

## Helping the Poor

*Matthew 25:34-40 (KJV)* - Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: <sup>35</sup> For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: <sup>36</sup> Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. <sup>37</sup> Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? <sup>38</sup> When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? <sup>39</sup> Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? <sup>40</sup> And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

Giving honor to God, Jesus the Christ, and the Holy Spirit. Giving honor to the children of God. Good morning to my brothers and sisters in Christ. As we look at today's text, Matthew 25:34-40, our didactic sermon topic is "Helping the Poor."

This morning as I reflect on the term poor and how it relates to my life and the lives of others, I view it as being in need or needing support from someone else or others. The reality is that we can move from a state of need or abundance quickly as conditions or circumstances change. The Apostle Paul said in Philippians 4:11-13 "Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content". I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengthened me. The reality is that we have all experienced areas of lack (in need) and we have all experienced abundance. In life we can move from poverty to abundance in a short time with minimal changes. We need to truly understand the power of trusting God regardless of what conditions or temporary circumstances we find ourselves in. It is through trusting God and a spirit filled relationship with Christ, that we are able to rise to the next level of blessing.

According to the text, the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it to me.' (Matthew 25:34-40)

The word of God encourages us to show consideration for the poor, which means, if you are able to assist the poor (needy) with your time, talent, and treasure, it will not only bless them, but it will also bless you. I heard somebody say, "It's better to give than to receive." O' You can't beat God Giving, No Matter how hard you try." Proverbs 19:17 shares that if you show love and kindness to the poor, you're actually showing love and kindness to the Lord, and He will repay you. This means if you lend or give money to the poor, you're giving it to the Lord, and He will repay you. Good God Almighty. The Lord can bless you in the morning, in the noonday, in the midnight hour. Anyway you bless us Lord... We'll be satisfied. Now we need to take inventory. How many times have we had an opportunity to lend or bless the Lord by helping somebody that was on the street corner, in our community, or someone that we know is going through a tough time?

I thank God for blessing Christy and I with parents (Sis. Bessie and Bro. James) who always taught us to help the poor and to give. Sis. Bessie and Bro. James served in food ministries and demonstrated the hearts to serve and to give to God's people. Brothers and Sisters, we can give without being judgmental. Can I get a witness? The word of God says, "Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you." (Luke 6:37-38)

In closing, if the thought of loaning your time, talent, and treasure to the God of heaven and earth may seem a little strange. I'm talking about the one who formed the galaxies and spoke the world into existence. I'm speaking about the one who woke you up this morning and started you on your way. I just thought about the one who allows you to breathe, walk, talk, and allow our hearts to continue to beat. My brothers and sisters, remember that Jesus said that whatever good you do for a brother or sister in the Lord, you are doing it to Him (Matt.25:40). Give wisely and within your means, but by all means give, give without being judgmental. I often think about the needs of a humanity; lost and broken. John 3:16 shares "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." Let the world see Christ in you. Help the Poor. Hallelujah to the Lamb of God. Amen.