

You and “The Poor”

I would like to ask everyone who is reading this to please understand that it is being written in the spirit of God’s Grace for edification, exhortation and in love.

The purpose is to ensure we are sensitive to God’s will and not our own.

Ever wonder why Jesus mentioned “The Poor” so many times during his time on earth? Let’s face it, Jesus’ time here on earth was limited, yet he made “The Poor” a central part of his ministry.

Why did God clearly make reference to “The Poor” throughout scripture?

Could it be that they were the central focus we, today, as family should pay the most attention to?

As we begin let’s breakdown the word poor in the Hebrew, there are several ways the word is defined

Old Testament

ebyown

- 1) in want, needy, chiefly poor, needy person
- 2) subject to oppression and abuse
- 3) needing help, deliverance from trouble, especially as delivered by God
- 4) general reference to lowest class

muwk

- 1) (Qal) to be low, grow poor, be depressed, be poor

aniy

- 1) poor, afflicted, humble, wretched
- a) poor, needy
- b) poor and weak
- c) poor, weak, afflicted, wretched
- d) humble, lowly

dal

- 1) low, poor, weak, thin, one who is low

ruwsh

- 1) to be poor, be in want, lack
- a) (Qal)
 - 1) to be poor
 - 2) to be in want or hunger
 - 3) poor man (subst)

b) (Hithpolel) one impoverishing himself (participle)

Let's breakdown the word poor in the Greek:

New Testament

Ptochos

1) reduced to beggary, begging, asking alms

2) destitute of wealth, influence, position, honour

a) lowly, afflicted, destitute of the Christian virtues and eternal riches

b) helpless, powerless to accomplish an end

c) poor, needy

3) lacking in anything

a) as respects their spirit

1) destitute of wealth of learning and intellectual culture which the schools afford (men of this class most readily give themselves up to Christ's teaching and proved them selves fitted to lay hold of the heavenly treasure)

Taking all these uses of the word poor, it is clear, if you'll allow me to paraphrase by blending the Old and New Testaments use of the word poor to mean: Poor, Needy, Lacking in Anything, Helpless, Powerless to accomplish, Destitute of wealth, Beggary, Begging, Lowly, Hungry, Weak, in Want, Needing Help, so as you can see it has a wide range of meanings.

Please keep in mind that it can also mean: Poor in Health, Spirit, etc or in need of wisdom, guidance or loaf of bread so don't think this just means money.

Don't try and split hairs here.

NOTE: Prior to beginning I want to point out this one thing, please read this in the Spirit of Grace. The word Grace in its literal translation is: The Divine influence upon the heart and its reflection in the life!

Allow me to explain how this revelation about "The Poor" has come into being for me to share with you.

We are currently living it and now coming out of it. Whenever an attack from the enemy takes place or a trial of faith occurs I always ask the Lord what I can learn from it so I can share those lessons learned with others, as I am with you now, during their times of trial and affliction and how the Lord delivered us.

My family and I were well below the poverty line, according to the United States of America, yet we could not get governmental assistance and watched while all the illegal's got food, medical assistance, rent allowance, utility assistance and more while we were literally going hungry, we lost everything!

The very sad truth is going to be revealed throughout this entire writing. Many a professed Christian have been standing by and watching my family starve and done nothing when it was well within their power to help by obeying the Holy Scriptures and demonstrating their love and commitment to God in so doing.

Although we did not mention our situation to many people it was very evident as time dragged on that we were having financial challenges.

In fact, knowing that people “really don’t care” about hearing about anything that anyone else is going through I kept most of our struggles to myself.

However many a professed Christian have been free with their opinions, criticisms, accusations, judgments, slander, and a host of other non-sensitive comments. Not to mention their self-centeredness and uncaringness about anything other than themselves.

Not one person ever heard me complain, murmur, grumble or look depressed during this entire time. The number one statement that anyone heard me say, when asked how I was, or to have a good day, was “all my days are good.” Once in a while someone would say “I wish I could say that” and I would always answer “you can,” I did not say I don’t have problems, I have more than you but I also have the solution and it is found in Christ!

How can you help “The Poor?” you ask.

This is NOT a subject you need to pray about!

This is NOT a subject where you need to seek the Lord on how he would have you approach this situation!

This is NOT a subject with gray areas!

This is a subject with clear instructions throughout time with specific responses by the true body of Christ!

