



The Fast That I Choose

A Bible Study On Hunger



Society of St. Andrew

GLEANING AMERICA'S FIELDS ~ FEEDING AMERICA'S HUNGRY

Gleaning Network • Potato Project • Harvest of Hope

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All scripture quotations in this study are from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) unless otherwise noted.



INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

The Fast That I Choose

A Bible Study On Hunger

*Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of injustice,
to undo the thongs of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?
Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
and bring the homeless poor into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover them,
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?* Isaiah 58:6-7

ABOUT THIS STUDY

This study is an exploration into what the Bible says about hunger. It may be a difficult study for some because hunger is a thorny issue, especially for contemporary American Christians. That is because hunger is almost always a result of poverty, and any thorough discussion of poverty must also include the subject of wealth. When it comes to discussions of wealth and poverty, people can become very uncomfortable because the issue can challenge them so deeply.

By examining the issue of hunger from a biblical perspective, this study seeks to make clear that one of the surest ways to test the quality of our walk with God is to examine the way we respond to the needs of others. Throughout this study, preconceived ideas about hunger and poverty will be challenged as we encounter God's preference for the poor revealed in scripture.

Finally, this study will challenge participants to respond out of their faith in Jesus in concrete ways to the reality of hunger in our world.

THE STUDY'S THEME

The Fast That I Choose takes its title from Isaiah 58:6, a scripture that should give us pause. The words of the prophet should remind us that God wants worship from the heart which has as its end the increase of God's justice in the world.

The theme of this study is to recognize that God wants those who worship the Lord to remove the chains of oppression and the yokes of injustice. This theme is particularly appropriate when considering the issue of hunger since the scripture identifies hunger as the kind of bondage God wants removed.

THE STRUCTURE OF THIS STUDY

The Fast That I Choose is presented in six units, with each unit having two lessons. The lesson guides are designed to afford the study leader flexibility in how long each lesson will take. Each is designed to take about an hour, which will make the complete study a 12-session course. However, if the study group desires, more than a single hour might be spent on particular lessons. One lesson includes a class meal.

The six units and their lessons are shown below. The study begins with the claim that hunger is a God issue and progresses through the causes and consequences of hunger in the world, nation, and community. Throughout the course, participants are challenged to change their attitudes and encouraged to take action as faithful followers of Jesus.

The Units of Study

1. Hunger is a God issue
 - Why is there hunger?
 - What does the Lord require?
2. Hunger is a global issue
 - Who are my brothers and sisters?
 - Am I my brothers' and sister' keeper?
3. Hunger is a national issue
 - What are the priorities of a just government?
 - What is the key to the godly use of power?
4. Hunger is a community issue
 - Are there hungry people in my neighborhood?
 - What can we learn from a communal meal?
5. Hunger is a church issue
 - What are the church's priorities?
 - How do we worship God rightly?
6. Hunger is my issue
 - What can just one person do?
 - Here am I, Lord!

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Some Books on Hunger:

Beckmann, David and Arthur Simon. *Grace at the Table: Ending Hunger in God's World*. InterVarsity Press, Downers' Grove, IL. 1999.

Boucher, Douglas H., ed. *Paradox of Plenty: Hunger in a Bountiful World*. Food First, Oakland. 1999.

Dunson, Donald H. *No Room at the Table: Earth's Most Vulnerable Children*. Orbis, 2003.

McGovern, George S. *The Third Freedom: Ending Hunger in Our Time*. Simon and Schuster, New York. 2001.

McGovern, George and Bob Dole and Donald E. Messer. *Ending Hunger Now*. Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 2005.

Russell, Sharman Apt. *Hunger: An Unnatural History*. Basic Books, 2006.

Sider, Ronald J. *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger: Moving From Affluence to Generosity*. Thomas Nelson, 2005.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

It is important to understand that this guide serves only a starting place for exploring what the Bible says about hunger and the related issues of poverty and wealth. Independent Bible reading and outside research on the subject by students will enhance both the individual and group experience. Additional resources and Bible passages are provided throughout the study.

Each student should have a study Bible. While the scriptures quoted in this study are from the New Revised Standard Version, any translation of the Bible (except paraphrased) should be sufficient.

THE STUDY LEADER

As the leader of *The Fast That I Choose*, you have a special responsibility. You must discover and develop ways to use the information and teaching ideas contained in this guide with your particular group.

You should prepare each session using this guide, taking into account your time constraints and the areas on which you wish to focus.

This study assumes that adults learn in different ways. To name just a few, they learn by:

- Reading texts and commentaries
- Listening to speakers
- Working on projects
- Role-playing and drama
- Teaching others
- Using their imaginations

Each session requires significant preparation on the part of the study leader as many of the issues considered are quite complex.

PREPARING FOR THE LESSONS

As you prepare for each lesson, you may want to follow these steps:

1. Think and pray about your group members individually and as a group. Ask God's guidance in finding the best ways for them to learn.
2. Keep in mind that this study is intended for the participants to increase their faithfulness as followers of Jesus Christ. Do not be afraid to take risks to help them learn and to grow in their faith.
3. Read the appropriate sections of this guide and read the scriptures faithfully before each session. Work through the questions in the guide and research those areas where you need more understanding or more information. Make sure you have the necessary resources on hand to look things up when the hard questions come.
4. Develop your lesson plan for each session using this guide. Plan for more than you will have time for each session. Be flexible. Remember that your lesson plan is only a guide; keep the focus on the class rather than the lesson plan.
5. Do not try to do everything contained in this guide. There is simply too much. Instead, take and use those ideas and areas of focus most suited for your group.
6. Unit 4 includes provisions for a class meal. Make sure you plan ahead. Encourage strongly full class participation in sharing the meal.

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

7. After each class session, evaluate how the session went.
8. The Appendices contain additional material the class leader may wish to use to supplement the lessons.
9. The most important thing for the class leader to bring to each class session is enthusiasm and a willingness to learn even as you teach. Approach the experience openly and full of confidence that by encountering the scripture you and your class are indeed encountering the Word of God.

SPECIAL OFFERING

A large portion of this study deals with issues surrounding wealth and poverty. When people are hungry, it often means that they simply cannot afford to meet their most basic need for food. That means that very often hunger is the most extreme form of poverty.

On the other hand, most contemporary American church-goers are “wealthy” in comparison to much of the world’s population. Most never experience hunger. In fact, few ever experience the reality of food insecurity. Since this study is not only an intellectual exercise but also a call to action, it asks participants to make a special offering to feed the hungry. Each lesson includes instructions to take up the class offering.

The class may decide which ministry to give to: The Society of St. Andrew (the publisher of this study), a local homeless shelter, a community food bank, a church food pantry, etc. It is not really important where the offering goes as long as it goes to a ministry that serves the poor. By the end of the last session the class must choose which ministry will receive the offering.

A WORD ON JUSTICE VERSUS MERCY

There are those within the Christian community who argue that hunger should be addressed only from the standpoint of justice. Justice, in such a context, usually means advocacy to the government in an effort to bring about systemic change to help the poor. By contrast, there are those who argue that God calls the faith community primarily to perform acts of mercy rather than to engage in advocacy. The “acts of mercy” in this context generally means the hands-on meeting of immediate human needs.

This study takes the position that because hunger is a God issue, it is also an issue for churches, individuals, and governments to deal with in a godly manner. How to address hunger from a faith perspective is therefore not an either-or proposition when it comes to justice and mercy. It is a both-and proposition. This topic is dealt with throughout the study.

ABOUT THE SOCIETY OF ST. ANDREW

The publisher of this Bible study is the Society of St. Andrew, an ecumenical Christian hunger relief ministry that was founded in 1979. The Society of St. Andrew has a vision of a world without hunger, where the spiritual and physical needs of all are met in harmony with the natural world, which is God’s gift to us.

