

**Xenos Christian Fellowship
Christian Ministry Light Unit 3
Practical Issues
Week 2: Missions & The Poor**

Overview

- [Missions](#)
- [The Poor](#)

Missions



Goal: To motivate missions mobilization by demonstrating the centrality of missions in the Bible. To challenge students with the question, Where do I fit into God's missionary purpose for the world?

Thesis: God is a missionary God, the Bible is a missionary book

Antithesis: Having a small world, thinking: missions is peripheral.

I. Introduction

What we think we know about missions Identify some myths about missions

Video clip from the movie: Hawaii We need an answer to the impression or accusation that missions is about cultural imperialism!!

II. What we should know about missions

What is the Bible about, in a word? Redemption. The outgoing God reconciling people back to himself. In Principles class we study theology, breaking it down to various areas. Tonight we're going to look at the big picture, how it all fits together. THE theme.

Quiz:

Q1 - How many verses can you name on God's global purpose? Was it an afterthought of JC? There are several thousand throughout the Bible!

Q2 - Why did JC come to earth? To save us? Yes, but that's rather man-centered...what did Jesus get out of it?. Dying for our sins was not the ultimate goal. Jn 17:4--glorify God. JC came to glorify the Father. JC said "as the father sent me, so send I you"(Jn 20:21). He came to glorify the Father and so should we. What does it mean to glorify the Father? One way is to bring unity out of diversity. Think about an International Bible study. This is like a picture of heaven. Bringing many diverse people together in Him.

Q3 - Ps 46:10 Fill in the blank: "Be still and _____"
WHY did we only know the 1st half of this verse? Because of: Yearbook Theology Looking for myself in the Bible. Missed half of the Bible!!

III. Short overview of the whole Bible.

3-part story:

A. Intro: Beginning of Genesis=God ruling, everything in harmony.

B. Story: Genesis-Revelation=Battleground- God moving to redeem mankind, through Israel then the church.

C. Conclusion: End of Revelation=God ruling and all in harmony again. See: God is a missionary God and the Bible is a missionary book.

A. Intro:

- Gen 1:28 God's original plan: 'be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth'.
- In Genesis 3, the plan was marred by the fall.
- Gen 11:1,4 Babel, they said 'let's make a name for ourselves'. God brought diversity through 70 people groups.

See the incredible PRIDE, man continued to seek meaning on his own terms by questing for a "name". God made it known that they would not frustrate His purpose to have peoples...and if diversity

could not come about through the natural process, He would bring it about supernaturally. After Babel, the major characters are:

God in heaven, and 70 different groups of people on earth waiting to be unified for God's greater glory.

B. Story:

- Gen 12:1-3 GOD gives a name to Abraham. He was blessed SO THAT he would be a blessing.

Top Line--Blessed,

Bottom Line--to BE a blessing, our responsibility

Abraham

Q4 - why is he the God of Abraham Isaac Jacob? Why not David or Moses? Not because they were especially "good". God made a commitment to reach the whole world to each of these 3 men. His calling card: I'm the One who made a covenant with these 3 to redeem all distinct ethnic groups.

Promised Land

Israel was a land flowing with milk & honey. This refers to the top line blessing. With every top line blessing, there is a bottom line responsibility. Israel was a strategic piece of property Ezek 5:5 major trading route. See 1 Chron 16:8, 24

The bottom line responsibility was to share about God with those who travelled through the land.

Exodus from Egypt

What was the lesson from this event? See Ex. 5:1-2 One application was to establish God's reputation Ex 19:4-6

Joshua

Q5 Josh 4:19-24 What was the lesson from the memorial stones? :5 top line--teach children about blessings 24 bottom line--responsibility to let the nations know about God

David & Goliath

Was this lesson to trust God and take on giants? That would be the top line blessing. The bottom line responsibility is in 1 Sam 17:45-46...that all the earth may know there is a God in heaven.

Psalm 67

See :1=top line blessing :2 we only know half the story! See :7!