One of the most horrible statements Christians use freely, without substance, is “I’ll pray about it!” When God say’s: “DO NOT COMMIT ADULTRY” you don’t have to pray about it, is that clear! When God speaks about the poor and your response you don’t have to pray about it.

I’m so sick of pretentious Christians covering their lack of a relationship with God by portraying themselves as in tune with God by saying “I’ll pray about it” instead of “Doing It!”

I had one brother who’s famous line was “if God wanted me to be there or do this or that I would definitely have been there or done this or that” but I did not feel lead in my spirit. This was so amazing, because this brother never missed God! If you want to believe his crock and bull statement at face value? This same brother lead about 5 or 6 Christian women to engagement but each time the Lord told him he was not to marry them! He left everyone of them decimated, sorry that is NOT GOD!

Let’s examine this and find out what the scriptures have to say about the subject of “The Poor”.

There are over 140 verses in the scriptures that refer to the term “The Poor” and each has what I consider a very important key to how God views each of us. I’m thinking of the scripture that states:

1st John 3:17

But whoso hath this world’s good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

NOTE: This verse does not even speak about “The Poor” it say’s if a brother have a need! Like, someone who is working and can’t afford to get new tires for their car.

I live and pattern my life by this verse and for the following verse:

Deuteronomy 15:11

For “The Poor” shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto, interesting, 1) thy brother, 2) to thy poor, and 3) to thy needy, in thy land.

Now let’s go back a bit here and look at the entire context in which this verse was written.

Deuteronomy 15:7-11

Vs. 7) If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother.

Vs. 8) But thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth, NOT needeth.

Vs. 9) Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, The seventh year, they year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him nought; and he cry unto the Lord against thee, and it be sin unto thee. WOW!

Vs. 10) Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him: because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy work; and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto.

Vs. 11) For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land.

This means Old and New Testament: I’m quite certain that God would not exclude the treatment/ heart attitude in the New when he made the old void!

WOW! I’m certain many reading this will now toss it out as the guilt of finding out who their god is, is now manifested to them.

Before we breakdown these verses lets look at a few other scriptures that will support where I’m going.

Mark 4:18 & 19

Vs. 18) And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as here the word,

Vs. 19) And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.

Let's look at the next verse to see the opposite type of personality.

Mark 4:20

And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some an hundred.

The other verses are found in;

1st Timothy 6:6-12

Vs. 6) But godliness with contentment is great gain.

Vs. 7) For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.

Vs. 8) And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.

Vs. 9) But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

Vs. 10) For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

Vs. 11) But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.

Vs. 12) Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

Verse 9 is very interesting when it states "drown men in destruction and perdition.

The word destruction is: olethros and means:

1) ruin, destroy, death

a) for the destruction of the flesh, said of the external ills and troubles by which the lusts of the flesh are subdued and destroyed

The word perdition is: apoleia and means:

1) destroying, utter destruction

- a) of vessels
- 2) a perishing, ruin, destruction
- a) of money
- b) the destruction which consists of eternal misery in hell

If we look at this in the following light it may drive this home even more. First the scripture here clearly say's "they that will be rich" meaning that is their sole goal. Secondly it will drown you in "ruin, by destroying you and causing death" the sole purpose of Satan's plan is to destroy your flesh and separate us from God. When we add from the word Perdition explanation B it really brings this home.

Now here is a hard one, but well worth heeding: Verse 11 where it say's "But thou, O man of God, flee these things:

We are instructed/commanded by God to FLEE 2 times – Fornication and when we're in the condition found in verses 9 and 10. Driving to be rich is a snare which is foolish and hurtful and drowns people in destruction and perdition as spelled out by the use of the true Greek words.

IF you're still reading at this point I must assume that you are a sincere Christian. My prayer is that you start seeking out the poor brethren in your area/within your gates, and begin to demonstrate the Love for God you have and not have a heart like Ananias and Sapphira had in Acts 5 at any point in your walk with Christ.

Let's start to break this down beginning with 1st John 3:17. I would like to think that this verse is perfectly clear. Just in case it's unclear please allow me to clarify:

If you have the ability to help a brother or sister in Christ and "DON'T" do it the Love of God does NOT dwell in you! *(I'm not talking about the scammer, you know the person who lives to get from others. I'm talking about "The Poor" not those who may portray themselves as poor. IF you know someone is not using the money on their family, i.e. doing drugs or alcohol I would say that you're free from the above verses. We are not called to enable someone's addictions.)*

Tying that into another set of verses, 1st Timothy 6:10 applies here; For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. Add to that Mark 4:18 and 19 And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as here the word, And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful., should really make it clear.

