

Helping the poor can be fraught with challenges... and yet, as we've seen, it is a Gospel imperative that Christ-centred servant leaders are involved in addressing the challenge of poverty. This purpose of this discussion has been to soften your heart to seeking God for how he wants to use you in this area – remembering Joel Manby's advice that we should 'do for one what we wish we could do for everyone'. However, there are some great resources available that can help you explore this area further. Please see the 'Going Deeper' section of the interaction guide on the website for a list of helpful books.

The following quotes draw from some of these books and speak about the mandate we have as Christians to lead with compassion.

"The church should be with the poor, and they should be among us as they were with Jesus" (Campolo and Claiborne 2012:165).

"Christianity is deeply associated with poverty. Contrary to myth, the typical Christian is not a white fat cat in the United States or western Europe, but rather a poor person, often unimaginably poor by Western standards" (Jenkins 2007:256).

"What is the task of the church? We are to embody Jesus Christ by doing what he did and what He continues to do through us: declare – using both words and deeds – that Jesus is the King of kings and Lord of lords who is bringing in a kingdom of righteousness, justice, and peace. And the church needs to do this where Jesus did it, among the blind, the lame, the sick and outcast, and the poor" (Corbett and Fikkert 2012:41).

"Jesus is saying that we show tangible love for God in how we care for the poor and those who are suffering. He expects us to treat the poor and the desperate as if they were Christ Himself" (Chan 2008:119).

"In truth, there is no 'gospel' that is not a 'social gospel'... Care of the poor is a matter of orthodox faith" (Sweet and Viola 2010:108-109).

"Mother Teresa used to say that when she looked into the face of a dying beggar in Calcutta, she prayed to see the face of Jesus so that she might serve the beggar as she would serve Christ. In an often quoted passage, C.S. Lewis expressed a related thought: 'It is a serious thing to live in a society of possible gods and goddesses to remember that the dullest and most uninteresting person you talk to may one day be a creature which, if you saw it now, you would be strongly tempted to worship, or else a horror and a corruption such as you now meet, if at all, only in a nightmare. All day long we are, in some degree, helping each other to one of these destinations" (Brand and Yancey 253).

"God does not want us to merely give the poor perfunctory help, but to ponder long and hard about how to improve their entire situation" (Keller 2010:110).

"It's sad but true that becoming involved in this kind of grassroots ministry amongst the vulnerable is an invitation to heartbreak. However, in the darkness of seemingly unredeemable situations we often see new rays of faith shining" (Wilson 2012:75).

"Here is what we seek: a compassion that can stand in awe at what the poor have to carry rather than stand in judgment at how they carry it" (Boyle 2011:67).

"it is clear that action for justice and peace in the world is not something which is secondary, marginal to the central task of evangelism. It belongs to the heart of the matter" (Newbigin 1989:137).

“For those ministering among the poor, our mission is not complete without introducing the needy to biblical passages that show how God lifts them up. Not only do poor people need to know that they are not forgotten by God, but even more, they need to know that they are affirmed by Him” (Hayes 2006:84).

“Offering present help and eternal hope to neighbours in need underscores the fact that the Gospel is not as much about life after death as it is life instead of death” (Ashmen 2011:63).

“Entertaining is mostly about inviting people into your house. Hospitality is about inviting people into your life” (Ashmen 2011:78).

“We need to get beyond seeing the poor as a ministry to be helped but as fellow brothers and sisters in the church with whom we work out our freedom together in Christ” (Measures 2010:83).

“Real fellowship across socio-economic boundaries will change the worldly order of things and affect how we treat and perceive one another. Such is the power of community” (Measures 2010:85).

“if the church is to be restored to be who she is meant to be, we must not forget the poor... To remember the poor is not a peripheral issue for the church to take or leave if she pleases – it is crucial for every Christian, every local church and every church movement throughout the world” (Measures 2010:77).

Bernard Manning, *“Compassionate love is the axis of the Christian moral revolution and the only sign ever given by Jesus by which a disciple would be recognised”*

Finally, this article from The Gospel Coalition is a very helpful additional resource on the topic of dealing with compassion fatigue: <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/how-prevent-burnout/>