Solomon's Wisdom

See 2 Chron. 9:22-23-top line and bottom line

Daniel in the Lions Den

Is the lesson: trust God and He will take care of you? That is a top line emphasis. In Dan 6:25-26 we see the process at work in Darius (who was not Jewish). The nations had some light even though Israel basically failed in their mission.

Will you start reading the Bible in a new light?

Jesus Christ

- Birth Lk 2:30-32 Simeon understood the 2-fold purpose

Q6 - Mt 22:37 Which one of the commands, he was looking for one answer. Jesus gave him 2--top line/bottom line

****note:** love your neighbor is not necessarily cross-cultural...but what does Jesus say when asked 'who is my neighbor'? The Good Samaritan which was a cross-cultural example!!

- After the Resurrection In Lk 24 Jesus was having a (OT) Bible study with the disciples. He broke it down to 2 themes. Shouldn't we be intimately acquainted with them? :46=top line, :48=bottom line

Acts: Paul GOT it! He had spiritual claustrophobia--he longed to take the good news of Christ to the regions beyond... 2 Cor 10:16

C. Conclusion

Rev 5:9, 7:9: Picture of heaven with all people groups represented.

God is a missionary God. The Bible is missionary Book. God's only son was a missionary.

All are called on to play a role in God's global purpose.

We were blessed to be a blessing! 1 Pet 2:9

Contrast pea-sized Christianity, shrinking world

Not all are called to go, but all are called to play a part in God's global purpose

IV. What is missions?

Important Note: The information in the next section is taken directly from: *Worldwide Perspectives: Understanding God's Purposes in the World from Genesis to Revelation*; Meg Crossman, Editor, 1996

We need to understand what the goal of missions is, as well as what are the strategies and issues regarding missions today - so we can effectively play our role in God's global purpose.

A. The Goal of missions is: the evangelization of the World

Matt 28:19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations

Aren't we all missionaries? Myth: I'm a missionary here in my own country You might be, but you probably are not. I hope you are all evangelists.

B. Defining Our Terms: Evangelism vs. Evangelization

There is a difference between evangelism, missions & evangelization
Evangelism - sharing the gospel & inviting people to accept Christ for themselves
Missions - involves crossing cultural barriers to evangelize & plant churches

Types of evangelism

E = evangelism; # = of cultural barriers such as language, geography, economic/class or caste, religion

E-1 evangelism is reaching out to people within one's own language and culture. The only barrier is church. Someone like you who is unchurched. · Most powerful because the messenger understands the culture of the people trying to reach.

E-2 evangelism is reaching out to a culture that is somewhat different but with some similarities.

E-3 big jump in culture. It requires penetrating & engaging a culture that is distant & very different from the messenger's. It is the most difficult, but most needed type of evangelism.

Missions involves E-2 & E-3 evangelism, but not E-1. Missions is not just evangelism, begins with evangelism

Evangelization - is the goal of evangelism. It includes: · Planting churches: discipling new believers, incorporating them into the body of Christ where they can grow spiritually & serve Christ. · Propagation: includes them spreading the Gospel to others in their own culture & to other cultures.

The Goal is the evangelization of world!

C. Viewing the World: political countries & people groups

Jesus said Go & make disciples of all nations... Myth: The work of Missions is almost done because there is a church in every country.

When we see the word "nation", we think of a "political country". However, this isn't the concept expressed in the Bible.

1. Nation - Greek word ethnos - Biblically, an ethnic unit or people group rather than a political country. Translated nation, people, heathen or Gentile A more correct usage would be as in the phrase "the Cherokee nation", referring to the tribe of Native Americans. In Rev 5:9 & 10:11 not only is the word "nation" used, but it is further spelled out as peoples, tribes, tongues & kindreds.

2. People group - people who are bound together by a common culture "significantly large sociological grouping of individuals who perceive themselves to have a common affinity for one another because of their shared language, religion, ethnicity, residence, occupation, class or caste, situation or combination of these." It is what makes us, us and them, them.