The Society of St. Andrew introduces people to God’s grace in Jesus Christ through meeting their hungers:

Food for the body
God’s word for the spirit
Community of love for the heart
Opportunity for those who desire action

Some Websites For Hunger Relief Organizations and Resources

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Feeding America | www.feedingamerica.org |
| Bread for the World | www.bread.org |
| Food Research and Action Center | www.frac.org |
| A Jewish Response to Hunger | www.mazon.org |
| World Hunger Year | www.worldhungeryear.org |
| Oxfam | www.oxfamamerica.org |
| Hunger No More | www.hungernomore.org |
| Presbyterian Hunger Program | www.pcusa.org/hunger |
| Lutheran World Relief | www.lwr.org |
| USDA Economic Research Service | www.ers.usda.gov/Briefing/FoodSecurity |
| Congressional Hunger Center | www.hungercenter.org |
| United Nations World Food Programme | www.wfp.org |
| UN Millennium Development Goals | www.undp.org/mdg/ |

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

SOCIETY OF ST. ANDREW MINISTRIES

The Potato Project: For just pennies per pound, perfectly edible produce that normally is dumped to rot is salvaged by the Society of St. Andrew by the tractor-trailer load. This salvaged produce is distributed through local agencies that work with our nation's poor across the U.S. Working in 48 states and the District of Columbia, the *Potato Project* salvages about 60 million servings of food for hungry Americans each year. The Society of St. Andrew also provides Seed Potatoes to enable low income families to plant and harvest their own potato crop.

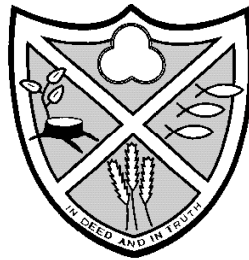
Harvest of Hope: An intensive hunger education program, *Harvest of Hope* teaches people, mainly youth, about the causes and effects of hunger. Through weekend and week-long events, participants experience hands-on hunger ministry while engaging in Christian community and service. *Harvest of Hope* combines work, study, fellowship, and worship into an unforgettable, often life-changing experience.

The Gleaning Network: Gleaning is the biblical practice of hand-gathering crops left in the field after harvest. The Society of St. Andrew coordinates volunteers, growers, and distribution agencies in gleaning events. The salvaged food is taken to local food banks and soup kitchens for distribution to the hungry. The Society of St. Andrew coordinates over 30,000 volunteers to glean millions of pounds of food for the poor each year.

Contact Information:

Society of St. Andrew
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Big Island, VA 24526
Email: sosahra@endhunger.org
Phone: 434-299-5956
Toll Free: 800-333-4597

Website: www.endhunger.org



MATERIALS NEEDED FOR THE LESSONS

In addition to Bibles, you should have a wall map of the world or a large globe in the classroom. Make sure the following materials are available for the sessions indicated:

- UNIT 1:
 - LESSON 1:
 - ◇ Copy of “Global Hunger Quiz” (p. 14) for each student
 - ◇ Chalkboard, white board, or newsprint
 - ◇ Latest information on world hunger hot spots, available from the World Food Programme at www.wfp.org
 - LESSON 2:
 - ◇ Bible Dictionary
 - ◇ Copy of “Some Bible Passages Related to Hunger and Justice” (p. 17) for each student.
- UNIT 2:
 - LESSON 1:
 - ◇ Bible Dictionary
 - LESSON 2:
 - ◇ Bible Dictionary
 - ◇ Chalkboard, white board, or newsprint
 - ◇ Copy of “Contrasting Lifestyles” (p. 25) for each student
 - ◇ You may also wish to have updated information about Somalia.
- UNIT 3:
 - LESSON 1:
 - ◇ Bible Dictionary
 - ◇ Chalkboard, white board, or newsprint
 - ◇ Copy of “Who Experienced Food Insecurity/America’s Spending Priorities” (p. 29) for each student.
 - ◇ You may also wish to have updated domestic hunger statistics from Bread for the World (www.bread.org) or other sources.

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- UNIT 3 (Continued)
 - LESSON 2:
 - ◇ Bible Dictionary
 - ◇ Chalkboard, white board, or newsprint with list of issues (see Political Power section on p. 32)
 - ◇ A copy of “Two Views of Joseph’s Exercise of Political Power,” p. 34, for each student.
- UNIT 4
 - LESSON 1:
 - ◇ Bible Dictionary
 - ◇ Chalkboard, white board, or newsprint
 - ◇ Four copies of the “Self-Sufficiency Exercise” (page 37)
 - ◇ Classified Advertisement and real estate sections of the local newspaper.
 - ◇ Optional: Self-sufficiency standard figures for your area. Self-sufficiency standard reports are available for 36 states through the Wider Opportunities for Women web site or at:
<<http://www.sixstrategies.org/states/states.cfm>>
 - ◇ The minimum wage for your area if it is different than \$5.15 per hour.
 - LESSON 2:
 - ◇ Materials for Stone Soup, page 41, or enough Stone Soup for the class.
 - ◇ Enough crusty bread for the class.
 - ◇ Bowl, spoon, napkin, and drinking glass for each person.
 - ◇ Paper and pen/pencil to record things we can do to address hunger in our community.
- UNIT 5
 - LESSON 1:
 - ◇ Chalkboard, white board, or newsprint
 - ◇ Lists created by the class in lesson 1 of Unit 3
 - ◇ Four copies of “Millennium Development Goals”, p. 48.
 - ◇ At least one concordance (four would be better)
 - LESSON 2:
 - ◇ Bible Dictionary
 - ◇ Chalkboard, white board, or newsprint
- UNIT 6
 - LESSON 1:
 - ◇ Chalkboard, white board, or newsprint
 - ◇ A copy of “Ten Steps To Fight Hunger,” p. 51, for each student.
 - LESSON 2:
 - ◇ Chalkboard, white board, or newsprint
 - ◇ Three copies of “Give To Everyone Who Begs?”, p. 57.
 - ◇ A copy of “Ten Steps To Fight Hunger,” p. 51, for each student (in case any forget to bring theirs back)
 - ◇ A copy of “Report Card”, p. 58, for each student.

SYMBOLS USED IN THIS STUDY



Signifies the unit’s key verse.



Highlights a major point.

Let Your Light Shine

Matthew 5:14-16

In biblical times every home kept a lamp burning all night long. While the lamp did not give off much light, it did testify to the fact that the house was occupied. These lamps were actually small oil-filled bowls and were set high on lamp stands so as to illuminate the entire house.

Jesus said that his followers are like lamps, that they are lights in the world. Interestingly, these words are a description rather than a challenge. Jesus does not call us to be light; instead he says that we are light. Our good works testify to the fact that this world, however dark it may be, still is inhabited by the King. That is why when others see our good deeds they see their ultimate source and praise God.

Don’t let anyone deny the role of good deeds in the Christian life. A Christian who does not perform good works is as useless to God as a lamp hidden under a bowl.



INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

America's Spending Priorities

Ice cream and frozen desserts: \$23 Billion (<http://www.idfa.org/facts/icmonth/page2.cfm>)

Motion pictures: \$9.6 Billion (<http://www.mpa.org/researchStatistics.asp>)

DVD movie rentals and purchases: \$22.4 Billion (<http://www.dvdinformation.com>)

Pet products: \$45.4 Billion (<http://www.americanpetproducts.org/>)

Video & Computer Games: \$18.8 Billion (http://www.npd.com/press/releases/press_080131b.html)

Candy: \$23.8 Billion (<http://www.answers.com/topic/candy-and-other-confectionery-products>)

Restaurants: \$566 Billion (National Restaurant Association, <http://www.restaurant.org/research>)

Beer: \$91.6 Billion (<http://www.progressivegrocer.com/progressivegrocer/research-analysis/index.jsp>)

Soft drinks: \$65.9 Billion (<http://www.wowt.com/news/features/2/1793012.html>)

Salty snack foods: \$15.9 Billion (<http://news.medill.northwestern.edu/chicago/news.aspx?id=94849>)

Weight control products: \$40 Billion (<http://health.usnews.com/usnews/health/articles/030616/16profit.htm>)

Consumer electronics: \$171 Billion (http://www.ce.org/Research/Sales_Stats/1891.asp)

Music (CDs and Downloads): \$10.4 Billion (<http://www.riaa.com/keystatistics.php>)

GRAND TOTAL: \$1,103.8 BILLION

Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.'

Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.'

Then he will say to those at his left hand, 'You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.'

Then they also will answer, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?' Then he will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.' And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

Matthew 25:34-46



UNIT 1: HUNGER IS A GOD ISSUE

The Fast That I Choose

A Bible Study On Hunger

GOD'S GENEROSITY

When it comes to issues of hunger, poverty, and wealth, many Christians operate on the same principle as the little boy with the dollar bill heading out to the drug store to buy a candy bar.

"Why don't you give your dollar to the poor," asked the pastor who was visiting at the time.

"I thought about it," the boy said. "But I think I'll buy the candy bar and tell the store owner to give the dollar to the poor."

One reason so many Christians act in such a way is that they buy into the world's economic order, which relies on scarcity. The world's view is that economics is about how people individually and collectively deal with the fact of scarcity. And scarcity exists when people's wants exceed their ability to satisfy those wants.

It is important to understand that according to the world's economic order, there are only wants. It does not recognize that there are needs. However, the truth is that there are needs. After all, without food, without clothing, without water, or without shelter people struggle simply to survive, people have no opportunity to live life abundantly, people are stripped of hope and robbed of their dignity, and sometimes people die.

God's economic order stands in stark contrast to the world's economic order. The world's economic order relies on scarcity, while God's economic order relies on righteousness. The world's economic order revolves around meeting people's wants, while God's economic order revolves around meeting people's needs. The world's economic order hinges on limited resources, while God's economic order hinges on unlimited love.

To put it simply, God operates on the economics of enough rather than the economics of scarcity. That is because God is generous beyond measure.

The story of manna in the wilderness (Exodus 16) illustrates this characteristic of God quite well. When the Israelites faced hunger in the wilderness, God provided food in the form of manna. However, no one was allowed too much manna, and no one ever received too little. Those who tried to hoard it found that it had spoiled. The point is, God generously provided enough for everyone.

God's generosity should come as no surprise since it is displayed throughout the Bible. For instance, when Jesus fed the 5,000 there were twelve baskets full of leftovers (John 6:13). When Jesus turned the water into wine, he made at least 120 gallons of excellent wine to serve to the wedding guests (John 2:6). The biblical witness makes clear that when God gives, God gives abundantly.

In like manner, God provides generously when it comes to global food production. It is a fact that God provides more than enough food for everyone in the world today. Indeed, "abundance" best describes the world's food supply. Enough food is available globally to provide at least 4.3 pounds of food per person daily.¹ That is enough food to make most people fat! That is how generously God has provided for us.

And that is not all. Enough food for the growing global population will continue to be produced into the foreseeable future. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations projects that growth in global agriculture should be more than sufficient to meet the increasing world demand.² So God's economics of enough is clearly in play when it comes to world food production.

GOD'S BROKEN HEART

Despite the world's abundant food supply, more than 923 million people across the planet experience the crushing effects of hunger.³ The human cost of hunger is measured in stunted physical and mental development, reduced opportunities, blighted health, shortened life expectancies, and premature deaths. Every year, maternal and childhood malnutrition accounts for more than one-third of childhood deaths across the planet.⁴



UNIT 1: HUNGER IS A GOD ISSUE

PURPOSE OF THIS UNIT:

- TO COME TO A CLEARER UNDERSTANDING OF THE REALITIES OF GLOBAL HUNGER.
- TO RECOGNIZE THAT HUNGER IS AN ISSUE OF PARTICULAR INTEREST TO GOD.
- TO UNDERSTAND THAT THE PEOPLE OF GOD HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO ADDRESS HUNGER.



Since there will never cease to be some in need on the earth, I therefore command you, "Open your hand to the poor and needy neighbor in your land."
Deuteronomy 15:11

The reality of hunger in the world has got to break God's heart because there is no legitimate reason for hunger to exist and because the consequences of hunger are so devastating, especially to the world's children.

Key Hunger Terms:

| TERM | DEFINITION |
|------------------------|--|
| Hunger | A condition in which people do not get enough food to provide the nutrients (carbohydrates, fats, proteins, vitamins, minerals, and water) for active, healthy lives. |
| Malnutrition | A condition resulting from inadequate consumption (undernutrition) or excessive consumption of one or more nutrients that can impair physical and mental health, and cause or be the consequence of infectious disease. |
| Undernutrition | A condition resulting from inadequate consumption of calories, protein and/or nutrients to meet the basic physical requirements for an active and healthy life. |
| Food Insecurity | A condition of uncertain availability of or ability to acquire safe, nutritious food in a socially acceptable way. |
| Food Security | Assured access for every person to enough nutritious food to sustain an active and healthy life, including: food availability (adequate food supply); food access (people can get to food); and appropriate food use (the body's absorption of essential nutrients). |

SOURCE: Bread for the World, *Hunger Report 2004*

A GOD ISSUE

Hunger is truly a God issue. It is a God issue because the Lord has provided all the resources necessary to insure that no one ever goes hungry. That is how important it is to God that no one experiences hunger. God's part of the solution to hunger has been provided in God's typical manner—abundantly.

That God has taken care of the supply side of the hunger equation means that the rest of the solution is up to humankind.

WHY IS THERE HUNGER?

If hunger is not the result of insufficient food production, then why does it exist? There actually is a simple answer to that question: hunger exists only because we human beings permit it.

Therefore, instead of asking why there is hunger, the better question is why we permit it. That is the fundamental issue we deal with in Unit 1.

UNIT 1 OUTLINE:

The two lessons of Unit 1 make the claim that hunger is a God issue. The first lesson looks at the question, "Why is there hunger?" The second asks, "What does the Lord require?"

In the first lesson, we will examine the reality of God's abundance and the reality of global hunger. These two realities lead to the conclusion that the issue of hunger is largely an issue of food distribution.

The second lesson builds on the conclusion drawn from the first. If the issue is largely food distribution, what is our responsibility as the people of God in addressing hunger? In dealing with that question, we will examine the issue of God's justice and consider the connection between worship and wealth. Finally, we will look at the blessings Jesus promised the poor and hungry in contrast to the woes he promised to the rich and well fed.



Make sure to have the class materials recommended on page 7 ready for Unit 1.



Lesson 1 WHY IS THERE HUNGER?

UNIT 1: *Hunger is A God Issue*

A Bible Study On Hunger

TEACHING LESSON ONE

OPEN WITH WORSHIP

- Begin with a few moments of silent prayer.
- Conclude with reading **Genesis 1:29-31**

INTRODUCE THE COURSE OF STUDY

- Welcome the participants in the study
- Take care of any “housekeeping” matters as appropriate—restrooms, breaks, etc.
- Explain the structure of the course.
- Outline expectations:
 - Attend every lesson.
 - Complete reading assignments
 - Bring your Bible to each session.
 - **PARTICIPATE** fully in discussions and activities.

DISCUSS THE REALITY OF HUNGER

- Ask if any class members can cite an example of hunger in the world today.
- Ask the class why there is hunger in the world. Record the answers on a large piece of newsprint, chalkboard, etc., that everyone can see. Ask for elaboration as necessary to make sure everyone understands each reason for hunger offered by class members. Responses might include such things as:
 - Weather (drought, floods, etc.)
 - Lack of good farming techniques
 - War
 - Poor education
 - Politics
 - Pollution
 - Selfishness
- When the class has listed all reasons they can think of, ask them how many of the reasons they cited for hunger are God’s fault.
 - **TEACHING NOTE:** In the case of weather and other natural causes of hunger the problem is geographically localized. In other words, when there is a drought in one area of the planet, food is produced abundantly in another.

