

A wooden cross stands in the foreground on the left side of the image. The background features a vast green field under a blue sky, with a dirt road winding through it. The overall scene is peaceful and rural.

Charity and Justice: What Love Requires

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Presentation Objectives

- The Difference Charity and Justice
- How Our Misunderstanding of “Poverty” Keeps Us From Living Justly
- How Our Process of Exegeting Text and Contexts Helps/Hinders Living Justly
- The Evolution of Missions/Social Justice and How It Has Kept/Keeps us From Living Justly
- Charity and Justice: Faith-based Community and Economic Development
- Understanding the Process of Christian Community and Economic Development
- A Biblical Comparison
- Questions and Answers
- Bibliography

A Story....



Charity and Justice: A Comparison of Two Virtues

Charity (hesed)

- Social service (food, clothing, shelter, necessities, etc.)
- Responds to immediate needs
- Directed at the *effects* of injustice
- More private, seen as altruistic

Justice (misphat)

- Taking up the care and the cause of the “quartet of the vulnerable”
- Rectifying and Restorative
 - 1 Cor 10 – 12
- Promotes social change in institutions and/or political change
- Responds to long-term needs
- Directed at the *root* causes
- More public and riskier

How Our Limited View of “Poverty” Hinders Our Ability to Live Justly

- Poverty is rooted in broken relationships
 - Solution is rooted in power of Jesus’ life, death and resurrection to put all things into right relationship
- Poverty Alleviation (Fulfillment of Great Commandment and Great Commission)
 - Moving people to glorifying God by living in right relationship with God, self, others, and rest of creation
 - Growing in Holiness
 - For Wesley – personal holiness and social holiness will lead to charity and social justice
 - Poverty and Affluenza
 - Pride/Assimilation v. Diversity-In-Unity
 - Affiliating Christianity with Nationalism
- Material Poverty Alleviation
 - Take care of basic needs so that people can fulfill their callings of glorifying God by working and supporting themselves and their families with the fruit of the work
- Means that our job is expanded
 - Not just giving stuff, but participating so that shalom can come
 - Shalom is worship, charity and justice (Isaiah 58)

How Our Process of Exegeting Text and Contexts Helps/Hinders Living Justly

Eisogesis

- Make things say what we want them to say
- Makes us and our experience the ultimate authority
 - Race
 - Socioeconomic position
 - Religion/Theology
- Believes that we can be taught nothing, but that we are bearers of gifts

Exegesis

- Seeks to be shaped by text and context
- Utilizes our experience and reason in context of wider community for greater learning
 - Scripture, Tradition, Reason, Experience (Wesleyan)
- Believes that Christian living/serving is communal and ongoing

Evolution of Social Justice/Missions: Colonialism

- Early period
 - Global and internal
 - Combined colonial power with theological authority (God is on the side of the missionaries)
- High Imperial Era/Mid-20th Century
 - Missionaries have activist and pragmatic spirit
 - Help/Service but in terms of democracy and free-enterprise
 - Ministry from “civilized” to uncivilized to make the other civilized
- Critique:
 - Uncritical of/supported system of colonial powers
 - So caught in their worldview unable to learn from the people they are going to “help.”
 - Create “cultural genocide”
 - Pater-(Mater-)nalistic/Patronizing/Objectifying

Evolution of Social Justice/Missions: Post-Colonialism/Neocolonialism

- Mission now has a “new freedom” from errors of the past
 - Mission now about exporting intellectual/economic structures (i.e., “arrival of American Methodism was... parallel to American capital”)
- Missions in now “outreach”
- Critique:
 - Colonial mentalities still in place
 - Benevolent paternalism
 - Don’t tell you what to do, show you what is best
 - Affirmation of multiculturalism without being open to critique from the other
 - Objectifying other (i.e., “figure out” the other, consume “other” culture without being open to learning from them)
 - Unawareness of larger/global realities, structures of power
 - Unawareness about our own “flawed/complacent” practices/theology

