

Remember the Poor

Galatians 2:10 (Acts 15)

Introduction:

1. "Remember the poor" -- Gal. 2:7-10 (Background -- Acts 15)
 - . The apostles were concerned about the poor -- Gal. 2:10a.
 - . But Paul was too - Gal. 2:10b.; Acts 24:17
2. Evidence of the early church's concern for poor, the famines, the hardships.
 - . Acts 11:27-30 -- severe famine during the reign of Claudius.
 - . Josephus mentions this same famine in his history.
 - . A later famine -- churches in Galatia, Macedonia, and Achaia sent relief.
 - . 1 Cor. 16:1-2
 - . Rom. 15:25-27
 - . 2 Cor. 8, 9; 9:1-3
 - . Acts 24:17
3. Evidence the apostles and early church were benevolent. Why? How did they come by this attitude?
 - . From Jesus and the Judeo ethic (the Christian-Judeo ethic)
 - . Our government today is based on this ethic. This is why there has been this kind of concern.
 - . This is why we have many welfare programs -- both federal and state and local.
 - . The churches today are not basically the "benevolent" organization like it was in the early centuries.
4. Even today we generally classify the work of the Church into three categories--
 - . Evangelism
 - . Edification
 - . Benevolence
5. It is very evident that the apostles remembered Jesus was concerned about the poor and unfortunate.
 - . On the night of his betrayal.
 - . Judas kept the purse for the group. -- John 12:3-8; 13:28-29
 - . Some apostles thought Judas' departure was to give out alms to the poor.
6. Peter and John -- went into the temple -- Acts 3
 - . Lame man asking for alms
 - . Had no silver or gold-- but gave what they could.
 - i. Indication is if they had had it would have been ready to share it.

- . There were many beggars in the land (no government funded program, but individually funded)
 - i. Bartimaeus sat by the highway in Jericho begging. Mark 10:46-52.

7. Old Testament Insights

- . The law laid down certain provisions for the poor -- Exodus 22:25-27
- . xxx How to provide for the poor, the widows & orphans-- Deut. 24:19-21 xxx NIV
- . Good men like Boaz, in Ruth 2 gave this kind of treatment to the poor
- . xxx Job 31:16-17, v, 19
 - i. IF ... v.28 that would be iniquity!

8. The Canaanites --were NOT concerned about the poor.

- . xxx What contributed to the fall of the Canaanites -- and why Judah would fall into the Babylonian Captivity -- Ezek. 16:46-50 (xxx v.49)
 - i. Ezekiel 18:7, 9.

9. Jesus's attitude.

- . Matt. 5:43-48
- . Matt. 11:5 (Luke 4:18) the gospel was preached to the poor
- . Even in his death-- Jesus resulted in a blessing for the poor --
 - . With the "blood money" Potters' field was purchased -- Matt. 27:7, 10
 - . The poor now had a burial place.

THE POINT:

- . Let us "remember the poor" also. Those suffering:
 - i. floods, earthquakes, burn-outs, and other disasters.
- . Remember the three-fold work of the church:
 - i. Evangelism
 - ii. Edification
 - iii. Benevolence
- . While we have a benevolence program in our budget-- it is not much.
 - . We realize not the desperate situation in our day and in our country.
 - . We always have the poor with us -- (John 12)
 - (1) But many fall into the category described in 2 Thess. 3:10--
 - (2) Others have families that should provide -- 1 Tim. 5:8; 5:4
 - . Illustration: I remember that a cotton farmer let the boys in a large poor family that lived near-by pick the "second picking" to buy themselves shoes and overalls for school.