GOD’S ABUNDANCE

- Have someone read **Genesis 1:29-31**.
 - Point out that God blessed the man and woman and then told them to be fruitful and multiply, pointing out the abundance of food provided for them and the animals. Ask what this implies for us today.
 - Discuss what it means in the context of hunger when the writer of Genesis makes the claim, that the Creation was “very good”?
- Ask: Can you think of any examples of God providing abundantly?
- Have students break into three groups to look up the following scriptures (two per group):
 - **Matthew 14:15-21** (feeding the 5,000).
 - **2 Kings 4:42-44** (feeding the 100).
 - **Exodus 16:13-18** (manna and quail).
 - **John 2:1-11** (water turned into wine).
 - **Genesis 41:47-57** (preparing for famine).
 - **Psalms 145:14-16** (God gives food).
- Ask the groups to consider these questions for each scripture:
 - What does this scripture tell us about God’s generosity?
 - How does this scripture show that it is in God’s nature to provide abundantly?
- Ask each group to share with the class what they discovered.
- Point out that God continues to give abundantly even today. The world produces 4.3 pounds of food per person per day, enough to make most people fat!

TAKE A GLOBAL HUNGER QUIZ

- Give each member of the class a copy of the Global Hunger Quiz (page 14) to complete.
- Once all have finished, use *Global Hunger Facts*, page 13, as a guide in discussing the answers.
- Point out again that God has provided abundantly to insure no one ever goes hungry. Yet still hunger persists. Ask, how can that be?



The only reason there is hunger in the world is because we permit it!

UNIT 1, Lesson 1: WHY IS THERE HUNGER?



Since there will never cease to be some in need on the earth, I therefore command you, “Open your hand to the poor and needy neighbor in your land.”

Deuteronomy 15:11

RECAP THE LESSON THUS FAR

- Remind the class about the reality of God’s abundance.
- Note that more than enough food is produced to feed everyone on the planet.
- Point to the reasons for hunger that the class developed.
- Ask: How do you think God feels about the existence of hunger in the world today?
- Ask: What can be done to end hunger?

THE ISSUE OF FOOD DISTRIBUTION

- By now the class should be coming to the understanding that the world does not face a food production problem. Rather, it faces a food distribution problem.
- Ask: If it is true that the hunger issue is largely an issue of food distribution, what can be done to solve the problem?
- **TEACHING NOTES:**
 - It is important not to oversimplify that food distribution is the real issue when it comes to global hunger. The truth is that there are many complexities involved in food distribution, such as war zones, shipment costs, spoilage, etc. (A class discussion on those complexities might be in order if time permits).
 - Also, when we talk about food distribution, we do not necessarily mean that it should be accomplished only through charity. While charity has an important role to play in addressing hunger, the ideal solution also involves lifting people out of poverty so they can afford to purchase food while enjoying improved quality of lives.

OFFERING

- Explain that the class will take action to help the hungry by collecting an offering at each session and giving it to the Society of St. Andrew, a ministry that serves the hungry and created this study (or to another hunger relief organization).
- Collect the offering.

CLOSING

- Have the class locate current hunger hot spots on a world map or globe. Share with the class the information you obtained on these countries.

- Ask the class to keep the hungry of the world in their prayers through the week.
- Read aloud **Deuteronomy 15:11**. Challenge the students to find a way to open their hand to the needy during the week.
- Close with prayer.

Global Hunger Facts

(ANSWERS TO THE GLOBAL HUNGER QUIZ ON PAGE 14)

1. 923 million people do not have enough to eat — more than the populations of the USA, Canada, and the European Union.
2. In essence, hunger is the most extreme form of poverty, where individuals or families cannot afford to meet their most basic need for food.
3. In the developing world, more than 1.4 billion people currently live below the international poverty line, earning less than \$1.25 per day.
4. Six million children under 5 die every year from hunger. There are 6.2 million children under 5 in France and Italy.
5. More than 60 percent of chronically hungry people are women.
6. Hunger and malnutrition claim: 10 million lives every year; 25,000 lives every day; one life every 5 seconds.
7. Hunger and malnutrition are the number-one risk to global health killing more than AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis combined.
8. Poor families spend over 70% of their income on food.
9. With a world population of 6.7 billion, the 963 million people who experience hunger represent one out of every seven members of the global human family.
10. There are 146 million underweight children under age five years .



GLOBAL HUNGER QUIZ

The Fast That I Choose

A Bible Study On Hunger

1. How many people in the world are hungry?
 1.42 billion 923 million 532 million 234 million
2. When people experience hunger, it usually means they are so poor they cannot afford their most basic needs.
 True False
3. More than ____ billion people currently live below the international poverty line, earning less than \$1.25 per day.
 1.4 2.1 3.2 3.7
4. About how many children under five die every year from hunger-related causes?
 4 million 5 million 6 million 7 million
5. What percentage of the world's chronically hungry people are women?
 40% 50% 60% 70%
6. How many lives do hunger and malnutrition claim every day?
 25,000 2,500 250 25
7. What is the number 1 risk to global health?
 HIV/AIDS hunger and malnutrition malaria tuberculosis
8. What percent of their income do poor families on average spend on food?
 40% 50% 60% 70%
9. One out of every ____ people are hungry in the world today.
 5 7 8 10
10. How many children under the age of five in the world are underweight due to malnutrition?
 106 million 126 million 136 million 1146 million

SOURCES: U.N. World Food Programme, 2009
Bread for the World, 2009
Hunger Notes, 2009



Lesson 2 What does the Lord Require?

UNIT 1: Hunger is A God Issue

A Bible Study On Hunger

TEACHING LESSON 2

OPEN WITH WORSHIP

- Begin with a few moments of silent prayer.
- Conclude with reading **Deuteronomy 15:11**.
- Collect the offering.

WHAT DOES THE LORD REQUIRE?

- Review with the class what was learned about world hunger in the first lesson and what was learned about God's generosity.
- Point out that in the face of global hunger, today's lesson seeks to answer the question: Do we as people of faith have any responsibilities?
- Have someone read aloud **Micah 6:6-8**. Discuss:
 - What does it mean "to do justice"?
 - What is God's justice with respect to hunger? (See *To Do Justice~To Act Justly* below).
- Have someone read aloud **Deuteronomy 15:7-11**.
 - Discuss what this scripture tells us about God's expectations of God's people.
 - **TEACHING NOTES:**
 - ◇ The "seventh year" refers to **Deuteronomy 15:1-2**.
 - ◇ While this passage specifically refers to members "of your community", the point to focus on is God's expectation that the needs of the poor be met. The following scripture reinforces that point and specifically includes "the alien".
- Have someone read aloud **Deuteronomy 24:19-22** and another read **Leviticus 19:9-10**.
 - Have students form into groups and use a Bible Dictionary to determine who "the alien, the orphan, and the widow" the scripture refers to were. Then discuss:
 - ◇ How do these scriptures support the idea of God's abundance?
 - ◇ Who might "the alien, the orphan, and the widow" be today?
 - ◇ Does the "law of gleaning" have any application today?
 - Discuss how the "law of gleaning" actually conferred a right to the poor and needy because the land and what it produced ultimately belonged to God.

WORSHIP AND WEALTH

- Ask the class to think for a moment about the abundance that God showers on each of them individually every day.
- Ask them to consider the abundance of possessions they have. Point out that by the world's standards, most Americans are extraordinarily wealthy.
- Note that the question facing us is whether those who are wealthy have an obligation to those who are not.
- Say: "Our key verse points out that there will always be some in need on the earth. Jesus made the same point in **John 12:2-8**."
- Have someone read **John 12:2-8**.
 - Ask: Is this scripture ever used as an excuse to NOT help the poor? Why?
 - Read *The Poor With Us*, on the next page, then discuss the points made in the article.
 - Point out that Jesus spent his ministry largely among the poor. The poor truly were WITH Jesus and his disciples. Then ask, are the poor WITH us in the church today? If not, why not?

To Do Justice ~ To Act Justly

Depending on the translation, Micah 6:8 might be rendered in English either "to do justice" or "to act justly". The prophets of the Old Testament saw justice in the broadest sense. To them it referred to one's ethical response to other people. To do justice or to act justly essentially means, "to do the right thing."

