

God's Heart For The Poor, pt.1, 2.26.06

The Poor Among Us

Transition from previous series...Cliff's message...this is an overview message

Introduction:

1. Deuter.15.11 - read together
2. Mark 14.7 - read together
3. The purpose of this series are:
 - a. Begin to feel God's heart for the poor...to see what God sees...unsettle our hearts...we don't see them.
 - b. Look at ways we can demonstrate His heart through our hands to those in need...living out the ministry of Jesus not only with a compassionate heart but an outstretched hand.
 - c. Consider the impact of responding to the poor ...what it means to God, the poor & us.

Poverty Quiz - on screen

Poverty Brochure

The Effects of Poverty on children - a compilation of many National Surveys

Biblical Understanding of the Poor (Over 2300 verses about the poor)

A. The Poor & Needy

- a. The words for poor & needy connotes destitution..."to crouch" like a beggar cringes.
- b. Scripture
 - i. Ps.72.4, 13
 - ii. Deut.15.7-10 - 7 If there is a poor man among your brothers in any of the towns of the land that the LORD your God is giving you, do not be

hardhearted or tightfisted toward your poor brother. 8 Rather be openhanded and freely lend him whatever he needs. 9 Be careful not to harbor this wicked thought: "The seventh year, the year for canceling debts, is near," so that you do not show ill will toward your needy brother and give him nothing. He may then appeal to the LORD against you, and you will be found guilty of sin. 10 Give generously to him and do so without a grudging heart; then because of this the LORD your God will bless you in all your work and in everything you put your hand to.

iii. Jer.22.16

iv. Jer.23.6

v. Prov.31.9

vi. James 5.1–6 – 1And a final word to you arrogant rich: Take some lessons in lament. You'll need buckets for the tears when the crash comes upon you. 2Your money is corrupt and your fine clothes stink. 3Your greedy luxuries are a cancer in your gut, destroying your life from within. You thought you were piling up wealth. What you've piled up is judgment.

4All the workers you've exploited and cheated cry out for judgment. The groans of the workers you used and abused are a roar in the ears of the Master Avenger. 5You've looted the earth and lived it up. But all you'll have to show for it is a fatter than usual corpse. 6In fact, what you've done is condemn and murder perfectly good persons, who stand there and take it.

B. The Refugee, Illegal Alien & Foreigner – The person(s) who are in this country who are not native to it.

a. Ex.22.21

b. Nu.15.15–16

c. Deut.10.17–19

- d. Jer.22.3 – 3This is what the LORD says: Be fair-minded and just. Do what is right! Help those who have been robbed; rescue them from their oppressors. Quit your evil deeds! Do not mistreat foreigners, orphans, and widows. Stop murdering the innocent!
- e. *Luke 10.25–37 – the story of the Good Samaritan

C. The Widow

- a. Often destitute, but play huge roles in the redemptive history of God. (2 paragraphs from Be A Hero, p.76)
- b. Scripture
 - i. Ex.22.22–24 – 22"Do not exploit widows or orphans. 23If you do and they cry out to me, then I will surely help them. 24My anger will blaze forth against you, and I will kill you with the sword. Your wives will become widows, and your children will become fatherless.
 - ii. Ps.146.9
 - iii. Is.1.17
 - iv. James 1.27 – 27Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

D. The Orphan – though often used with other groups

- a. Ps.10.17–18 – LORD, you know the hopes of the helpless. Surely you will listen to their cries and comfort them. You will bring justice to the orphans and the oppressed, so people can no longer terrify them.
- b. Ps.68.5
- c. Prov.23.10
- d. Mal.3.5 – "Yes, I'm on my way to visit you with Judgment. I'll present compelling evidence against sorcerers, adulterers, liars, those who exploit workers, those who take advantage of widows and orphans, those who are inhospitable to the homeless--anyone and everyone who doesn't honor me." A Message from GOD-of-the-Angel-Armies.

Waging a War Against the Force Behind Poverty

- A. Satan – Poverty is more than a societal issue it is spiritual one.
B/c of mankind's sin, Satan has brought bondage of every kind upon mankind. Don't hear me saying that those living in poverty
- B. The call to the Church. Bringing justice (when God gets his way) to the oppressed is advancing the Kingdom of God against the kingdom of darkness...to preach Good News to the poor and release the oppressed. When this happens (Justice) over a person, or region revival happens. Real revival impacts society=transformation
- C.

Job as an example of compassion – Job 1.1; 31

16"Have I refused to help the poor, or crushed the hopes of widows who looked to me for help? 17Have I been stingy with my food and refused to share it with hungry orphans? 18No, from childhood I have cared for orphans, and all my life I have cared for widows. 19Whenever I saw someone who was homeless and without clothes, 20did they not praise me for providing wool clothing to keep them warm? 21If my arm has abused an orphan because I thought I could get away with it, 22then let my shoulder be wrenched out of place! Let my arm be torn from its socket! 23That would be better than facing the judgment sent by God. For if the majesty of God opposes me, what hope is there?

31My servants have never let others go hungry. 32I have never turned away a stranger but have opened my doors to everyone.

35"If only I had someone who would listen to me and try to see my side! Look, I will sign my name to my defense. Let the Almighty show me that I am wrong. Let my accuser write out the charges against me. 36I would face the accusation proudly. I would treasure it like a crown. 37For I would tell him exactly what I have done. I would come before him like a prince.

A gateway to revival

- A. the largest % of poor – children under 18
- B. the largest % to respond to the Gospel – children under 18
- C. Change a child's destiny and you change a family's destiny
- D. This is the largest harvest field in the world.