

Thoughts on Poor Folks

Years ago I went to a meeting of a group that was a grass-roots group that was to discuss poverty. I made a statement that Satan was the reason for poverty and people got mad. They wanted the reason to be rich folks or big business or heartless government, but not the poor person's fault at all. They felt that the poor person just had bad luck.

Another time I was doing music for a women's Bible study. It was led by a young female seminary student and was held at the local rescue mission. I had felt led earlier to write down all the hard-work verses. A lady was asking for prayer because after working on numerous jobs for a day, no one would ask her back. The seminary student comforted her and said that God would take care of her and help her get a job. The Holy Spirit said to me, "You know those hard work scriptures, sic'em."

I told the lady I knew what the problem was and went through all the hard-work verses. After I went through them she looked at me and said, "That's it. They don't want me to stand around and talk." This was a revelation to her. How she got to adulthood without knowing that I'll never understand, but somehow she did.

Jesus said that the poor would always be around. I have said many times that the poor do not have a right to eat, but we have an obligation to feed them. If a person does not have food to eat, something is wrong somewhere. Paul said he went without sometimes, and I believe it was an attack of Satan. God would not withhold food from a hungry child, so we can rule out God holding back food.

Under the Mosaic Law a farmer was not to get every kernel of grain from his field but to leave some in the corners and not go through the field over again to get each piece (glean). The poor were allowed to go into the field and pick the left-over grain.

Leviticus 19:9 And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest.

10 And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every grape of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger: I am the LORD your God.

Deuteronomy 24: 19 When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow: that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hands.

20 When thou beatest thine olive tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow.

21 When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean it afterward: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow.

22 And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt: therefore I command thee to do this thing.

God says he will bless all the work of our hands if we do this. This could be viewed as not trying to get every penny out of a business deal or selling to a poor person at cost or cheaper than normal. I don't haggle over prices. I either take the product at what the person is asking or not.

Leviticus 25:35 'If one of your brethren becomes poor, and falls into poverty among you, then you shall help him, like a stranger or a sojourner, that he may live with you.

Deuteronomy 15:1-11 deals with the canceling of debts every 7 years. God really set up a wonderful system. I don't know how much the Hebrews adhered to it. But verse 11 sums it up.

Deuteronomy 15:11 For the poor will never cease from the land; therefore I command you, saying, ‘You shall open your hand wide to your brother, to your poor and your needy, in your land.’

John 12:8 For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always.

This was a response to complaints about using expensive oil on Jesus. We shouldn't be romantic about the poor. God also says that just because they are poor we don't pervert justice and not be fair to the rich person in a court hearing.

I suggest a word study of the word “poor”. God does not want us to oppress the poor and God is on their side. A word study will tell you exactly how God relates to the poor and we see God's heart. After doing a word study, God will show us what he wants us to do. What I am suggesting is to get a good understanding of what God wants each of us to do and let's work with God to help the poor. I have taught tithing to the poor and do a lot with our church food pantry with my wife. In my business I have hired ex-convicts and even one who was still in jail on work-release.

Don't think I'm bragging, I like to ask, “If I work with God to help poor folks, what do I get?” People get real upset when I say this but God gave us a lot of promises if we help the poor and I think it is because he wants to encourage us to help them. I have studied giving so much that it is hard to separate the giving with the promise. I am going to talk about the promises to encourage the reader and myself to always remember the poor. I am not going to discuss oppressing the poor; God does not like oppression of the poor.

I'm going to go through some of God's promises and we should always remember what God said about Abraham. It is very important that we believe what God has promised.

Romans 4: 20 He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;

How would we like to:

Have our light break forth like the morning.

Have our healing spring forth speedily.

Have God's glory be our rear guard.

Have God say, “Here I am.” when we cry out.

Have our light shine in darkness and obscurity.

Have the darkest, gloominess time in our lives to be like high noon.

Have God guide us continually.

Be satisfied in the drought.

Have strong bones.

Be like a watered garden and a spring that does fail to give water.

Have our people build in the old waste places, raise up foundations for many generations, and
be called Repairer of the Breach and Restorer of Streets to live in.

Delight ourselves in the lord.

Ride on the high places of the earth.