In every society some have an easier life than others, and some are disadvantaged. In ancient Israel the disadvantaged included widows, orphans, resident foreigners, and most especially the poor. The "justice" referred to by Micah and the other prophets was less a case of keeping the rules than of assisting and protecting disadvantaged people.

With respect to hunger in a world of abundance, "to do the right thing" means simply making sure that the hungry are fed.

UNIT 1, Lesson 2: WHAT DOES THE LORD REQUIRE?

The Poor With Us

When it comes to helping those in need, all too often Christians point out that Jesus said, “You will always have the poor with you.” Usually when people quote that scripture, what they are really trying to say is that since hunger and poverty are insurmountable problems, there is nothing we can do about them. They are saying that we might as well not even try since we will always have the poor with us.

But that is not what Jesus meant. After all, God commanded the people to help the poor BECAUSE there would always be those in need (Deuteronomy 15:11).

The truth is that the anointing of Jesus’ feet with costly oil raises the issue of how our material wealth enters into worship. What Mary did — washing Jesus’ feet with expensive oil and wiping them with her hair — was nothing less than a remarkable act of devout worship. Mary was expressing her love and adoration for Jesus in a very profound way.

When Judas asked why the costly oil wasn’t sold and the money given to the poor, he raised a valid point. But Jesus answered Judas’ question by saying, “Leave her alone. You will always have the poor with you, but you won’t always have me.”

What Jesus meant when he said that was this: “Let Mary use her wealth to worship me in this way now... you can always use your wealth to worship me after I am gone. And you can do that, you can show your love for me after I am physically gone, by helping the poor.”

BLESSINGS AND WOES

- After pointing out that Jesus had a lot to say about the poor and the wealthy, have someone read **Luke 6:20-31**.
- In small groups, discuss:
 - Which specific conditions lead to blessings and which lead to woes? Why?
 - Jesus promises future blessings for those who suffer now, and future woes to those who thrive in the midst of suffering. When will these promises be fulfilled?
 - Jesus concludes the beatitudes with a call to action. How do we live out these commands of Jesus in our lives today?
 - Do these words of Jesus have any warnings for us?

WHAT RESPONSIBILITIES HAVE I?

- Remind the class of the key verse, **Deuteronomy 15:11**.
- Discuss what responsibilities we have as Christians to feed the hungry.
 - **TEACHING NOTE:** Remember that the issue here is not “how” to feed the hungry. Instead, the issue is whether Christians have a responsibility to give food to those in need. Try to keep the students focused on that topic.
- Point out that the class has only touched on a few Bible passages related to hunger and justice.
- Give each student a copy of page 17 for their further study.

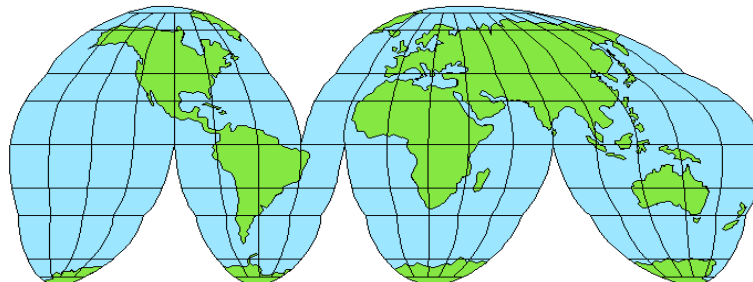
CLOSING

- Remind the class of the world’s hunger hot spots.
- Ask the class to keep the hungry of the world in their prayers through the week.
- Read **Deuteronomy 15:11**.
- Close with prayer.



Since there will never cease to be some in need on the earth, I therefore command you, “Open your hand to the poor and needy neighbor in your land.”

Deuteronomy 15:11





**Selected Bible
Passages Related to
Hunger and Justice**

***The Fast That
I Choose***

A Bible Study On Hunger

| | | | |
|-------------------|--|------------------|--|
| Genesis 1:29-30 | God gives the world's food | Matt. 6:25-34 | Seek first the kingdom of God and righteousness |
| Exodus 3:7-12 | Moses asked to go to Pharaoh | Matthew 14:14-21 | Feeding the multitude (also Mark 6:30-44, Luke 9:10-17, and John 6:1-14) |
| Exodus 16:1-12 | The manna lifestyle—economics of enough | Matt. 23:23 | You have neglected justice, mercy and faith |
| Leviticus 19:9-11 | The law of gleaning—leave food for the poor | Matt. 25:31-46 | I was hungry and you gave me food |
| Deut. 10:17-19 | God executes justice | Mark 8:1-9 | Feeding the 4,000 |
| Deut. 14:28-15:11 | The law of tithe helps the poor | Luke 1:46-55 | Mary's <i>magnificat</i> —He has filled the hungry with good things |
| 2 Kings 4:42-44 | Feeding the 100 | Luke 6:20-26 | Blessed are you who are poor |
| Psalms 72:1-14 | How to pray for a just government | Luke 10:25-37 | The story of the good Samaritan |
| Psalms 82 | Justice to the weak and destitute | Luke 12:15 | Watch out for all kinds of greed |
| Psalms 140:12-13 | God maintains the cause of the needy | Luke 12:35-48 | To whom much is given, much is required |
| Psalms 146:5-9 | God is just and feeds the hungry | Luke 14:12-14 | Invite the poor to your dinner |
| Proverbs 14:20-21 | Happy are those who are kind to the poor | Luke 16: 19-31 | The story of the rich man and Lazarus |
| Proverbs 19:17 | Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the Lord | Luke 18:18-30 | Give to the poor |
| Proverbs 21:13 | Listen to the cry of the poor | Luke 19:1-10 | Zacchaeus' radical generosity |
| Isaiah 1:16-18 | Seek justice – correct oppression | John 13:1-20 | Jesus washing disciples' feet |
| Isaiah 3:13-15 | Why do you grind the face of the poor? | Acts 2:42-47 | Sharing in the early church |
| Isaiah 5:1-7 | I expected justice but found bloodshed | Acts 6:1-7 | Dispute over the distribution of food |
| Isaiah 10:1-4 | God's anger at unjust government | 1 Cor. 11:17-34 | Selfishness in the Christian community |
| Isaiah 58:1-12 | The fast that I choose | 1 Cor. 16:1-2 | Put aside for the needy each Sunday |
| Jeremiah 22:13-16 | To do justice is to know the Lord | 2 Cor. 8:12-15 | A balance between need and abundance |
| Lamentations 4:9 | It is better to die by the sword than by hunger | 2 Cor. 9:6-15 | God loves a cheerful giver |
| Ezekiel 16:49 | Sodom was guilty of neglect of the poor | Galatians 2:10 | Remember the poor |
| Ezekiel 34:16-22 | God will judge between the fat and lean sheep | 1 Tim. 6:17-19 | The wealthy are to be generous |
| Amos 5:10-24 | Let justice roll down like waters | James 2:1-7 | God's bias toward the poor |
| Amos 8:4-7 | God will not forget those who trample on the needy | James 2:14-17 | Faith without works is dead |
| Micah 6:8 | Do justice, love mercy, walk humbly | 1 John 3:17-18 | Love in truth and action, not just word |
| | | 1 John 4:19-21 | Loving God means loving neighbor |



**UNIT 2:
HUNGER IS A
GLOBAL ISSUE**

*The Fast That
I Choose*

A Bible Study On Hunger

A VICIOUS CYCLE

Today nearly 17% of the developing world's people are undernourished. In some areas of the world more than one-third of the people are chronically hungry. And even though the percentage of people experiencing hunger globally has declined since 1992, the number of hungry people in the world has actually increased because of population growth.¹ For the most part, these people simply do not earn enough to provide for their basic food needs.

While it is clear that poverty causes hunger, it is also important to understand that hunger causes poverty. In fact, hunger and poverty actually feed off each other.

