thousand plus. What the believer has in his possession will ALWAYS be sufficient when our lives are turned over to the King of Glory and Lord of Creation.