A people group is the largest group within which the gospel can spread along natural lines without encountering barriers of understanding or acceptance due to culture, language, geography, etc. A country may have many people groups. ex: Papua New Guinea >800 languages

3. Unreached People Group - is a people group among which there is no indigenous community of believing Christians with adequate numbers & resources to evangelize this people group without outside (cross-cultural) assistance. Unreached people groups lack a church that has the numbers & strength to reach their own people.

The world we need to be concerned with is the world of unreached people groups.

Q7 - It is estimated that there are about 10,000 unreached people groups; who have never yet heard the Good News of Jesus in a way that they can understand it.

Mostly they are found in 5 major cultural blocks: Muslim, Chinese, Hindu, Buddhist and tribal cultures This represents about 40% of the world's population (2-3 billion people). So the job is far from being finished!

V. How Is the Evangelization of the World Accomplished?

A. Plant multiplying churches in every people group of the world!

Churches that are able to spread the gospel throughout their own people group and also beyond to penetrate other people groups.

The resource most needed to plant multiplying churches is leaders. The training of nationals is key missions work.

B. Four Stages of Church Planting Relationships

- Stage 1: Pioneer - First contact with a people group.
- Stage 2: Parent - Missionary trains national leadership
- Stage 3: Partnership - national leaders work as equals with missionaries.
- Stage 4: Participation - nationals lead the church, missionaries participate only by invitation.

Distinction between: Regular missions: Cross-cultural evangelism (ideally in association with Christians of the target culture) to a people group which already has a sound indigenous church.
Frontier Missions: Cross-cultural evangelism to a people group who do not have a sound indigenous church (Stage 1 & 2)

C. Where are the unreached people groups? All over the world

There is a window, where the vast majority of unreached are located.

1. Q8: 10/40 window: term coined for the area of the world between 10 degrees and 40 degrees North latitude, which stretches from North Africa & southern Spain to Japan & the northern part of the Philippines.

There is an emphasis in missions on the 10/40 window because: a. Most of the least evangelized peoples and countries of the world are here. b. This is where 3 large religious blocs of unreached peoples are mainly found: Islam, Hinduism & Buddhism. c. The poor are there. Many of the 50 poorest countries of the world are also the least evangelized countries of the world. Poorest of the poor. Lowest quality of life.

2. Brings us to our next Myth: I can't go when there is so much need here. On one hand it is true, there is need here in the U.S., but realize the need is far greater in the rest of the world. We should serve here. The problem is there is no time or resources left for the lost & poor of the world. There is a great imbalance in the allocation of resources such as money, people & prayer. I don't have to look father than myself to know it's easier to pray for my family & friends than the lost of the world.

For example: western church spending is as follows 95% domestic projects 4.5% regular missions .5% Frontier missions - most needed Balance - We need to show concern for those near & far.

D. Nearly half the world's population is poor:

1. Sobering Statistics - to give you a glimpse of the incredible need in the world:

Today: · Approximately 35,000 children age four and under will die of hunger & hunger related diseases. Tomorrow & every single day - Pulse, Dec 19, 1997 This year: · 250,000 children will become permanently blinded this year for lack of a 10-cent vitamin A capsule or a daily handful of green vegetables. · 230,00 children are struck by polio because they do not receive the immunization, which has virtually eliminated polio in the West. In our World: · There are 100 million children living in the streets of the cities around the world. · There are nearly one billion people who are defined as "the absolute poor", whose existence is characterized by malnutrition, illiteracy, and disease and is beneath any reasonable definition of human decency.

Not long ago I read an article written by Peace Corps Nurse who was trying to help this extremely poor village in Sudan & village

woman asked her, "Does anyone know we are suffering like this?" This pierced my heart. We need our eyes open to the incredible spiritual & physical poverty of the world!

2. Holistic Development - Since the lost are often poor, then a holistic ministry is needed. One in which evangelism, compassion & social transformation are inseparably related. Christian community development focuses on spiritual & physical needs (food, health, sanitation, and education), and aims to bring a group to a place of self-sufficiency, spiritually & physically.