It is often said that the most abundant asset of the poor is their labor. However, people who are undernourished are unable to work to their full potential. At the same time, studies have shown that one of the surest ways to relieve poverty is through education. However, hungry, listless people do not learn as easily as the well-fed. Also, the hungry must invest almost all their time in activities that earn their daily bread and so usually cannot even attend education programs.²

Hungry children usually grow into hungry adults. That is because a person's work capacity is affected by his or her entire nutritional history. How an adult thinks and reacts to situations is seriously affected by their undernutrition as a child.³

The harsh realities of hunger mean that the impoverished often find themselves in a vicious cycle of hunger-poverty-hunger. And so hunger must be the first hurdle people cross on their way out of poverty.⁴

ONE HUMAN FAMILY

When facing the twin issues of global hunger and poverty, the Christian must recognize that all of humanity actually comprises a single human family. Some might resist this worldview. After all, they could argue, the Old Testament provisions for caring for the poor applied only to those living within the geographic boundaries of ancient Israel.

On top of that, they could point out that the concern of the early Christian community in tending to peoples' physical well-being seemed to focus only on taking care of the needs of their fellow Christians (Acts 6:1-6, for example. See also 1 Corinthians 16:1-4). These examples might make it hard for some to consider all of humankind as a single global family or for them to see any obligation to help the needy beyond those who are Christian or who are in the U.S.

While there is some truth to such a parochial perspective of "family" in the Bible, the idea of a single global family to which all humans belong is also rooted strongly in scripture. In fact, the theological concept of a single human family begins with the biblical account of the Creation. The Bible teaches that all human beings descend from a common ancestry, Adam and Eve. It follows that because of our common ancestry all human beings are related to one another, however distantly.

On top of that, we need to turn to what Jesus taught. It is true that Old Testament law applied only to those living within Israel. The supreme law that God established to regulate behavior between people in ancient Israel was "you shall love your neighbor as yourself." (Leviticus 19:18). Here, and generally in the Old Testament, "neighbor" means a fellow citizen of Israel.⁵

In the New Testament, however, the limitation of moral obligation to just one's fellow citizens is abolished. For instance, in the parable of the Good Samaritan Jesus gave broad interpretation of "neighbor". He used the term to include those outside the ties of nation, even those whose nationality was despised (Luke 10:25-37).

Proportion of population living below \$1 a day, 1997 and 2007⁷

| REGION | 1997 | 2007 |
|-------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Sub-Saharan Africa | 55.5 | 51.4 |
| Southern Asia | 51.5 | 31.5 |
| Oceania | 22.9 | 21.6 |
| South-Eastern Asia | 24.1 | 13.3 |
| Eastern Asia | 18.8 | 8.7 |
| Latin America & the Caribbean | 11.6 | 8.0 |
| Asia | 11.0 | 5.8 |
| Western Asia | 2.9 | 5.4 |

UNIT 2: HUNGER IS A GLOBAL ISSUE

PURPOSE OF THIS UNIT:

- TO SEE THAT WE ARE PART OF A SINGLE GLOBAL HUMAN FAMILY.
- TO RECOGNIZE THE INTERCONNECTEDNESS OF LIFE ON EARTH.
- TO UNDERSTAND THAT WE HAVE AN OBLIGATION TO ASSIST “FAMILY” MEMBERS.



Since we are God’s offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals.

Acts 17:29

In the final analysis, Jesus showed that the relationship to one’s “neighbor” is a moral one rather than a physical one. In fact, Jesus’ teachings made “neighbor” equivalent to “family member.” Clearly, in Jesus’ eyes all of humankind comprises a single family that is loved by God.⁶

This view of all humans being in the same family culminates in Acts 17:16-33 where the Apostle Paul addresses the Greeks in Athens. Paul drew on pagan Greek poets to establish a point of contact, and then went on to proclaim God’s truth, beginning with the point that we all are God’s children.

THY WILL BE DONE

It was Catholic scholars who coined the phrase “God’s preferential option for the poor”. They used this term to describe a phenomenon found throughout both the Old and New Testaments: God’s partiality toward the poor and the disadvantaged. The list of verses on page 17 is just a small sampling that demonstrates the pervasiveness of this biblical theme.

And so we must recognize that the Bible makes clear that God’s intention is for no one on earth to ever go hungry. That is the will of God. Just one example is found in Isaiah’s prophetic vision:

In Jerusalem, the LORD Almighty will spread a wonderful feast for everyone around the world. It will be a delicious feast of good food, with clear, well-aged wine and choice beef. Isaiah 25:6(NLT)

As followers of Christ, when we pray, “Thy will be done,” we are praying for the day that hunger comes to an end.

UNIT 2 OUTLINE:

The two lessons of Unit 2 highlight the reality that hunger is a global issue. The first lesson looks at the question, “Who are my brothers and sisters?” The second asks, “Am I my brothers’ and sisters’ keeper?”

In the first lesson, we will examine the theological foundations that support the idea of humankind being a single family. We will also look at what obligations we have as members of the human family.

The second lesson begins with a look at whether we have an obligation to others and then examines two contrasting lifestyles in the human family. It concludes by asking about the responsibility of the rich toward other members of the human family.



Make sure to have the class materials recommended on page 7 ready for Unit 2.

A Traditional Jewish Story

A rich but miserable man once visited a rabbi seeking understanding of his life and how he might find peace. The rabbi led the man to a window and said, “What do you see?”

“I see men, women, and children,” answered the rich man.

The rabbi then took the man and stood him in front of a mirror. “Now what do you see?” he asked. “I see myself,” the rich man replied.

“Yes,” said the rabbi. “It is a strange thing, is it not? In the window there is a glass and in the mirror there is a glass. But the glass of the mirror is covered with a little silver, and no sooner is the silver added than you cease to see others, and see only yourself.”



Lesson 1 WHO ARE MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS?

UNIT 2: Hunger is A Global Issue

A Bible Study On Hunger

TEACHING LESSON ONE

OPEN WITH WORSHIP

- Begin with a few moments of silent prayer.
- Conclude with reading **Genesis 5:1-2**.
- Collect the offering.

INTRODUCTION

- Begin the lesson by asking the class if any feel a sense of obligation toward their family members if they have a genuine need. Give some specific examples such as the ones below and discuss what those obligations might be.
 - Lost job, needs money to eat
 - Bad credit, needs co-signer for a car loan
 - Unmarried and pregnant, needs help with medical costs
 - Homeless, needs a place to stay
 - Drug addict, asks for money
- Tell the class that today's lesson seeks to answer from a biblical perspective the question: Who are my family members?

THE OLD TESTAMENT VIEW OF FAMILY

- Have someone read aloud **Leviticus 25:35-38**. Discuss the following, with the class using a Bible Dictionary as necessary to look up the terms:
 - In this passage, who are one's "kin"?
 - To whom does the term "resident alien" refer? (A foreigner living in Israel.)
- Ask: Why are a person's relatives who fall into difficulty to be treated as resident aliens?
 - Discuss whether it is a "good thing" or a "bad thing" to be treated as a resident alien.
 - You may want to discuss how we generally treat resident aliens in our society.
- Ask: In ancient Israel, how were resident aliens to be treated?
- Have someone read aloud **Leviticus 19:33-34**.
 - Point out that here God says that the Israelites should love the resident aliens as they love themselves.
- Have someone read aloud **Leviticus 19:18**.
 - Point out that here God says that the Israelites should love their neighbors as they love themselves.

- Ask to whom the term 'neighbor' refers.
 - ◇ **TEACHING NOTE:** The first part of the verse contains the answer. It refers to "your people", which means fellow citizens. "Neighbor" in this passage therefore refers to one's fellow citizens.
- Have someone look up "neighbor" in a Bible Dictionary and read the definition as it applies in the Old Testament.



Everyone in Israel was to be treated the same and the basic human needs of the poor were to be met by those who were able to help them.

