

THE CHRISTIAN RESPONSIBILITY TO THE POOR

6 September, 2013

John 12:1-7

It is good to care for the poor, but it is better to care for the Lord Jesus Christ. No matter how much you give to the poor, the poor will always be with us on this earth. It was never God's plan to make everybody on earth financially equal. Our priority should not be to elevate the status of the poor, but to make sure Jesus Christ is glorified on earth. If you preach Jesus to the poor, when they die, their troubles will be over. Since you can't eliminate poverty, focus on the salvation of souls.

Deuteronomy 15:10-11

Even amongst all the kingdom blessings promised by God, He said there will always be poor among them. You can't make people smart about money simply by giving them money. That is why there are poor people in every land.

Zephaniah 3:8-12 (Nahum – Habakkuk – **Zephaniah** – Haggai – Zechariah – Malachi – New Testament)

Even in the Millennial Kingdom where all is made right; where everyone is worshipping and serving the Lord and trusting in His name, there will still be poor people. In the millennium everybody's not rich; everybody's not equal. Some rule; some are ruled. One nation will be the head, all other nations will be under that head (Zechariah 14:9). Even the creatures in heaven are not equal. There are angels and Archangels (1 Thess. 4:16, Jude 9). Even the stars differ in glory (1 Cor. 15:41). Equality is not a Christian principle or standard.

Acts 2:44-47

One local New Testament church voluntarily chose to give up everything they had for the common good of all their members. They were not commanded to do this by the Lord or the Apostles. They wanted to do it.

Later in the book of Acts, rich churches are giving to poor churches voluntarily (Acts 11:29-30). This proves that there was no longer a common pool.

Proverbs 30:15

Here beggars are compared to a horseleach. Someone who expects others to give so that they don't HAVE to work; we call them leaches. Christians ought to give to those who have legitimate needs, not to those who choose to be leaches. Decent people help decent people in times of crisis or times of need, but we need to distinguish between the poor and the moochers.

James 2:1-5

Do not favor the rich. Do not look down upon the poor. There are good Christians to be found in every economic class. A Christian should not be a money lover (1 Tim. 6:10); he ought to be concerned about souls.

Leviticus 23:22

Here is a welfare system that provides the poor with a means of working for their provisions. They didn't expect the rich people to simply hand them money or food. They were willing to work for it.

"If I'm poor, do I have to give to God?" What's the Bible principle and example?

Mark 12:41-44

Jesus (and not the pastor) is the one who observes (vs. 41) how much you give to Him and how much you keep for yourself.

Jesus does not command that you give all that you have, as this poor widow did. But He records it so that you can understand the principle: if you love the Lord, you're going to give to the Lord.

First Kings 17:8-16

The widow had faith to believe that God would provide for her and her son if she would give to Him first. This is a principle that works for the rich and the poor alike. If you put God first because you love Him, you'll find that all your needs will be met.
