



It's time to share



Scripture commentary and sermon starter for the 2023 One Great Hour of Sharing

Carpe diem! Often translated “seize the day,” the phrase has a range of meanings: life is short, create new experiences now; swallow that fear and just do whatever strikes your fancy; stop wasting time and have that adventure; don’t squander time and energy on the small stuff; grab the gusto; be all you can be; take the trip; buy the shoes; eat the chocolate cake. Time is of the essence—do it now!

Roman poet Horace used the phrase in his Odes, written over 2,000 years ago. We suppose his intention was to spur people to live their lives fully—in all the ways that hold meaning for them. Perhaps, he wanted people to know that there are experiences that enrich our lives that we might miss if we’re not paying attention. We suppose... but we don’t know, for sure.

In its original language, carpe diem is not quite “seize the day.” Latin scholar Maria S. Marsilio states that carpe diem is “a horticultural metaphor that, particularly seen in the context of Horace’s poem, is more accurately translated as ‘plucking the day,’ evoking the plucking and gathering of ripening fruits or flowers, enjoying a moment that is rooted in the sensory experience of nature” (Chi Luu, “How ‘Carpe Diem’ Got Lost in Translation,” August 7, 2019, <https://daily.jstor.org/how-carpe-diem-got-lost-in-translation/>).

Paul speaks of reaping, sowing, and harvesting to the Galatian churches. He encourages them to do the right things to extend hospitality and generosity to the community. Paul envisions church communities of men and women from every walk of life, embraced as siblings and cared for as if each were caring for themselves. Their response to God’s love and care for them is to love and care for others by doing the works of Jesus—feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, welcoming the stranger, and working for justice.

Paul’s image of the harvest reminds us that we live in a world in which hunger is widespread and can be brought on by disasters, poverty, or fleeing conflict. Food sustains life. Responding to hunger is an affirmation of life. Your gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) help the Global Food Initiative and Brethren Disaster Ministries to respond to immediate and long-term hunger issues, no matter the cause, both locally and globally.

In addition to physical hunger, we also consider the spiritual hunger that is experienced by many—in the US and around the world. There are people who long for healing because of hurt they have experienced in relationships. There are many who are burdened by the circumstances of life due to struggles of health, challenges of employment or finances, or concern for the safety and wellbeing of their loved ones. Whether a person has hunger in their body or soul, the work we do together as the body of Christ can make a difference. Your gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing support ministries like Discipleship Ministries and the Office of Global Mission that offer hope in places near and far.

As you prepare to preach in preparation for lifting the OGHS offering, consider these questions: Is there a sense of urgency in your congregation to respond to sisters and brothers in need? For whom is food insecurity an issue in your congregation and your community? How is your congregation and community responding to the needs

of those who are physically or spiritually hungry? What are some positive stories you can share about your congregation's and community's work to alleviate hunger and offer comfort through tough times? How can volunteers stay motivated as the needs of their community remain steady or even increase?

In Galatians 6, Paul urges the churches to take every opportunity or time to do the right thing. The word translated "time" is the Greek *kairos*. *Kairos* is not simply chronological time; it is a decisive and appointed moment and season to do God's work. Whenever we have an opportunity, we can work together—for the good of all, one community at a time, planting seeds of faith, hope, and love to feed a hungry world.

In the spirit of *carpe diem*, let us do what we can, while we can, with all that we have—it is the right thing to do to ensure a bountiful harvest for all of God's children.

Seize, pluck, harvest the day. It's time to share so that no one goes hungry or feels alone. There is enough for all when we share. The time to share is now.

Carpe diem, indeed, and in deed!