

SOCIAL ACTIVISM

Matthew 26:11 ... “For you have the poor with you always, but Me you do not have always.”

Social activists serve as advocates for, and helpers of the poor, the handicapped, the homeless and victims of prejudice. Although social activists are found among both believers and unbelievers, in this devotional we speak to the Christian. The Bible clearly teaches that we are to care about the poor and others in need of help, but we must especially care about their spiritual condition. In our communities, poverty is the greatest challenge to life. The sick and elderly are often neglected. Persons with disabilities may be shunned. And IPs are often shamefully treated by bigoted people.

In Deuteronomy 15:11 Moses said the poor will always be present and he instructs the Israelites to be generous toward their brothers and those living in their land. We may find that uncomfortable, because it says we should care about those who live among us, even if they are not believers. Psalm 41:1 says we will be blessed if we help the poor. In Matthew 19, Jesus told a wealthy man that to become perfect and enjoy heaven, he must give to the poor.

However, through Christ's words we also learn that our spiritual condition and the spiritual condition of those we help, is the priority. Jesus said in Matthew 26:11: “For you have the poor with you always, but Me you do not have always.” If you feed starving persons with food, but do not introduce them to Christ, they may be lost for eternity. You must treat both conditions. If you treat IPs kindly but neglect their souls – perhaps because you have misplaced respect for their ancient beliefs – they are at risk of going to hell.

If you are living in obedience to Christ, you must care more about the souls of your neighbors than you do their stomachs because if you feed them but allow them to go to hell, you have done nothing for them. You must treat both problems. You must consistently demonstrate the life of Christ in your own life to those around you (which earns their respect and trust), you must care passionately about your neighbors' souls (which God commands us to do), and you will also help them materially and physically.

Finally, when you give to the poor you must be careful not to enable their destructive or sinful lifestyles. If someone comes to you for money to buy liquor or cigarettes, they need to be informed of their bad decisions and, perhaps, given food for their children instead. The model of our relationship with God is that he supplies our needs, not necessarily our wants. That should also be our practice in helping others. We should help with what they need, not necessarily give them what they want. And, everyone needs Jesus.

Copyright © 2018 Datu Wali Mission Foundation