Notice here that the word of God can be "CHOKED" and it can become "UNFRUITFUL"!

I often say "I can tell you who is and who isn't a True Christian by looking at their checkbook". I'm NOT talking about giving money to a church most people do that out of a sense of duty or guilt, not freely as God wants us to according to 2nd Corinthians 9:7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.

Further on in Mark chapter 4 in verse 20 is a great revelation; And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some an hundred, no doubt this can refer to souls they have had a direct influence on not sowing money as the popular teachings of the past 30 years in the body of Christ have made people believe.

I had one person several years ago make the following comment to me “Am I suppose to work just to give that person my hard earned money,” my answer was simply “YES!”

I believe it was Joni Eareckson Tada’s husband Ken who said “a man is no fool to give up the things he cannot keep to gain the things he cannot lose!” I can’t improve on that one bit.

Here is a verse that supports this: Ephesians 4:28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hand the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

That’s what my wife and I did and will once again do as God completes His work in us.

I had a friend who in October 2008 had a desire to help us as we were beginning to experience this trial and his plan was to give us a certain sum of money after the New Year. He had the ability to help us on the spot but his desire was to wait until the New Year for personal financial reasons. This man was a true Christian. He went to the hospital in early December to get his medications balanced and got a staff infection and died in three days. He left his entire estate to a charity organization. Although this mans heart was absolutely in the right place for he lived for God all the time, when it was in the “power of this hand” to help us he used business sense to override scriptural direction and it has hurt my family for the past 3 years.

There are consequences to our actions both positive and negative. Keep in mind that our enemy, Satan, the Devil is like a roaring lying seeking who he may devour, 1st Peter 5:8. Satan was trying to destroy the promise to me by delaying the manifestation of the promise given to me by God.

If this person would have moved without hesitation we would have had the money in hand. My brother (a) in Christ was going to come on staff and be our company’s COO and would have been under our insurance program. Because we did not receive the funds from this brother (b) I could not afford to hire my brother (a). He had to stay on the job were he was and use their insurance carrier. One month after brother (b) went home to be with the Lord my brother (a) was diagnosed with Cancer. Because of the insurance he had he was forced to go to a sub-standard cancer hospital instead of the one I told him he needed to go to.

We had a friend who, at the same time, was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer and went to a good cancer hospital, the one I was recommending to brother (a), brother (a) went home to be with the Lord and our friend was completely healed!

If I received money from that brother (b) my brother (a) would have went to the same cancer treatment center and been alive today!

Deuteronomy 15:7-11 speaks to these situations perfectly. Vs. 7) If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates, **this means your city, county and especially your family**, in thy land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, **Gods view is you harden your heart!**, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother.

Vs. 8) But thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth. **Notice in this verse that God commands you to open your hand WIDE unto them. Not only that, it is for whatever he WANTETH!**

Vs. 9) Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, the seventh year, they year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him nought; and he cry unto the Lord against thee, and it be sin unto thee. **This verse is talking about an Ananias and Sapphira type spirit. Notice also the last part of that verse; and he cry unto the Lord against thee, and it be SIN unto thee! God means business when he commands us when it comes to the poor!**

Vs. 10) Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him: because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy work, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto. **You must do this with Love in your Heart for God and notice God's response to you, he will bless all your work! That is amazing. I believe it was R.J. Letourneau who said the more he gave to help others the more he was getting back in return. GOD CARES FOR THE POOR and He uses US "IF" we are willing to bless and enrich their lives in honor of God!**

Vs. 11) For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land. **This verse goes even further: unto thy brother, "to the poor", and to the needy, in thy land! God leaves NO DOUBT about it here, does he?**

We have emptied our check book on several occasions when God instructed us to. Once we received a call that a young boy could not get his medication for cancer as it was not approved by his insurance provider and he needed it to take the pain away. We had no job, no income and not much on the horizon. Without hesitation we wrote a check for the entire amount for this young child. It left us with nothing. Within a short time God provided us with work for a substantial amount.

We believed that God would replenish our funds and honor our heart attitude.

Who do you know that needs some help?

Do you really know those who are in your circle?

Do you really care?

How are you displaying your love for God when it comes to money?

Who can you help?

How many people are crying to God that you ignored them?

Where is your heart?

