



Our Focus – *Understanding poverty differently.* Tom Ellsworth January 24, 2016

## **THE ISSUE OF POVERTY MATTERS TO GOD**

He gives justice to the oppressed and food to the hungry. The LORD frees the prisoners. The LORD opens the eyes of the blind. The LORD lifts up those who are weighed down. The LORD loves the godly. The LORD protects the foreigners among us. He cares for the orphans and widows, but he frustrates the plans of the wicked. *Psalms 146:7-9 (NLT)*

If you take your neighbor's cloak as security for a loan, you must return it before sunset. This coat may be the only blanket your neighbor has. How can a person sleep without it? If you do not return it and your neighbor cries out to me for help, then I will hear, for I am merciful. You may wonder, how practical is that? It may well be a rhetorical device – God may be saying "don't demand something from someone who had nothing but a coat to give." *Exodus 22:26-27 (NLT)*

"You must not mistreat or oppress foreigners in any way. Remember, you yourselves were once foreigners in the land of Egypt. "You must not exploit a widow or an orphan. If you exploit them in any way and they cry out to me, then I will certainly hear their cry. *Exodus 22:21-23 (NLT)*

Lazy hands make a man poor, but diligent hands bring wealth. *Prov 10:4 (NIV)*

Laziness brings on deep sleep, and the shiftless man goes hungry. *Proverbs 19:15 (NIV)*

He who ignores discipline comes to poverty and shame, but whoever heeds correction is honored. *Proverbs 13:18 (NIV)*

For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: "If a man will not work, he shall not eat." We hear that some among you are idle. They are not busy; they are busybodies. Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the bread they eat. And as for you, brothers, never tire of doing what is right. *2 Thessalonians 3:10-13 (NIV)*

## **GOD EXPECTS POVERTY TO MATTER TO US ALSO**

You humble yourselves by going through the motions of penance, bowing your heads like reeds bending in the wind. You dress in burlap and cover yourselves with ashes. Is this what you call fasting? Do you really think this will please the LORD? “No, this is the kind of fasting I want: Free those who are wrongly imprisoned; lighten the burden of those who work for you. Let the oppressed go free, and remove the chains that bind people. Share your food with the hungry, and give shelter to the homeless. Give clothes to those who need them, and do not hide from relatives who need your help... Remove the heavy yoke of oppression. Stop pointing your finger and spreading vicious rumors! Feed the hungry, and help those in trouble. Then your light will shine out from the darkness, and the darkness around you will be as bright as noon. *Isaiah 58:5-7, 9-10 (NLT)*

## **POVERTY IS MORE THAN A MATERIAL DEFICIT**

Rich and poor have this in common: The LORD is the Maker of them all. *Proverbs 22:2 (NIV)*

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich. *2 Corinthians 8:9 (NIV)*