

The Poor And The Needy

References:

Notes For Servants:

- 1.
- 2.

Objectives:

General:

Specific:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Instructions:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Bible Verse:

**“If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food,
And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled;
notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body;
what doth it profit?**

Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.”

(James 2:15-17)

Lesson:

The Poor And The Needy

HOW GREAT ARE THE POOR?

One day, a good Christian saw a vision. The Lord Jesus appeared to him and talked with him during this conversation. A poor man knocked at the door. The man excused himself from Jesus in order to go and see to the poor man's needs. When he returned after he had helped the poor he started to apologize to his Lord. The Lord replied: You are blessed, beloved, because if you would

not have left me to help the poor, I would have left you for his sake.”

Thus no one knows the value of the poor and the needy except he who has the Lord Jesus Christ’s heart. Glory be to Him who emptied Himself and took upon Him the form of a servant for our sake to free us from sin’s slavery. He appeared as a poor and needy man to enrich our souls with His righteousness and the gifts of His Holy Spirit. Thus the poor and the needy free us from the material slavery and the selfishness of our old nature.

AMOS AND JAMES TEACH ON HELPING THE NEEDY

In the Old Testament, we find Amos shouting at the people rebuking injustice and the eating up of the money of the poor and weak. “Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the land to fail, Saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit? That we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes; yea, and sell the refuse of the wheat? (Amos 8:4-6)

And in the New Testament, we read in the Epistle of James “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.” (James 1:27)

“If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.” (James 2:15-17)

BISHOPS SERVE THE POOR

The Church history relates to Anba Sarabamon, the bishop of Menoufia, Egypt in the 19th century, that he used to walk disguised at night carrying a heavy bag containing provisions for the poor. One day, a man saw him and thought that he was a thief. The man followed him until he saw him standing at a door and knocking. When the door was opened, he gave the bag without uttering one word and then returned from where he had come. The man came forward and caught him and knew who he was. He used to carry flour and wheat by himself to the families that were ashamed to ask for charity.

It was said about Anba Sarabion, the monk, that he went to Alexandria where he found a poor man naked in the market. He stood thinking within himself, How is it that I am wearing a robe while this poor man is naked truly this is Christ and the cold hurts him. then he sprang up with a courageous heart and gave it to that poor man, then he sat naked, holding the Bible in his hand. A rich man passed by him and asked: “Anba Sarabion, who stripped you from your clothes?” So he pointed at the Bible and said: “This made me naked.” After the rich man had dressed him up. Anba Sarabion left the place and found a man who was in debt, and who had been arrested by the creditor. As he did not have anything to pay off the debt for the poor man, he sold his Bible and paid its price to the creditor. His disciple asked him : “Father, where is your Bible with which We were comforted?” So he told him I sold it for it used to tell me every day “sell all that is yours and give it to the poor”.

WHY WE CARE FOR THE POOR?

+ The Lord Jesus recommended the poor to us when He said: “As you did it to ~ne of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me.” He also said about the day of judgment “For I was hungry and you gave me food. I was thirsty and you gave me drink. I was stranger and you welcomed me. I was naked and you clothed me. I was sick and you visited me. I was in prison and you came to me.” Then the righteous will answer him “Lord, when did we see thee hungry and feed Thee” and the King will answer them: “Truly, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me.”

+ Giving is one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and it is a proof that we have acquired brotherly love. The Apostle says “Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.

It is a proof of our living membership in the body of Christ. “And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.”

(1 Cor 12:26)

And the Apostle requested three things from us unity in general, that there may be no discord, and to have the same care for one another.

St. Augustine spoke about the spiritual and social co-operation between the believers. He said that when the deer wander in the pastures and when they rise up to reach another part of the earth, they support the weight of their heads on each other so that the first deer leads and the rest follow her, and every one leans its head upon the one in front of it, and the next leans its head upon the one before it, and’ so on to the end of the herd. And when the leading deer that bears the weight of all the heads tires out, it goes to the back and rests by leaning its head on the one in front of it just a~ the others are doing, and so on, each one in its turn... For such partnership the Apostle addresses us saying: “Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.” (Gal 6:2)

Conclusion:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.