

Caring for the poor

*If you help the poor, you are lending to the Lord—
 and he will repay you!* (Proverbs 19:17)

*Blessed are those who are generous,
 because they feed the poor.* (Proverbs 22:9)

“And I have been a constant example of how you can help those in need by working hard. You should remember the words of the Lord Jesus: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’” (Acts 20:35)

There is a common belief in our culture that the church exists to help the poor, and that’s a good thing. The role of the church (and the role of the family, for that matter) in caring for the needy has been largely usurped by the government. And while we are grateful to live in a benevolent nation, caring for the poor has traditionally been a cornerstone of the mission of the church. The problem we struggle with is 1.) how should we define “poor” in this culture, and 2.) what does caring for the poor look like from a Biblical perspective?

The Word teaches that giving to the poor brings a blessing. Often, though, we give just to get back. This is a bad motive! Yes, we will be blessed, but we give because of the example Jesus set for us, and because of our great love for God.

There is a story in the gospels about a little boy who gave his lunch consisting of a few loaves of bread and fish to Jesus. He didn’t sit down and plan for an abundance. He had no idea that he was going to receive much more in return. He gave simply because he wanted to help. Likewise, the woman who poured an expensive perfume on Jesus didn’t do it for any other reason than to show her love for Him.

Caring for the poor must be the product of a grateful heart. Some say, “I’ve got enough for myself. I don’t need any more” but that is a selfish perspective. The more you have, the more able you will be to help others. God blesses us so we can be a blessing to others (Isaiah 42:6-7).

At City Church, we understand that caring for the poor is the purview of the people of God (Proverbs 31:20). That might be as simple as looking a homeless person in the eye and listening to their story, or it might entail a massive service project. We will Serve the City because we desire to embody the Gospel.

Pray

Help me remember, Lord, that I was hopeless until you found me. Remind us to be agents of hope to the hopeless around us.

RECURRING NEEDS

Revival
 Repentance
 Wisdom
 Marriages
 Families
 Sick/Grieving
 Depression/Mental illness
 City Church
 Church leaders
 Children
 Youth
 Singles
 Senior citizens
 Volunteers
 Teachers and support staff
 Emergency personnel
 Business community
 Elected officials
 Missionaries
 Worldwide church
 The lost

REFLECTIONS