Guarantee that FEAR has gripped many who have read this far. Guarantee Satan has put false logic into your train of thought. You can sit in the sinking boat and drown or walk on the water, it's always your free choice given you by God but keep in mind what His mindset is towards "The Poor" and his response.

Remember Peter and John at the Beautiful Gate Acts 3:1-16, this man was laid daily at the gate of the Temple, opps, right in front of the Temple! This man was asking alms of anyone who passed by. When he asked Peter and John, Peter said what? Silver and gold have I none; verse 6, but such as I have GIVE I thee: In the Name of Jesus RISE UP and WALK!

Believe this or not, it's still true: Many years ago I was at a healing service and a woman in a wheel chair was just sitting in her chair. I told the man who brought her to bring her down and God would heal her. He said he tried but she refused. I went and asked her to come up front and her response has stuck with me for over 28 years. She said, "I know God would heal me but that would cut off my income from Social Security and I would be broke!" I could not believe my ears. I said "don't you think that if God healed you he would provide the simple things in life and open a door of ministry in sharing your testimony that could more than supply any need or want you ever have?" In a very stern voice she said, "I don't want to be healed."

What do you do with something like that? I'm happy to tell you that she did get just what she believed, she never left that wheel chair all the day's of her life.

You don't have to pray about it you just have to do it.

In teaching I often ask "are you a person who gets things done?" or "are you a person who makes things happen?"

Any time we gave to others we gave it under the following heart condition.

- We did not expect to get it back.
- We told no-one of our giving
- We were not doing it to receive favor.
- We were not doing it to "display our Christianity" to others.
- We did not want recognition.
- We did not look for an advantageous return.
- We GAVE it without conditions.

In fact, we told people that we did not want the money back. But if God pressed them to return it that was solely between them and God.

My reason for this approach was to not allow bitterness to set in. Even when I signed a note or took a loan out for someone I did it with the full intention of paying that debt off without their help or assistance. Again, so as not to get into bitterness.

By this type of approach I feel that I'm fully expecting to pay the debt myself without any expectations from the other party keeping in line with the scriptures on co-signing. When you co-sign and don't take this approach you are putting an opportunity for the enemy to cause strife between you and the brethren.

Other than this situation we're in now no one ever knew about our giving unless they were directly involved or the recipient as we did not speak about it keeping in line with the scripture found in Matthew 6:2&3, Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward. But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth.

I would not be sharing this with you now if not for God instructing me to do so, as this goes 100% against my nature.

This has been the most humiliating time of my life. I have been ashamed to show my face. When the church was having a function that required us to pay a small sum we could not attend it made me feel like scum, even though the church leaders would say come even if you can't afford to pay anything.

For the most part, other than a few people, we were abandoned by the body of Christ. Even sadder than this, is that my family and I are not alone.

The story of the rich man and Lazarus is so real it hurts. Here you have someone who is obviously religious as he calls Abraham "Father" acknowledging his place of reverence. He, the rich man, being a Hebrew knew the scripture and Deuteronomy 15:7-11 and clearly ignored Lazarus who was laid at the rich mans gate/entrance to his domain. The scriptures even make note of the fact that the dogs had more compassion on the beggar then the rich man did is a very sad testament to the insensitive nature of mankind, sickening! Pay special attention to the end of these two souls!

Pay extra close attention to this next part here;

Jesus left us with TWO Commandments:

In Matthew 22: 37-40 Jesus teaches how the poor are carried through into the New Testament.

Verse 37) Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all they soul, and with all thy mind.

Verse 38) This is the first and great commandment.

Verse 39) And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love they neighbour as thyself.

Verse 40) On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

The word Neighbour here is: (PLESION)

a neighbour

a) a friend

b) any other person, and where two are concerned, the other (thy fellow man, thy neighbour), according to the Jews, any member of the Hebrew nation and commonwealth

c) according to Christ, any other man irrespective of nation or religion with whom we live or whom we chance to meet

Focus in on “C” here!

Add to this John 13:34 & 35,

Verse 34) A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another

Verse 35) By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, IF ye have love one to another.

Please pay close attention to the last part of verse 35; love one TO another; that word “to” is an action word. It doesn’t say love one for another, it clearly is written as an action. Often times loves has sacrifice to it. Love often is not easy. Love costs you something.

I trust this is becoming clear to everyone, if not keep reading and it will.

We are being asked to lay down our lives. For most the essence of their being is their livelihood, i.e. Money; and for them to part with some of that is horrifying, frightful and nerve-racking.