These promises are in **Isaiah 58**. Here is what we have to do to receive these promises. God wants our fasting to: **to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke.** He wants us to give food to the hungry, give shelter to homeless, cloth the naked, and take care of our own family. We are to draw out our souls to the hungry and satisfy

the afflicted soul. We are to keep the Sabbath and call it our delight. We can fast new clothes and give to the poor instead of buying new clothes. We can skip a meal and give that money to feed the poor.

How would we like:

For God to bless us.

For God to deliver us when we are in trouble.

For God to keep, guard, observe, heed, protect, save, treasure (in memory), celebrate, and preserve us.

For God to keep us alive.

For God to bless us upon the earth.

For God to deliver us from our enemies.

For God to strengthen us when we feel tired and ill.

For God to heal our sicknesses.

What we would need to do is consider the poor. The Hebrew word for consider means to be prudent, be circumspect, to wisely understand, prosper, to look at or upon, have insight, give attention to, ponder, and teach. This is from Psalm 41:1-3.

Psalm 41

1 Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the LORD will deliver him in time of trouble.

2 The LORD will preserve him, and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth: and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies.

3 The LORD will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness.

This is a lifestyle of helping the poor. This is teaching them and understanding them. This is not just giving them a few bucks or voting for someone who gives lip-service to helping the poor. We can read Psalm 41 and Isaiah 58 over and over and over and over and then a few more times to build faith. Also add **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.**

(The Lord will pay us back any money that we give to the poor.) We should periodically go through all the giving scriptures to build our faith and to keep our faith built up.

We see Jesus, Peter, Paul, and James acting and talking about a lifestyle of helping the poor. When Jesus told Judas to leave, some of the disciples thought Jesus had told him to go give something to the poor. John 13:29. In Galatians 2:10, Peter, James and John tell Paul to remember the poor and Paul says that he always does.

We may think we don't have much to give, but we all know someone who is poorer than we are. In 2Corinthians 8 & 9 we see an answer for not having much to give. First, we give what we can; we don't go and borrow money or impoverish ourselves. These verses are about sowing and reaping. In 9:10 we see God will give us seed to sow and as we grow we can plant more and more seed and have a bigger harvest.

2 Corinthians 9:10 Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness.

When we think of Sodom we think of sexual sin, but in Ezekiel God says something else.

Ezekiel 16:49 Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy.

One of the sins of Sodom was neglecting the poor and needy.

Here is something I tell when talking about giving:

As I got out of my car one morning at the downtown post office the Holy Spirit pointed out a “street type” person and told me to meet his needs. He was neat and clean, but I could tell he had spent a lot of time on the street. He probably had recently become a Christian after spending years on the street. He had a pleasant smile, but I noticed a lot of wear in his face.

After the Holy Spirit spoke to me, my thoughts were about how little money I had. It was during a tough financial time and we were on a very tight budget. I did not feel like I could afford to give the guy any money. I knew God wanted me to help him but I didn’t think I could do anything.

Then these Bible verses started coming out of my spirit: **Proverbs 19:17 He who has pity on the poor lends to the Lord; and the Lord will repay. / Luke 6:38 Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again. / 2 Corinthians 9:6 But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.** I was about to pass up the best business deal I had received in a long time. In fact, I couldn’t afford NOT to help this guy.

He had spotted me too. He came up to me and said he was trying to get money to buy a bus ticket to Los Angeles and could I help? I then asked him how much he needed. He said, “About fifty dollars.” Remembering the verses that went through my head, I gave him \$60. All I had was four twenties. If I ask God for money, I would like for Him to round up also. This is how things work, God tells you to do something and then, when you hesitate, He gives you promises to help you complete what He wants you to do.

Giving is tied in to the 30, 60 or 100 times teaching. Let’s build up our faith in the giving lifestyle. Even though I have gone through the giving verses many times in the past, my faith always needs to be renewed. Any time I feel like holding on to something, I reread these giving verses.

To bring everything to a close, let’s look at:

Ephesians 4:28

Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

Instead of seeing our jobs as “making a living” or “What can I buy?” we should see as jobs as a means to make money so we can help others. God wants us to work hard and make all the money we can; but instead of accumulating wealth, God wants us to use the money to help the poor.

We begin with tithing (10%). (To build faith in God’s financial system, see my teaching called “Money”.) This is first, and then we move on to helping the poor. After the 10%, build up your faith in giving and receiving and begin slowly building to larger amounts as your faith develops.