

- Greetings in the name of all that is holy,

SCRIPTURE:

Colossians 4:5 (NIV) – Larger reading: Colossians 4:2-6

“Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity.”

STORY:

The Irish Potato Famine (1846-1851) resulted in a 30 percent drop in the population of the west of Ireland. The prolonged suffering of the Irish peasantry had broken the survivors in body and spirit.

John Bloomfield, the owner of Castle Caldwell in County Fermanagh, was working on the recovery of his estate when he noticed that the exteriors of his tenant farmers' small cottages had a vivid white finish. He was informed that there was a clay deposit on his property of unusually fine quality. To generate revenue and provide employment on his estate, he built a pottery at the village of Belleek in 1857. The unusually fine clay yielded a porcelain china that was translucent with a glass-like finish. It was worked into traditional Irish designs and was an immediate success.

Today, Belleek's delicate strength and its iridescent pearlized glaze is enthusiastically purchased the world over. This multimillion-dollar industry arose from innovative thinking during some very anxious times.

OBSERVATION:

The scripture lesson speaks of taking advantage of every opportunity. Sometimes it is hard to see the opportunities when they are housed in disappointments or during difficult times, as now with the Covid-19 Pandemic. But, opportunities are there nevertheless.

When those opportunities involve people it is sad when they are missed because they might, or should I say, usually won't, come our way again. A chance encounter is seldom realized a second time.

The scripture instructions about “outsiders” are interesting because, if I have read the complete passage correctly, the outsiders are the non-believers, those outside the fellowship of believers. Those opportunities are extremely rare and should be handled wisely, carefully and a true sense of a fear of God.

If we handle it carefully, wisely and within the context of our relationship with God then something fine could develop ... as fine as Belleek china.

QUOTE:

“Opportunities are usually disguised as hard work, so most people don’t recognize them.” - Ann Landers

PRAYER:

Make us sensitive to those around us and to each opportunity that comes our way. Help us to approach them with the wisdom of God and in the fellowship of all the saints so that something beautiful and priceless may grow. In the name of Jesus, Amen.

And the faith journey continues, Pastor Jim

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Reminder that Christmas Eve Service is by Reservation only and on a first come – first serve basis. We need to know how many will be in your family grouping.

Sermon this next Sunday is: “Once is Enough” – Hebrews 9:24-28 ... begin now to pray and prepare your heart for God’s revelation.

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