

# Remember the Poor

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## There are many “hindrances” to helping the poor

- We are bombarded by so many needs it is impossible to meet them all
- Many take advantage of the charity of others and we don't want to enable them
- It takes more time to help someone **out** of poverty than to simply throw money at it
- Our personal financial health may prohibit giving to the poor due to things like debt, self interest, not planning to give, or we may simply believe we are not be able to afford it.

## Developing a biblical philosophy around giving to the poor

While there are some legitimate as well as some not so legitimate hindrances toward giving the poor, we should ultimately seek to embrace a biblical framework that informs our ideas and thoughts about the poor so that our attitude and actions align with God's word on the topic.

## The LORD is definitely interested in the poor

### **It is reasonable to assume Jesus gave to the poor on some occasions**

- Joh 13:29 NIV Since Judas had charge of the money, some thought Jesus was telling him to buy what was needed for the festival, **or to give something to the poor.**

### **He taught us to do the same**

- Luk 14:12-14 NIV Then Jesus said to his host, "When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or sisters, your relatives, or your rich neighbors; if you do, they may invite you back and so you will be repaid. 13 But **when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, 14 and you will be blessed.** Although they cannot repay you, **you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.**"

### **He blesses those who give to the poor**

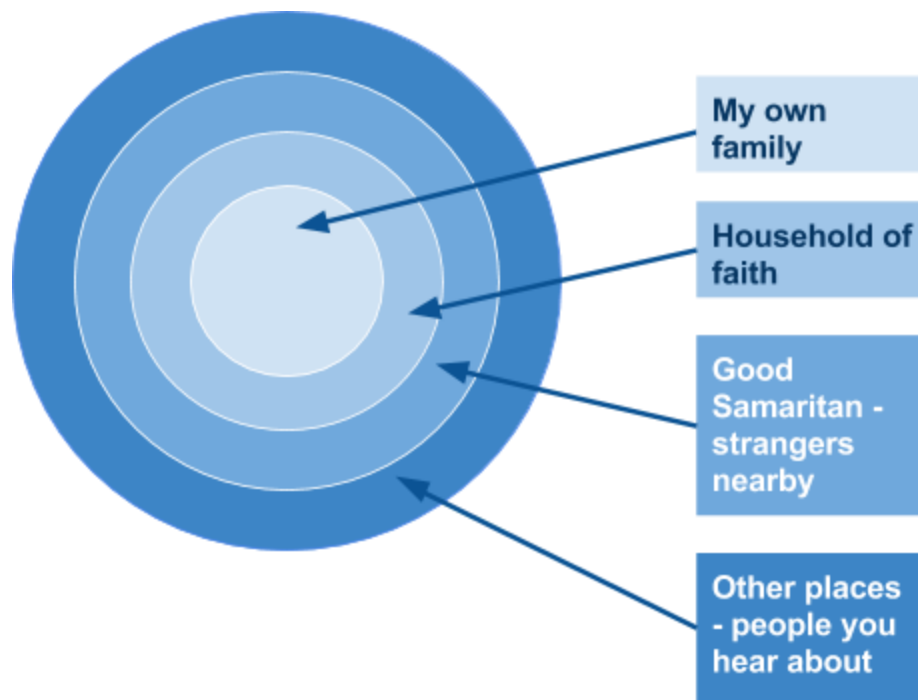
- Deu 15:10-11 NIV **Give generously** to them and do so without a **grudging heart**; then **because of this the LORD your God will bless you in all your work and in everything you put your hand to.** 11 **There will always be poor people in the land. Therefore** I command you to be **open-handed toward your fellow Israelites** who are poor and needy in your land.
- Pro 22:9 NIV **The generous will themselves be blessed**, for they share their food with the poor.
- Pro 28:27 NIV **Those who give to the poor will lack nothing**, but those who close their eyes to them receive many curses
- Pro 19:17 NIV Whoever is kind to the poor **lends to the LORD**, and he will **reward** them for what they have done.

### **The early church seemed to include remembering the poor as part of its mission**

- Gal 2:9-10 NIV James, Cephas and John, those esteemed as pillars, gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship when they recognized the grace given to me. They agreed that we should go to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcised. 10 All they asked was that **we should continue to remember the poor**, the very thing **I had been eager to do all along.**

## Rules of thumb

### Proximity



#### **My own family**

- 1Ti 5:3-8 NIV Give proper recognition to those widows who are really in need. 4 **But if a widow has children or grandchildren, these should learn first of all to put their religion into practice by caring for their own family and so repaying their parents and grandparents, for this is pleasing to God.** 5 The widow who is really in need and left all alone puts her hope in God and continues night and day to pray and to ask God for help. 6 But the widow who lives for pleasure is dead even while she lives. 7 Give the people these instructions, so that no one may be open to blame. 8 **Anyone who does not provide for their relatives, and especially for their own household, has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.**

#### **Household of faith**

- Gal 6:9-10 NIV Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. 10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, **especially to those who belong to the family of believers.**
- Act 9:36 NIV In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (in Greek her name is Dorcas); she was **always doing good and helping the poor.**
- Act 4:33-37 NIV With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And God's grace was so powerfully at work in them all 34 that **there were no needy persons among them.** For from time to time those who owned land or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales 35 and put it at the apostles' feet, and it was **distributed to anyone who had need.** 36 Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means "son of encouragement"), 37 sold a field he owned and brought the money and put it at the apostles' feet.