The Peoples in the 10/40 window need to be given priority & it is an incredible challenge to bring the Good News to the poor in these countries, but with God all things are possible!! The question is, who will have the faith to step out to do it?!

VI. The Challenge of Crossing Culture

This includes things we've covered - In addition, our own culture opposes missions. The accusation is: Myth: Missionaries destroy culture - as they evangelize & plant churches

A. Cultural Imperialism- imposing our own culture on others. This is the cry of our postmodern culture. Christian missionaries ruin cultures. What right do missionaries have to intrude & impose their beliefs & culture on others? This is an issue for which we all need to have a ready answer.

B. Our Answer

1. Yes, but missionaries have done far greater good. Unfortunately missionaries have sometimes acted in a culture-destroying manner & needlessly opposed customs they did not understand. The world has been quick to notice the mistakes & stereotyped missionaries as cultural imperialists (as Abner Hale in Hawaii clip). Overall missionaries have done far greater good, even in the area of preserving culture. "By learning the language of a tribal group & studying tribal culture and thought, missionaries have actually done a good deal to preserve tribal cultures which might otherwise have just disappeared." In addition all the medical care, orphanages, education, & helping the oppressed far outweighs missionaries mistakes.

2. Some aspects of culture need to be changed. All cultures under authority of God's word. Ex. tribe in Brazil had custom of sacrificing babies to demons to try to prevent disease. Missionaries went, lived with the tribe, learned their language, gave it an

alphabet, translated the Word of God, taught them to read. When the tribe learned about the love & truth of God, they had a rational and wonderful reason for not sacrificing babies to demons.

3 . Cultures are in a constant state of change. The fact is commercial exploiters & other secular forces have destroyed tribal cultures. Ex. Movie: The Mission 1750 Even in the recent past, land developers, settlers, & gold seekers have murdered Indians in South America & taken what they wanted from their territories. "The most isolated minority cultures must eventually be overwhelmed by the commercial and political expansion of majority peoples. As governments want tribes to be assimilated into its society's cultures, who will help these primitive tribes survive?" Don Richardson

These are the answers we need to have ready to refute the myth that missionaries destroy culture.

Missions is not about cultural imperialism, yet there is the challenge of C. Ethnocentrism - the way we do things is the right way. We all think this, that's why our friends & family's idiosyncrasies bother us. We ask, why do you do it that way? All cultures are naturally ethnocentric. A missionary has to struggle to overcome their normal tendency to assume their culture's way is the only right way

D. Cultural Sensitivity

Some people reject the gospel not because they perceive it to be false, but because they perceive it to be alien. Others reject the gospel because they perceive it to be a threat to their own culture. When a missionary enters another culture, he is conspicuously foreign. How can he explain the gospel so it seems culturally right?

A missionary has to defuse these barriers through these means of cultural sensitivity:

1. Identification: developing a deep understanding of the local culture & a genuine appreciation of it, so there's not an us & them mentality. It is a sense of oneness with the people. Our example is Christ. Because of His love, He identified with us to bring us God's good news. 1 Cor 9:22 - Paul

Another way missionaries overcomes barriers of foreignness & threat is:

2. Contextualization: refers to finding ways to make the gospel &

the rest of Christian teaching meaningful & appealing to the culture we hope to reach. Definition: "Presenting the gospel in ways which consider the world view of the local culture. Adapting the Biblical message into forms that are true to the Scriptures but appropriate to the local culture" In our own culture, we try to make the gospel culturally relevant.

Both the gospel and the church need to be contextualized. "Peoples who become Christian must be allowed to have expressions of worship, leadership, theology, and practice that reflect their own culture. Once the basic foundation of truth is laid, the receiving culture must determine its own appropriate ways to communicate & live out God's truth. It must express its love for God within its own cultural framework."

Identification & contextualization are means of making God's message understandable and acceptable in a new culture.