Evolution of Missions/Social Justice: Missions As Relationship

- Not about getting job done, but working together
- Relationship that promotes learning from and helping each other
- Mutuality and Inclusiveness
 - Power/authority/resources
- Makes persons look at relationships between power, privilege, etc.
 - Not “empowerment” per se, but working together to resolve issues
- Mission is “Inreach” and Outreach
 - All the work/needs are not only in another community
 - About what God is doing/not what we are doing
 - We are changed in the encounter
 - Means of Grace (Grow in Love of God and Love of Neighbor)
- Our going means God intends to transform us, them and our church (Acts 10 – Peter/Cornelius/Church)

The Problem of Charity Alone or Calling Charity “Justice”

Giving to those in need what they could be gaining from their own initiative may well be the kindest way to destroy people.

We mean well, our motives are good, but we have neglected to conduct care-full due diligence to determine emotional, economic, and cultural outcomes on the receiving end of our charity. Why do we miss this crucial aspect in evaluating our charitable work? **Because, as compassionate people, we have been evaluating our charity by the rewards we receive through service, rather than the benefits by the served. We have failed to adequately calculate the effects of our service on the lives of those reduced to objects of our pity and patronage.**

Robert D. Lupton, *Toxic Charity: How Churches and Charities Hurt Those They Help*

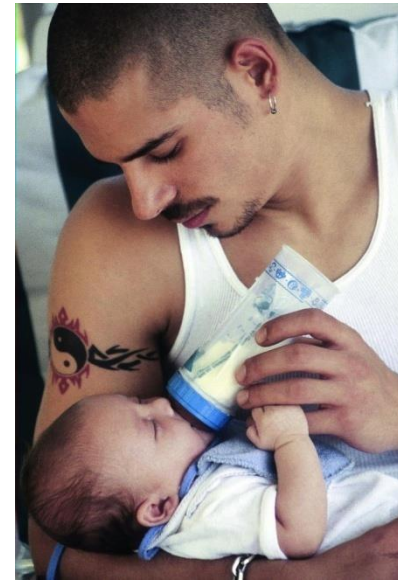
Charity and Justice: Christian Community and Economic Development (CCED)

- Grounded in belief that we are co-creators with God
- Mission (cross-shaped):
 - God's *basilea*
 - God's *shalom*
- Accomplished through
 - Restoration
 - Reconciliation
- Driven by Love in the Power of the Holy Spirit
- Requires:
 - Prayer
 - Faith
 - Hope
 - Understanding of Salvation/Liberation
 - From and for



CCED Is Based On Concept of Felt-Based Needs and Assets

- Needs and Assets
 - "Felt-based"
 - Systemic issues
- Both Being and Doing
- Helps move everyone from patron/provider - consumer/client mentality to citizen/kingdom mentality
- Mission-As-Mutuality/Relationship



Definition of Term: Christian Community and Economic Development (CCED)

- CCED is not
 - Multitude of sporadic projects (enthusiasm and goodwill not enough)
 - Increasing financial wealth or making persons like us (Judaizer)
- Guided by 8 principles
 - Relocation: Living among the people
 - Reconciliation: People to God and one another
 - Redistribution: Just Distribution of Resources
 - Leadership Development
 - Listening to Community (Felt-Need Concept)/Asset-Based
 - Church-Based
 - Wholistic Approach
 - Empowerment

Charity and Justice: A Simple Way to Understand CCED



Go to the people:

- Live among them
- Learn from them
- Love them
- Start with what they know
- Build on what they have
- But of the best leaders, when their task is done
- The people will remark “We have done it ourselves.”