## Good Samaritan

- Luk 10:33-37 NIV But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. 34 He went to him and **bandaged his wounds**, pouring on **oil and wine**. Then he put the man on his own **donkey**, brought him to an **inn** and **took care of him**. 35 The next day he took out **two denarii** and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, **I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.**' 36 "Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?" 37 The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him." Jesus told him, "**Go and do likewise.**"

## Other places

- Act 11:27-30 NIV During this time some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. 28 One of them, named Agabus, stood up and through the Spirit predicted that a severe famine would spread over the entire Roman world. (This happened during the reign of Claudius.) 29 The disciples, as each one was able, **decided to provide help for the brothers and sisters living in Judea**. 30 This they did, sending their gift to the elders by Barnabas and Saul.

## Opportunity

### God gives us material possessions - some of them are for others

- 1Jn 3:17-19 NIV **If anyone has material possessions** and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? 18 Dear children, let us not love with words or speech **but with actions and in truth**. 19 This is how we know that we belong to the truth and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence:

### God gives us a blessing - some of it is for others

- Lev 19:9-10 NIV "When you reap **the harvest of your land**, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. 10 Do not go over your vineyard a second time or pick up the grapes that have fallen. **Leave them for the poor and the foreigner. I am the LORD your God.**

## Responsibility

Both the poor and those who give to the poor carry responsibility. The poor should seek to alleviate those issues that keep them poor...(bad spending habits, laziness, no budget, no generosity - a lot of the things we have been talking about in this series). While we are called to give to the poor, we are also called to HELP the poor, and sometimes helping the poor is taking a deeper step into their financial life to help them find a permanent solution to their problem.

### God's Word is clear that laziness will lead to poverty

- Pro 10:4 NIV **Lazy hands make for poverty**, but diligent hands bring wealth.
- Pro 20:4 NIV **Sluggards do not plow in season**; so at harvest time they look but find nothing.

### Those who will not work shall not eat

- 2Th 3:10-12 NIV For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: "**The one who is unwilling to work shall not eat.**" 11 We hear that some among you are idle and disruptive. They are not busy; they are busybodies. 12 Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and **earn the food they eat**.

**Sometimes NOT meeting a need is better...their hunger will drive them**

- Pro 16:26 NIV The appetite of laborers works for them; their hunger drives them on.

### **It is difficult to step into a person's personal space and talk about these things**

- Pro 9:7-9 NIV Whoever corrects a mocker invites insults; whoever rebukes the wicked incurs abuse. 8 Do not rebuke mockers or they will hate you; **rebuke the wise and they will love you.** 9 Instruct the wise and they will be wiser still; teach the righteous and they will add to their learning.

### **We have a responsibility to do something**

- Jas 2:14-18 NIV What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? 15 Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. 16 If one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? 17 In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. 18 But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds.

### **At minimum we are called to love**

- Rom 13:7-8 NIV Give to everyone what you owe them: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor. 8 Let no debt remain outstanding, except **the continuing debt to love one another**, for whoever loves others has fulfilled the law.

## For the kingdom

### **One of the goals of our working is to give**

- Act 20:25 & 33-35 NIV "Now I know that none of you among whom I have gone about preaching the kingdom will ever see me again...33-35 **I have not coveted** anyone's silver or gold or clothing. 34 You yourselves know that **these hands of mine have supplied my own needs and the needs of my companions.** 35 In everything I did, I showed you that **by this kind of hard work we must help the weak**, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: **'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'**"

### **Along with giving - we MUST share the gospel with the poor**

- Mat 11:5 NIV The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, **and the good news is proclaimed to the poor.**

### **We must include the poor in our fellowship**

- Luk 14:13 NIV But when you give a banquet, **invite the poor**, the crippled, the lame, the blind,

### **The poor must be treated with respect and dignity**

- Jas 2:2-5 NIV Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in filthy old clothes also comes in. 3 If you show special attention to the man wearing **fine clothes** and say, "Here's a good seat for you," but say to the **poor man**, "You stand there" or "Sit on the floor by my feet," 4 have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? 5 Listen, my dear brothers and sisters: **Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him?**