VII. Missions involves cross-cultural evangelism & church planting

The goal is to see a church planting movement begun in every people group.

This quote sums up what we're talking about:

"An estimated 75 percent of the world's non-Christians find themselves in unreached people groups. That means that over two billion individuals for whom Christ died will not hear of His love unless someone follows the call of God, leaves their own culture, learns a new language, eats new food, adjusts to a new lifestyle, loves new peoples who may appear unlovely, and shares the gospel message with them. This is mission, pure and simple. The age of missions is far from over. On the contrary, cross-cultural service for Christ is the most massive & most exciting challenge for Christians today." Peter Wagner, 1992 (8-26)

VIII. What are we doing about missions?

Xenos

- Going: We have 31 missionaries on 7 fields
- Welcoming: International Student Services
- Sending: Rom 10:13-15 Home Support Teams, Prayer partners, Financial partners
- Mobilizing: Missions Mobilizers Handbook, Ralph Winter says mobilization is the #1 priority! Xenos Missions Mobilizers

offers a chance for everyone to become more aware and involved in God's global purpose. We offer:

- Missions training: classes, conferences
- Resources
- Special projects:
 - Relief--helping the poor
 - Short term trips
 - Kids-Oasis
 - Who is your home group's missions rep?

You

- TAKE A STEP!!
- Missions Mobilizers: sign up!
- Personal involvement is the key
- Spiritual vitality--see E. Stanley Jones quote: "I came to Him all unsuspecting. I wanted salvation, and found in taking it I wanted the salvation of the world. I'm taking more and more projects upon myself--world projects. And the more I take on myself--the more I'm taken over by joy, by well-being, by inner excitement, by adventure, by growth, by LIFE"
- Perhaps the biggest myth for us is that we love our comfortable lifestyle too much!

Take a step!!

Read, take a class, give, take a trip! Find how you can use your talents & resources for God's global purpose! Especially--look for the launching of missions mobilizers this fall and get on board! Growing as globally aware christians stimulates our faith to develop. It stirs us up! Mobilizing, sending, going launches us into a world where we must trust God!

It moves us from being spectators with a pea-sized world to participants--partners with God in His plan for this planet! Give up your small ambitions!

It pleases God--it is central to His purposes!

There is no more significant way to live.

We live in a battleground, as you step forward expect some opposition because Satan knows that mobilizing people in missions is a threat to his stranglehold on the world. Don't buy into myths

about missions! Urge you: read your Bible with your eyes open. Watch the news prayerfully, i.e. Iranian hostages, and gulf war

You were blessed to be a blessing!

P. C-14 Missions Mobilization "As christians, we know that ultimate success, significance and fulfillment are found only in God. If God is a missionary God, then our significance can be found in participation in God's global cause. In the words of Jim Elliot, *"He is no fool who gives up what he cannot keep, in order to gain what he cannot lose."*

The Poor

Urban Concern: Concern Christian Community Development

Why should we address social issues if Christ is coming back and we know the world system is doomed?

1. Moral Command. It is a moral issue (not an eschatological one) and sin if we do not show concern.

(Ezekiel 16:49) "Now this was the sin of your sister Sodom: She and her daughters were arrogant, overfed and unconcerned; they did not help the poor and needy.

Sin of omission. - lack of concern for the poor (not doing anything). This is probably one of the biggest sins the church is involved in. Unfortunately you probably don't hear much about this scripture or sin in the church today or even in seminary

Why is that?

Someone wants us to avoid hearing about our own sin lest we turn, repent and draw close to God. This would be the devil. What a powerful gospel we would preach if the church could give real testimony to the love of God in this area.

2. Expression of the love of God (gospel)

Does anyone know 1 John 3:16-17 ?

(1 John 3:16-17) "This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. (17) If anyone has material possessions and sees his

brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?"

