

The Meaning of: The Poor and The Widow

2020 by Dennis Dickinson

“The poor you will have with you always,” Jesus said. The question here is, What Is The Definition Of Poor. Different people have different definitions. What is discussed here is those who say “Send me your money so I can provide for the Poor Orphans and the Widows.”

Poverty has been around a long time and with no end in sight. War zones perhaps create the worst cases of Orphans and Widows. In war, there are no stores with food anywhere. The society shuts down and it is a time when many starve and die. That is the real meaning of poor.

When the Bible speaks of such things, it makes a clear difference between severe poverty and being short of funds. Between the real poor and real widows and those who are not. Between who is responsible for them and who is not. It also warns in 1 Timothy 5 that if the church spends its resources on those it should not, it will not have the resources for those

in real need.

The Hebrew word for a Widow, means to be cast off, discarded, abandoned. The Greek word means to have a chasm, or a gulf. Distance and emptiness. away from any possibility of getting what she needs to live. So the Scriptures in 1 Timothy 5 say, “Not all widows are real widows,” playing off of the word’s meaning or definition. English can make this hard to see. The same chapter says she is not in real need if she has those who can and should take care of her; namely adult kids, adult grand-kids, other family and near relatives. In the Book of Ruth a widow was cared for by her dead son’s wife. Again, 1 Timothy 5 says women also should take care of their widows, so that the Church will not be burdened. It is, and should truly be, a family affair. This is where widows and orphans should be first, with family. The Church and its leaders are warned to not step in and take the place of their families.

So also orphans with no parents or family to take them in, are different than just being poor. Even here we need definition. The Hebrew word for Poor, means to be in misery and to be humbled to look down. That

is, to have to answer to others with the head down in shame. The Greek word simply describes a beggar who has nothing. One who cringes by the side of the road asking for mercy and starving. Jesus gave to these people, and did not give to the rest.

I know of orphanages where some of the children are not orphans. I also know that when they ask me for money for the poor orphan kids, that they are not being totally honest with me. They are not telling me all of the truth. I told one such man running an orphanage that he should send the kids home to their parents and families instead of asking others for money for them. Many ministries today have made professional beggars out of men and women who claim it is for the widows and the orphans that they are begging. The pictures they show you however, are of crowds of people and they are handing out everything in every direction to everyone. The kids have homes and the widows have families and no one seems to be checking on anything or anyone. Begging from everyone around the world that bears the name of Christian, to send them more and more money so they can feed all the towns in their country, is something the Bible actually says that

God's people should not support. There are many Church leaders who never once went to the Bible to see what it teaches.

Real Church leaders know that there are real widows from time to time that will need real help. Widows who have no living relatives at all, who cannot work, and who will starve if there is not help. These are the Real Widows, the Bible says.

Christians must look to the Bible's teaching, not just some word or verse pulled out of its context to use to get money, and not waste precious resources. Resources God has provided for those who are greatest in need among us. Human nature, being what it is, will take advantage of others. We must respond, and only when needed, to the real widows, the real orphans, and the real poor. The rest must go to their families, relatives, neighbors and friends; and when needed to local and national governments in time of mass starvation. The one thing that is constant in all of this is to always be ready to repent and look to our Creator who provides for all men through His provision of Governments, local authorities, Churches, friends, neighbors and

families; thanking Him for this provision, and looking for Him to teach us in His word how not to abuse His provisions.

BIBLES and Missions

I receive requests all the time for Bibles and have been telling people, "Go and memorize these verses until you know them by heart, and then obey them and **your Bible problem is fixed . . .**"

Colossians 4:16 And when this letter has been read among you, have it also read in the Church of at Laodicea; and see that you also read the letter from Laodicea.

1 Thessalonians 5:27 I put you under oath before the Lord to have this letter read to all the brothers.

I have regularly read entire books of the Bible to the people and they love it.

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