But I believe God is saying, “Put your money where your heart is.” Don’t just talk a good game in front of believers but live it with your blood, sweat, tears and years.

Now for a bit of balance in this let’s examine the some what shocking contradiction that Jesus himself showed us in John 6:1-68, please read the entire chapter for yourselves so you can get the full brunt of this.

Jesus fed the 5,000 and the 4,000 here and then he left that part of the country and took shipping, verse 23 and in verse 25 they found him and in verse 26 and 27 is where Jesus said;

Verse 26) Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.

He is pointing out their hearts attitude here. For us I believe it means don’t be foolish when dealing with “FREELOADERS” we are not suppose to be stupid.

I believe that we are to give people a few chances to show they are sincere.

God told me one time that “Money never changed anyone” because I was concerned that money would change me as I was increasing and I did not want it to separate me from Him. My response to His statement was I know many people who money changed. His response was “no it didn’t it exposed their heart!”

Recently I heard a football analysis, Trent Dilfer, state “having money only makes a person MORE of what they really are!”

Don’t fall for people who are trying to use extortion type ploys to get money from you.

Don’t fall for people or pastors or evangelists who try and manipulate the scriptures for their own gain.

NEVER EVER fall for the false teaching of those who have healing lines of \$5.00, \$50.00, \$100.00, and \$1,000.00 or any other amount, “THEY ARE NOT OF GOD!!!!”

I find it interesting that when people were called to a supper that they made one excuse after another why they couldn’t come. The master of the house then said, Luke 14:21, go out quickly into the streets and lanes (alleys) of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind!

Look at this example Jesus gave us! Go into the STREETS? Who lives in the streets? Go into the lanes, these are alleys, who lives in the alleys? Any people who are in the alleys are ones I’ve seen digging through the garage looking for scraps to eat!

I hope and pray you see what I’m trying to share with you.

Let’s continue by looking at the Rich Young Ruler.

Matthew 19:21 here Jesus told this man who obviously was doing just as he said he was to Jesus. Notice Jesus’ response:

Go and sell that thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven and come and follow me.

Jesus only asked him to sell his possessions, not to take any money he had in a bank or treasury out only his toy’s, using today’s term.

Satan always likes to attack a person right in their gifted area.

If you don’t have money to give, give your time!

My father-in-law was a hard working farmer all the day’s before his retirement. They don’t have much money at all, especially after the stock market took a dive and the wonderful 401 K scam got exposed.

He saw one of the neighbors who had a need for Heat as the weather was turning to winter so he at the age of 76 went and cut down several trees on his land and gave the wood to the family. Now that's walking in love and his commitment and love of God was clearly seen. He did not want anyone to know, he was doing this for God and God only. Now that's walking in love to thy neighbor! He opened his hand wide, one tree would have been great, two would have been greater but three, that is the foundation for storing up treasure in heaven for yourself.

Not only that, this kind of act blesses his children and his children's, children's and sets a great foundation for his family and how he wants everyone to walk. POWERFUL WITNESS!

One brother and his wife have demonstrated their love for God and commitment to following Christ through their constant help financially to my family.

We have three grandchildren living with us and my wife has needed my help at home due to many surgeries over the past 5 years which have caused me to be at home with her for 51 of the past 62 months.

Her medications are about \$20,000 per month. We're very grateful that we have great insurance due to our grandchildren living with us. The gas needed alone to go to the hospital/doctor during this time has been on average \$500-600 per month.

Add to that I have not been able to work it has been a crippling time. Yet no one when murmuring about us speaks about this!

If this is motivating you to help "The Poor" please don't make those in need feel like "Beggars." All too often, without knowing it, you can cause someone to feel like a beggar by saying some insensitive things like:

1. I'm too busy today, can you call me tomorrow
2. I'm going on vacation in two days can you wait until I get back
3. How much do you need this time/now
4. I think I've given you enough, haven't I
5. Can't keep helping you – you're not the only one who needs help
6. I had to buy..... so I can't help you and so on and so on.....

Don't be like that you are crushing a soul that is dear to God:

Proverbs 22:22 *Rob not the poor, because he is poor: neither oppress the afflicted in the gate:*

Proverbs 19:17 *He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD; and that which he hath given will he pay him again.*

Proverbs 28:27 *He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack: but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse.*

You CAN'T LOSE ***IF*** you "Give to The Poor"!!!!!!!