The gospel is demonstration as well as proclamation. The greatest demonstration of God's love was Christ dying on the cross. He could have just told us he loved us but he also demonstrated it in his actions. We need to demonstrate the gospel through our actions of love for the poor, in addition to our explanation of the love of God.

3. We are responsible to represent the Character of God

(1 Peter 1:14-19) As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. (15) But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; 16for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy." (17) Since you call on a Father who judges each man's work impartially, live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear.

A. God is concerned about justice for the oppressed and poor.

(Psalm 140:12) I know that the LORD secures justice for the poor and upholds the cause of the needy.

B. God identifies with the poor.

(Proverbs 14:31) He who oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honors God.

To be Holy is to be like God. In this area it means to be concerned about the poor to the extent that we act by doing something about their predicament.

We shouldn't use our eschatology as a shield for our sin. As we will see, the fact that Christ is coming back is a reason to serve the poor not a reason to neglect them.

History of Xenos getting involved in Christian Community Development

Our elders were bothered by the fact that our church was weak in the area of ministry to the poor and hurting. We had tried some things in the past but had never kept it going (Orient). So we began to save up money and teach on the need for service and the variety of gifts in the Body Of Christ. A year later I was hired on a part

time basis while continuing in my role of doing accounting and administration.

We started a 4-phase plan:

- **1st phase.** We began home church service ministries and recruited a service ministry coordinator in each home church.
- **2nd phase.** We began service ministries to the whole church such as single parents, CARE group, service network (replaced by NETWORKING).
- **3rd phase.** We wanted to do something in the community of need outside of the church.
- **4th phase.** Set up (or link with) a Christian Community Development ministry overseas.

Let's look at the third phase more in depth and get a historical perspective on how things have developed here at Xenos.

I hooked up with a local group of pastors and others that were meeting about prayer and racial reconciliation. They referred me to John Perkins ministry in Mississippi called Voice of Calvary. Ron Sider called this ministry the best thing going in North America. I attended a workshop at Voice of Calvary in Mississippi. A week later I attended the first meeting of the Christian Community Development Association (CCDA). This was a group of Christians from around the country working in low income areas and committed to Christian Community Development as it was defined by John Perkins.

I began to get input from other ministries such as Voice of Hope in Dallas, Lawndale community church, Bethel New Life, and Circle Urban ministries in Chicago.

We took the principles we learned from these different groups and applied them to our local situation. In addition we continued to get input from John Perkins and others. We got together with people from Rhema Christian Center and began a Bible study at Windsor Terrace. Xenos then formed Urban Concern.

Mission Statement

The mission of Urban Concern is to work with individuals in the inner city to break the cycle of poverty and hopelessness. Urban

Concern is committed to raising up leaders who will play an active role in restoring their community.

How do we carry out that mission? I have given you two handouts. One is the [philosophy](#) (theology) and the other is the ["4 D" strategy](#) underlying our ministries.

Philosophy

God has always had a concern for those who are poor, in need, oppressed, and those who know God and are following God will demonstrate this through their actions.

(Jeremiah 22:15-16) "Does it make you a king to have more and more cedar? Did not your father have food and drink? He did what was right and just, so all went well with him. (16) He defended the cause of the poor and needy, and so all went well. Is that not what it means to know me?" declares the LORD.

This is what people do who know God.

It is the church's (& Christians) responsibility to serve the poor and bring them the gospel.

4 D's.

Define a geographical area, **describe** the needs, **distribute** resources, and **develop** leadership.

Structural sin in our society has developed segregation between the rich and poor (as well as racial). To love our neighbor requires us to make a relational link across these geographical boundaries that are set up by the sin in our society.

Lifestyle and friendship evangelism will fall short most often in ministering to those in need today because most of us have relationships with working people and live in middle class neighborhoods.