- **Sum up:** The Old Testament Law referred to three types of people: Resident aliens, fellow citizens, and relatives. The Law required Israelites to love the resident aliens as themselves. It also required them to love their fellow citizens as themselves. And finally, it required them to treat their needy relatives as if they were resident aliens.
- Note that by making these connections between neighbor, citizen, alien, and family member, one can conclude that all people within the boundaries of Israel were, in God's eyes, members of a single family. Further, with family membership came certain obligations, including the obligation to help those in the "family" who were less fortunate.

THE NEW TESTAMENT VIEW

- Point out that Jesus challenged much of the thinking of his time, and that he continues to challenge us even today.
- Introduce the story of the Good Samaritan by explaining that Jesus was once asked the very question we have just been dealing with, "Who is my neighbor?"
- Assign roles to members of the class:
 - Narrator (reads everything but the lines of the other "cast" members).

UNIT 2, Lesson 1: WHO ARE MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS?



Since we are God's offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals.

Acts 17:29

- Jesus
- The lawyer
- The robbers
- The Levite
- The Samaritan
- The priest
- Have the class act out the parable of the Good Samaritan, **Luke 10:25-37**.
- After acting out the scripture, have the class discuss the lessons of the parable. Try to address these issues:
 - Where does the lawyer's answer to Jesus' question about the law come from? (**Deuteronomy 6:4-5** and **Leviticus 19:18**.)
 - What do you think it means when the scripture says the lawyer wanted to "justify himself" in asking "Who is my neighbor"?
 - How did Samaritans feel about Jews and vice-versa?
 - According to the scripture, who was the neighbor?
 - Why was he a neighbor?
- Have students break into small groups to look up each of the following scriptures:
 - **Matthew 12:47-50**
 - **Matthew 7:3-5**
 - **1 John 4:19-21**
 - **Ephesians 3:14-15**
 - **Acts 17:22-29**
- Consider these questions for each scripture:
 - What does this scripture tell us about God's view of neighbor or "brother and sister"?
 - How does this scripture show that all humans comprise a single family?
- Have someone read aloud **Matthew 22:36-40**
 - **TEACHING POINTS:**
 - ◇ In the Old Testament, being a neighbor was based on kinship or national ties. By contrast, Jesus taught that the relationship is instead a moral one.



- ◇ Christ and the apostles gave the names "brother and sister" to all Christians, and "neighbor" to all the world.
- ◇ The connections between neighbor, citizen, alien, and family member in the Old Testament remain valid, which means in God's eyes all people are members of a single global human family.

FAMILY OBLIGATIONS

- Remind the class about the earlier discussion of family obligations. Ask: According to the Bible, what kind of obligations do we have toward our fellow human beings? Record the answers where all can see.
- Have someone read aloud **Luke 14:12-14**. Discuss what this scripture tell us about our obligation to others.
- Have someone read **Matthew 23:23**. Ask if this verse tells us anything about our obligation to do justice and extend mercy.
 - You may want to review with the class the last lesson's discussion of justice.
- Ask the class to read along in their Bibles as you read aloud **Matthew 25:31-46**. Make the point that this scriptures indicates that how we treat the poor and hungry reveals how we truly feel about Jesus.



How we treat the poor and hungry reveals how we really feel about Jesus.

- Point out that roughly 20% of the global human family in developing areas lives on less than one dollar per day. Many of these people live in such abject poverty that they cannot buy enough food to live healthy lives. Then ask if we have any obligation to these people. Let the class respond.

CLOSING

- Remind the class of the world's hunger hot spots.
- Ask the class to keep the hungry of the world in their prayers through the week.
- Read aloud **Acts 17:29**. Underscore the point that Paul says we are all God's offspring.
- Read aloud *Growing Good Corn* (see following page).
- Close with prayer.

Growing Good Corn



There was a Nebraska farmer who grew award-winning corn. Each year he entered his corn in the state fair where it won a blue ribbon.

One year a newspaper reporter interviewed him and learned something interesting about how he grew it. The reporter discovered that the farmer shared his seed corn with his neighbors.

"How can you afford to share your best seed corn with your neighbors when they are entering corn in competition with yours each year?" the reporter asked.

"Why sir," said the farmer, "didn't you know? The wind picks up pollen from the ripening corn and swirls it from field to field. If my neighbors grow inferior corn, cross-pollination will steadily degrade the quality of my corn. If I am to grow good corn, I must help my neighbors grow good corn."

He is very much aware of the connectedness of life. His corn cannot improve unless his neighbor's corn also improves.

So it is in other dimensions. Those who choose to be at peace must help their neighbors to be at peace. Those who choose to live well must help others to live well, for the value of a life is measured by the lives it touches. And those who choose to be happy must help others to find happiness for the welfare of each is bound up with the welfare of all.

The lesson for each of us is this: if we are to grow good corn, we must help our neighbors grow good corn.

Author Unknown



Since we are God's offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals.

Acts 17:29



Lesson 2
AM I MY
BROTHERS' AND
SISTERS' KEEPER?

UNIT 2: Hunger is
A Global Issue

A Bible Study On Hunger

TEACHING LESSON TWO

OPEN WITH WORSHIP

- Begin with a prayer.
- Conclude with reading **Genesis 4:8-10**.
- Collect the offering.

INTRODUCTION

- Remind the class that in the previous lesson we explored the theological foundations for looking at all people as belonging to a single human family.
- Point out that we also looked briefly at the question of “family obligations” in the context of global hunger.
- Tell the class that today we will examine the issue of family obligations more thoroughly.

FAMILY MATTERS

- Have the class refer to **Genesis 4:8-10**. Ask: When God asked Cain, “Where is your brother Abel?” what did he mean?
 - **TEACHING NOTE:** God was not seeking Abel’s location since verse 10 shows that God knew Abel was dead. God was actually asking Cain to account for his treatment of his brother.
- Discuss Cain’s reply to God’s question using this guide:
 - Note the word “keeper”. Ask the class to define the word. Have someone look it up in a Bible Dictionary.
 - In this context, keeper is understood to mean one who “guards, protects, or attends to.”
 - Point out that Cain’s reply was designed to deflect responsibility from himself.
- Discuss God’s answer to Cain’s question.
 - Point out that God’s reaction certainly suggests he expected Cain to guard, protect, or attend to his brother. Cain, in God’s eyes, was his brother’s keeper indeed.
- Have someone read aloud **1 John 3:11-18**. Note how this says that if we do not treat our brothers and sisters properly, then we become like Cain.

CONTRASTING LIFESTYLES

- Have someone read aloud **Luke 16:19-31**.
- Divide the class into two groups. Have one group list the lifestyle attributes of the rich man and the other list the lifestyle attributes of Lazarus. Have each group consider at least:
 - Clothing
 - Shelter
 - Food
 - Health
- Have each group share its list. Record the information in two columns on a chalkboard, white board, or on newsprint that all can see.
- Discuss what happened to the rich man and Lazarus when they died.
- Ask the class what sin the rich man committed that led to him going to Hades. Allow the class to discuss.
 - **TEACHING POINTS:**
 - ◇ Refer to *The Rich Man’s Sin* at the top of page 24.
 - ◇ There are several other theological points that can be taken from this scripture. However, try to keep the discussion centered on the issue of the rich man’s responsibility to Lazarus and his failure to meet it.
 - ◇ Make the point that the rich man was his brother’s (Lazarus’) keeper and that he failed in that responsibility.



Indifference is a sin! Jesus calls us to a discipleship where we seize every opportunity to be an instrument of God’s grace.

AN ACCIDENT OF BIRTH

- Point out that in large measure in the world today, living in poverty is a consequence of where a person is born. Acknowledge that there are exceptions.
- Note that in the world today, those who live on less than one dollar per day live in abject poverty and

UNIT 2, Lesson 2: AM I MY BROTHERS' AND SISTERS' KEEPER?

The Rich Man's Sin

From the scripture we learn that Lazarus lay powerless and helpless at the gate of the rich man. In fact, Lazarus lay at the precise location where every time the rich man left his home or returned, he would pass by him. But the rich man not only passed by Lazarus. He also passed him by. We can infer that in the rich man's eyes Lazarus became simply part of the landscape.

