

## **Love Reaches!** **Part 9: "Love Reaches Down!"**

**Reaching down... Easy to just focus on giving stuff away to financially needy people...** Takes little more than opening a wallet or writing a check or doing some shopping! All of us are responsible to give to the poor and needy! "When you do your almsgiving..." not *if*!

**But we need to approach it willingly, intelligently and carefully...**

**Psalm 41.1,2** "Happy is the one who circumspectly (cautious and heedful of the circumstances and potential consequences) deals with the people who are dangling in poverty, sickness and weakness... the Lord will deliver him in time of distress and regard and preserve and keep him alive, happy and safe on the earth in the midst of his enemies..."

"Happy is the one who circumspectly (cautious and heedful of the circumstances and potential consequences) deals with the people

Not over-cautious for self... More personal effort and involvement to get to know people and their situations to make the moves that help/not hurt them. People need different things at different times and no two cases are the same.

Needy/desperate people can abuse the situation with a little practice... But it's not a matter of being taken advantage of for a few bucks... It's a matter of enabling further sin... And taking it away from real needs!

**It can be fun to give indiscriminately... but God has greater purpose ingrained in the concept of helping the needy! Sometimes people need resources, sometimes understanding, sometimes to know they're not alone, and sometimes to hear "no... and here's why!" And God rewards those who take the time to genuinely help others figure things out!**

**Rewards...** He that has pity on the poor lends to the Lord *and that which he has given (the deed he has done) the Lord will pay him again!* **Pr 19.17** *He that has a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he gives of his bread to the poor.* **Pr 22.9** *He that gives to the poor shall not lack!* **Pr 28.27** *Happy is the one who helps the poor, sick and weak... the Lord will deliver him in time of distress and regard and preserve and keep him alive, happy and safe on the earth in the midst of his enemies... the Lord will strengthen him when he languishes with sickness...* **Ps 41.2,3**

**But let's talk about reaching down to the "poor, oppressed and broken..." like God did for us!**

**Romans 12.9-16** *Let your love be real! Hate what is evil; hold tightly to what is good. Be deeply fraternal toward one another, esteeming and opening the way for others. Not hesitating but zealous to serve the Lord. Full of cheerful expectation; enduring tribulations; persevering in prayer; Sharing in the needs of others; giving them an openhearted reception. Bless those who persecute you; Rejoice with those that are happy and weep with those that weep; align your mind with where they are. Don't entertain yourself with ambition for high things but be willing to reach down those who have been humbled. Don't be lifted up with conceit.*

**KJV: "Condescending to men of low estate!"**

**Condescending...** Isn't addressing "attitude..." We are not to be condescending in our approach to anyone... But we are called to reach down, to step down, to bring aid to humbled souls... Just like Jesus stepped down from the glory He had with the Father... To be the savior of mankind, of... "me!"

**Reaching down...** May be the very first experience we have with being the church! Resources from heaven, encouraged and built by friends, we reach down... To meet the needs of those broken by life... as His hand extended! And that's where the miracles begin!

**The Church...** Is not Saturday, Sunday and midweek gatherings of people in this place... Church is what happens when two or three are gathered together in His name! Jesus uniquely made the way for THAT! By saving and empowering "people!" He definitively modeled THAT! By doing most of His work outside the Temple!

**The Church is always at its best when it is operating in "real life!"** The early church came together for training and went out... And when they "institutionalized" and "substituted the institution" it died! The modern church too often comes for "play practice!" And it is dead and cold and alone as far as the world is concerned!

**The "Church" is you** happening where you are; touching people, meeting needs!

**The "Church" needs the "institution"** to do certain things that it does better!

**"The Church-institution" is: A training center...** Meet together for organized teaching/ building up/patching/envisioning... **An Empowering center...** Resourcing individuals to do the work of their ministry... **An Outreach/benevolence clearing...** "Laid the money at the apostles feet for distribution..." **Courtroom...** Judging matters between brothers...

**But the "Church-individual"** is "gifted" for touching people and miraculously meeting needs! And we can never forget that, nor substitute anything else in "our" place!

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