Linda Dillow in her book Creative Counterpart tries to justify not going to the inner city poor by falsely interpreting Proverbs 31:20 "She opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy." Dillow conveniently passes by the part about the excellent wife opening her arms to the poor and focuses on the needy. She interprets needy then to apply to people with many needs such as a divorce, or depression. Plenty of people with needs are in her own

neighborhood she points out so she doesn't have to go to the inner city poor and neither do you according to Dillow. The problem is that while these needs are valid ones to meet in our own neighborhoods, she is leaving out the needs of the poor that the verse refers to. Most of us do have to go out of our own neighborhoods to fulfill the scriptures command to reach out to the poor.

Here at Xenos we must have a lot of excellent wives (and single women) because we find so many of them volunteering at Urban Concern in our various ministries to the poor.

Avoiding the poor is a sin that is in our culture and we need to be aware of it. Moving up and out has to be challenged as a materialistic and self-centered philosophy. We should not just go along with the crowd as to where we live or whom we have relationships with.

(Phil. 2:3-8) Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. (4) Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. (5) Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: (6) Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, (7) but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. (8) And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death-- even death on a cross!

Christ was born poor, became a refugee, lived as a homeless person and even to the point of allowing himself to be killed. He didn't stay in heaven where it was most comfortable or safe. A friend of mine who is on the CCDA board said he was doing a survey of Christians and one of the questions he asked was "Do you think Jesus spent a lot of time with the poor, homeless and down and out? Do you spend a lot of time with the homeless, poor and down and out?" He said that although Christians want to say they want to be like Jesus there is a disconnect in this area.

We need to consider the good of others in our choice of where to live and who to have relationships with, and we should seek God's direction in these decisions (rather than just following the flow of our culture).

I have seen hundreds pray to receive Christ in my ministry to the poor over the last 9 years. Over nine years in ministry to the middle class, a few dozen. We shouldn't assume that there will be less fruit in ministry among the poor.

Let's take a look at UC and see how practically these ideas have worked out

Video

What can you do? Everyone can do these things.

1. Volunteer.

There are over 1000 volunteers each year at UC. There are various volunteer opportunities requiring different levels of commitment. The South Linden Bible Study is our key program for outreach and evangelism. It meets every Monday night and requires a couple of hours each week. Some people bring their kids and have them go to the classes for their age. There are tours on the first Monday of every month. 100's of children have prayed to receive Christ. Other needs include One on One Mentors, After School helpers or academic tutors, summer program, summer camp, Hope Builders is one weekend a month, and event help is one time a year usually. I have volunteer applications or you can call the Urban Concern office at 291-0885 and talk to Donna Spengler.

2. Get others involved.

Many Christians want to follow the commands of scripture to serve the poor but don't know how to go about that. If you know of Christians outside of Xenos you might want to bring them to the silent auction. This is a great way to introduce people to Urban Concern. People also use this event to bring non-Christians they are reaching out to.

3. Give to the general fund.

Urban Concern is supported through the general fund at Xenos. Almost \$200,000 came to UC from the general fund of Xenos in 1999.

4. Pray.

Seek God's will in what you should do but also pray for people and families that are poor and oppressed.

There are tragic situations that children and families are in here in Columbus (as well as around the world).

5. Learn what the Bible says about the poor and oppressed

(2 Tim. 2:15) Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.

You should be able to know and explain the scriptures on the poor - it is a huge amount of scripture in the Bible.

I always encourage people to first take the Principles class to get an overall grounding for their Christian walk with God. Once you have done that you need to take my Christian Community Development class. It's a five week course offered the second half of winter quarter. Everyone should have the basic introduction to the scriptures and ministry to the poor even if it is not the area God has called you into making your primary ministry. There are also resources such as tapes from CCDA conference, videos and books at the study center. Start with John Perkins and go from there.

(Matthew 25:31-36) "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. (32) All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. (33) He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. (34) "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. (35) For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, (36) I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'

Memory Verses

Matt. 24:14* Jesus will return to establish his kingdom only after the Great Commission is fulfilled.
Prov. 14:31* We honor or reproach God by how we treat the poor.
Ps. 140:12* God is committed to the cause of the afflicted and justice for the poor.

Assignment

Complete the *Principles of Financial Giving Assignment*.