

Decision '08 How to do More for the Poor

ICEBREAKER: Have you ever spent time with someone who was homeless or impoverished. Share your experience.

1. Stand with God on the issue of poverty

Pure and genuine religion in the sight of God the Father means caring for orphans and widows in their distress and refusing to let the world corrupt you. James 1:27 NLT

Their only suggestion was that we keep on helping the poor, which I have always been eager to do. Galatians 2:10 NLT

DISCUSSION: In what way(s) are you standing with God when it comes to poverty?

2. Pray about how I can personally make a difference

When you harvest the crops of your land, do not harvest the grain along the edges of your fields, and do not pick up what the harvesters drop. Leave it for the poor and the foreigners living among you. I am the LORD your God. Leviticus 23:22 NLT

DISCUSSION: How are you currently and directly sharing your resources with those who are less fortunate than you?

- I can help families...
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- In my church
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- There should be no poor among you... Deuteronomy 15:4 NLT
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- Dear children, let's not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions. 1 John 3:18 NLT
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- In my community
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- But if there are any poor... in your towns... do not be hard-hearted or tightfisted toward them. Deuteronomy 15:7 NLT
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- For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. Matthew 25:35 NLT
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- Globally

Those who oppress the poor insult their Maker, but helping the poor honors him. Proverbs 14:31 NLT

Those who shut their ears to the cries of the poor will be ignored in their own time of need. Proverbs 21:13 NLT

If someone has enough money to live well and sees a brother or sister in need but shows no compassion—how can God's love be in that person? 1 John 3:17 NLT

DISCUSSION: Do you know anyone at Sandals who is in need of help?

Leaders: {Is there anyone in your group that is truly in need? If so, how can you help them as a group. And if the need is greater than what the group can provide:

Contact our Care Minister Jamie Van Houten at care@sandalschurch.com }

DISCUSSION: Which of the above three options to serve another person in need sounds like it might be a good fit for you? How will you begin to help out? What will you do?

{NOTE: Leaders, please be firm to challenge those within your group. This isn't just another "good idea" to try. How can you also encourage them to reach out with the church?}

3. Trust that God blesses those who care for the poor

Sell your possessions and give to those in need. This will store up treasure for you in heaven! And the purses of heaven never get old or develop holes. Your treasure will be safe; no thief can steal it and no moth can destroy it. Luke 12:33 NLT

Blessed are those who are generous, because they feed the poor. Proverbs 22:9 NLT

PRAYER PROJECT: Take 5-7 minutes and be alone with God. Talk to him about what has kept you from reaching out to those in need. Maybe you have been uncomfortable. Maybe you have been unwilling. What has prevented you from blessing the poor?

ALTERNATE PRAYER PROJECT: Take 5-7 minutes to be with God and try to feel what those in need feel everyday. Where do they sleep? How does it feel to not know from where your next meal is coming?

Talk with your group about what you felt.