Requires New Ways of Thinking of “Social Justice”



- People and Process: Not Project and Products
 - Not us v. them, but all of us together
- Have to acknowledge corporate systemic evils
- No microwave solutions
- Corporate models may not be kingdom models
- Other “tools” at our disposal

Charity and Justice: A Biblical Comparison

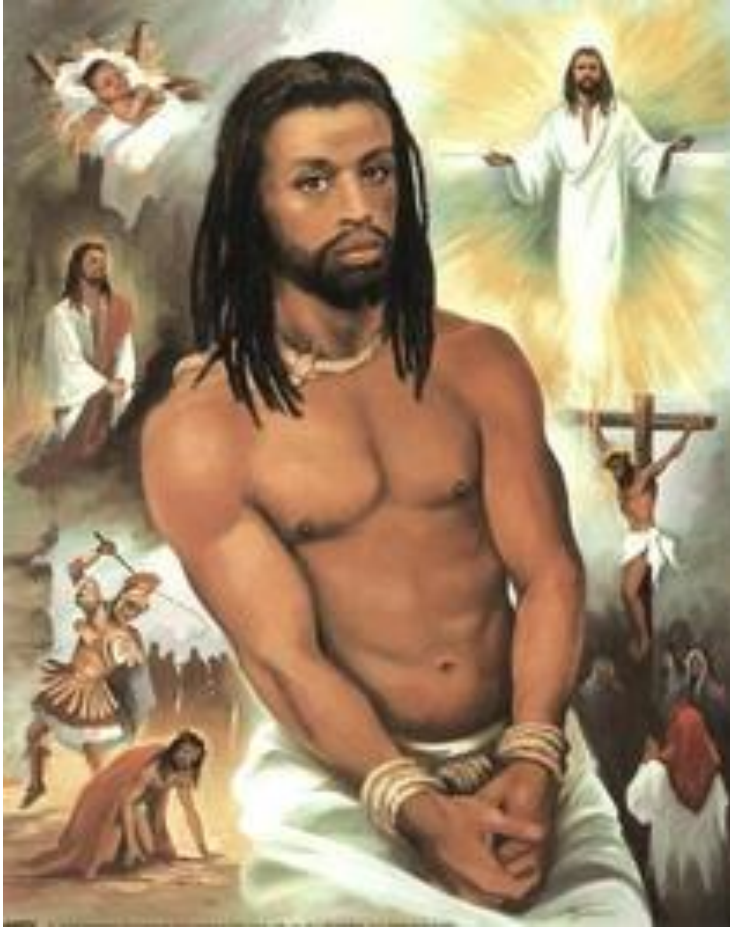


- Hebrew in Exile
- Rises to power in oppressive kingdom
- Recognizes need
 - Among Egyptians and family members
- Holds power
 - Egyptians and surrounding territory
 - Family
- When leaves (dies), people powerless



- Hebrew in Exile
- Rises to power in oppressive kingdom
- Aware and compassionate (Neh. 1)
 - Complicity (Sin)
 - Needs
- Operates from a position of abundance
 - God's
 - His
 - People's
- Uses power to bring to situation what persons can't do for themselves (Neh. 2)
- Shares power (Neh. 3)
- When he leaves, both he and people elevated

Case Study: Jesus



- Hebrew in Exile
- Rises to power in oppressive kingdom
- Aware and compassionate (Neh. 1)
 - Complicity
 - Needs
- Operates from a position of abundance
 - God's
 - His
 - People's
- Uses power to bring to situation what persons can't do for themselves
- Shares power through Holy Spirit

New Ways of Defining Success/Charity and Justice



- Healthy growth v. chasing funds
- Mutuality in Relationships
- Time and trust investment
- Community transformation
- Prioritizing
 - Reality of Abundance v. Scarcity
- Responding to Limits
- Stewardship = Success
- Alleviation and dismantling of systemic issues that cause oppression

Understanding and Meeting Community Needs – How To Start



- Pray
- Listening and Looking for Felt-Needs/Asset-based (John 4)
- Impersonal Data
 - Demographic Information
 - Precept (www.missioninsite.com)
 - State Planning Commissions
 - State Boards of Education
 - Municipal Websites
 - Economic Development and/or Planning Department
 - Police Departments
 - Housing Authorities
 - Census Bureau
 - Wikipedia/Historical Societies
- Find opportunities to build relationships
- Be open to change
- Be willing to care-front the good people who are like you were.

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