

The Holes in the Gospel: Poverty

Main Scripture: Acts 11:26-30

Additional Scriptures: Proverbs 14:31, Proverbs 19:17, Jeremiah 22:16,
Matthew 25:40, Luke 3:9-14, Matthew 6:21, Psalm 41:1-3

Hearing: Discussion Questions

- **Read Proverbs 19:17.** When you give to the poor, you are lending to the Lord... and He always pays you back! Share some stories when you stepped out and gave in faith and the Lord repaid you in a non-conventional way.
- **Read Acts 11:28 & Psalm 41:1-3.** Is your first reaction to hearing about the recession or bad financial times to save or to give? What are some of the big roadblocks that keep you from giving, particularly in hard times?
 - How do you overcome those roadblocks and get freed up to give?
- When the Bible talks about the poor, who is it talking about? Is it just financial?
- Pastor Mike said “Whenever the Kingdom shows up, the poor get blessed and your stuff gets touched.” Do you agree with this? Why or why not?
 - When do you have a hard time giving up your stuff? Is there something that is harder for you to give away than others?
- **Read Acts 11:29.** Discuss what you think it means when the Bible says “each according to his ability.” Does this mean rich people give more? Does everyone give the same percentage regardless of wealth? Is it just completely different for every person?
 - What is too much? Too little? Are there these types of boundaries?
- “The Gospel through you is how the Gospel comes to you.” What are some ways that you as a small group could make this a reality?
 - Share some stories of how giving has changed you.

Doing: Application

- **“Christians are people who respond.”** What are some action steps you could as a small group take to know Jesus more in the way of helping the poor and needy?
 - What are some of your collective passions?
 - How would you turn passion into action?

Some statistics used from Pastor Mike's sermon:

- 80% of the world lives on less than \$10 a day
- The poorest 40% of the world's population accounts for 5% of the global income
- The richest 20% accounts for $\frac{3}{4}$ of the world's income
- 25,000 children die every day due to poverty
- Water problems affects $\frac{1}{2}$ of humanity.
- 12% of the world's population uses 85% of the water. None of that 12% are in developing countries.
- Some 1.1 billion people in developing countries have inadequate access to water and 2.6 billion lack basic sanitation
- 1.8 million children die every year from diarrhea
- Millions of woman spend several hours a day collecting water
- The number of children in the world is 2.2 billion. 1 billion of those children are in poverty.
 - 1 in 3 of the children do not have adequate shelter
 - 1 in 5 of them have no access to safe water
 - 1 in 7 have no access to health services
 - 15 million children have been orphaned by AIDS
- In 2005, the wealthiest 20% of the world accounted for 76.6% of total private consumption. The poorest 20% accounted for 1.5%
 - The poorest 10% accounted for .5% while the richest 10% accounted for 59% of the consumption.