

# LOVING OUR NEIGHBORS AS OURSELVES

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## Introduction

One of my first missions trips – giving rides to others and fill the poor's bag in the marketplace

- These are people who make on average \$1 a day.
- I have never really seen the poor. I never thought nor was taught to give to the poor.

Read Ruth 2:2-23

## What is this idea of gleaning?

**READ Leviticus 19:9-10** (Deut 24:19-21, 23:24-25)

**Rule one:** Do not reap up to the edge of your field, intentionally leaving it for the poor.

**Rule two:** Do not strip clean your field while harvesting; leave it for the poor.

**Rule three:** Your neighbors can eat their fill from your crop, but fill no bag or cut with a sickle.

## God's provision for the poor

God gave these instructions to the **entire assembly** of Israelites. These instructions are not the responsibility of the government, the leadership, the priesthood (church), but every member of society.

**All individuals have responsibility** for the society in which they belong. Their actions or attitude either make it healthy or destroy it.

Our being generous (open handed) with our possessions, **thereby inviting us to imitate Him.**

- To withhold what we have received from his blessing to us is unkind, malicious, & ungrateful.

God calls us to work and be fruitful contributor to our community. But God also built into our work, provision for the poor as we work, not merely an afterthought which is much smaller.

- This is not lumped into the tithe but above and beyond

From this we can learn that God gives his resources to the poor through other people.

- This is the picture of gospel, that we were given salvation through is Son.
- We must understand that God has placed you in the suburbs, a place of abundant wealth and resources so that you can be a great provider for the poor.

## Mercy shouldn't create poverty in us

God does not require us to give so much away that they are **unable to enrich others** or bring **ourselves into distress** and needing help.

- Everyone is permitted to reap from his crop and enjoy his abundance along as they do not ignore/oppress the poor by preventing them from gleaning from our abundance.

## Promise to the merciful

Deut. 24:19 "that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hands."

To leave some food unharvested was a sign of:

- Thanksgiving to God for His abundance
- A mark of trust in his provision
- A way of restraining greed
- A reminder of gospel impacting our own lives as lowly sinners shown mercy by Christ.

**Western Problem:** The opposite of building mercy into work, we live & spend well beyond our means.

Excessive living: All I make goes towards me, my wants, image and my debt, none left for poor.

All my time is booked pursuing self-advancement, no time to serve the poor

Application: Live within your means (time and money wise)

- Use your time wisely to learn about the poor and how you can help locally and globally.
- Build into your finances 1. The tithe 2. Gleaning don't use up all you have for you weekly, monthly