



9 August 2014 - "Least of These"

1. What does it mean to really help those who are less fortunate? What's the difference between giving aid and sharing their burdens?
2. Jesus says that the woman who gave two coins gave more than all the others because she sacrificed in her giving (Mark 12:42). Does God expect a certain level of sacrifice from us, regardless of the absolute amount?
3. Often we donate finances, or do short term mission trips. How much responsibility do we have for how our donations are used, or how useful our labor is to the community?
4. What is the balance of giving too much vs not enough? Of not giving the right kind of help vs not helping at all for fear of not getting it right?
5. James 5:1-5 lists some ways the the rich have taken advantage of the laborers. Is it possible to "heap up treasures" without oppressing others?
6. What stops us from putting more time and energy into aid and relief?
7. There's a belief that the poor mismanage money. Is it a waste of money to provide aid?
8. Should a person be compelled into being charitable, or is goodwill a necessary element?
9. Jesus is clear in telling us to look after the sick and the poor. To what extent are we responsible for the safety of the homeless on the street or the plight of refugees?
10. Do you agree with Bill Gates' quote that "by 2035, there will be almost no poor countries left in the world"? And what does Matthew 26:11 really mean when Jesus says "For you have the poor with you always, but Me you do not always have."
11. Is it possible to do more harm than good when attempting to address poverty and suffering? When may helping others cause harm, both locally and overseas?
12. Given the relativity of poverty, is there value in assisting poor people in Australia when there are poorer people overseas?
13. In Australia much time effort and resources have been placed into "Closing the Gap" for Indigenous Australians, and yet the statistics continue to show drastic gaps in almost all indicators. Is this in part due to a lack of cultural understanding, and what does this mean for our efforts in overseas aid?
14. Is it appropriate to mix evangelism with aid?
15. Why do you think so many third world countries are so open to Christianity?
16. What kinds of service projects would you like to get involved with?