The rich indolent man had no concern for others. He got all he could and kept it all to himself. Every single day the rich man had the opportunity to minister to Lazarus. But he did not do anything to help the poor beggar. The rich man would not even give Lazarus the scraps from his table.

So the rich man's sin was his indifference. He turned his back on every opportunity to become an instrument of God's grace to those in need. And in the end the rich man suffered the consequences of his daily indifference.

face malnourishment every day.

- On a chalkboard, white board, or on newsprint, recreate the table shown at the bottom of page 18.
- Ask: From this table, on which continent is a child most likely to experience hunger? Least likely? Why?
- Ask: Who gets to choose where they are born?

CONTRAST TWO LIFESTYLES

- Hand out copies of *Contrasting Lifestyles*, page 25.
- Have the class locate each of the countries listed on a world map or globe. Point out that one country has been selected for each continent.
- Note especially the differences in the infant death rates and life expectancies between the countries.
 - Ask the class if they can account for the differences. Record their answers on a chalkboard, white board, or on newsprint.
 - **TEACHING POINT:** Two of the major factors that affect infant mortality rates and life expectancy are access to good health care and a healthy diet.
- Ask each class member to complete the section of *Contrasting Lifestyles* that says "My Lifestyle."
 - **Food:** What kind of food do you eat? How many meals per day? Any snacks?
 - **Shelter:** What kind of house do you live in? How many bedrooms? What kind of heating system? Do you have air conditioning?
 - **Water:** What kind of water do you drink? Where do you get it? Do you use bottled water or a filter?
 - **Health Care:** Do you have health insurance? When was the last time a member of your family saw a doctor? Do you have a dentist? An optometrist? How often do you go?
 - **Transportation:** What kind of car do you have? How new is it? Do you ever travel by air or rail?

➤ **Education:** What is the highest grade you completed? Has anyone in your family gone to pre-school? How many in your family can read and write?

- After everyone has finished "My Lifestyle" ask the class to record the same kind of information for the "Typical Lifestyle in ____" as you read the article on page 26, *Life in Somalia*.
- Ask the class to discuss the difference between their lifestyle and the typical lifestyle in Somalia.
- Point out that from a global perspective, Somalia is very much like Lazarus and the United States is like the rich man.
- Ask: Do we Americans have any obligation to the people of Somalia?

RULES FOR THE RICH

- Have someone read aloud **1 Timothy 6:17-19**.
- Note that in contrast to almost the entire world, Americans can only be described as "rich."
- Discuss the obligations and the blessings that come with being rich.

CLOSING

- Read aloud the key verse, **Acts 17:29**. Highlight the teaching that we are all God's offspring.
- Remind the class that Somalia is just one of the world's many impoverished nations. Ask the class to keep the world's hungry and especially Somalia's hungry in their prayers through the week.
- Read aloud *A Traditional Jewish Story*, page 19)
- Close with prayer.





CONTRASTING LIFESTYLES

The Fast That I Choose

A Bible Study On Hunger

| Source: CIA Fact Book 2008 | Somalia | Cambodia | Guyana | Tuvalu | France | United States |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Continent | Africa | Asia | South America | Oceania | Europe | North America |
| Population | 9,832,017 | 14,494,293 | 772,298 | 12,373 | 64,057,792 | 307,212,123 |
| Infant Death Rate* | 109.19 | 54.79 | 26.65 | 18.43 | 3.33 | 6.26 |
| Life Expectancy | 49.63 years | 62.1 years | 66.68 years | 69.29 years | 80.98 years | 78.11 years |
| GDP | \$7.756 billion | \$29.24 billion | \$3.082 billion | \$14.94 million | \$2.097 trillion | \$14.58 trillion |
| Per Capita GDP | \$600 | \$2,100 | \$4,000 | \$1,600 | \$32,700 | \$48,000 |

*deaths/1,000 live births

| The Typical Lifestyle in _____: | My Lifestyle: |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| Food: | Food: |
| Shelter: | Shelter: |
| Water: | Water: |
| Health Care: | Health Care: |
| Transportation: | Transportation: |
| Education: | Education: |

UNIT 2, Lesson 2: AM I MY BROTHERS' AND SISTERS' KEEPER?

Life in Somalia

Background:

Somalia is a dry, sparsely populated country that has been in a state of civil war and anarchy since 1991, when the central government was overthrown. Overgrazing, deforestation, and periodic drought have led to severe soil degradation in Somalia, rendering much of the land unsuitable for agriculture.

About 70 percent of Somalis are nomadic or semi-nomadic people who depend upon livestock for their livelihood. The remainder are either crop farmers or inhabitants of the few urban centers. A typical home for the herder is a collapsible shelter built of wood and animal skins, with grass mats on the floor. Farmers usually live in villages of one-room, thatched mud huts. A house with a metal roof is a sign of prosperity. In the few cities, Somalis may have larger homes with Arab- or Western-style furnishings.

Staple foods in urban areas consist of locally produced meats and imported rice. In farming areas, sorghum, millet, maize, and sesame are common staples. Among the nomads, milk from camels and goats is the main food available, supplemented with grains bought with money from the sale of animals.

Hospital and clinic services are free in Somalia. However, the long civil wars have largely exhausted medical resources and primary health care is an urgent need in the countryside.

Less than 10 percent of school-aged children are enrolled in school in Somalia. About 38% of the population can read and write.

Current Situation:

Somalia remains one of the most dangerous places in the world, and a country with massive humanitarian needs – not least for food assistance. As a result of conflict and displacement, drought and hyperinflation, the number of Somalis in need of humanitarian assistance in August 2008 rose 3.25 million – a 77 percent increase over those needing assistance at the beginning of that year. The United Nations reported the level of human suffering in Somalia was shocking, with one in six children under the age of five acutely malnourished, and the numbers rising.

Over ninety percent of all emergency food for Somalia is delivered by sea. However, because of piracy in Somali waters, shippers are nervous of delivering into Somalia, and frequently refuse to do so.

Somalia is a least developed, low-income, food-deficit country. Acute malnutrition rates are very high, with rates above 20 percent in some areas such as Juba Valley and the Gedo, Bakol and Bay regions of the south. The situation in this region is aggravated by civil strife, insecurity and poor rains, while areas along the Juba River suffer from floods. Somalia has some of the world's worst health indicators. Life expectancy at birth is 46.2 years. A quarter of children die before they reach five.

Sources:

"Somalia," Microsoft® Encarta® Online Encyclopedia 2008. <http://encarta.msn.com> © 1997-2008 Microsoft Corporation. All Rights Reserved.

"Somalia," The World Factbook, U.S. Central Intelligence Agency. 2008. (<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook>)

"U.N. World Food Programme Country Profile: Somalia. January 2009. (<http://www.wfp.org/countries/somalia>)





UNIT 3: HUNGER IS A NATIONAL ISSUE

The Fast That I Choose

A Bible Study On Hunger

A BIBLICAL VIEW OF GOVERNMENT

Government affects our lives every single day. Government tells us how fast we may drive. It regulates commercial enterprise. It provides for our common defense and protects us from domestic strife. Yet rarely do we consider government's responsibility from a biblical perspective.

Developing a Christian view of government is complicated by the fact that the Bible does not give an exhaustive treatment of government. Nonetheless, from what the scriptures do say about government we can come to some conclusions about its authority and responsibility.

The Bible teaches that government is instituted by God and that its authority comes from God (Romans 13:1). However, the Bible also makes clear that with governmental authority comes certain responsibilities. For example, Psalm 72 is a prayer of guidance and support for the king of Israel. It outlines how God expects rulers (governmental powers) to exercise their power. They are to:

- Judge the people with righteousness
- Judge the poor with justice
- Defend the cause of the poor
- Give deliverance to the needy
- Crush the oppressor

The Bible also makes clear that government is responsible for protecting its citizens from wrongdoers (Romans 13:3-4) and for treating all its citizens justly (Deuteronomy 16:18-20).

With responsibility comes accountability. Just as the authority of government comes from God, the Bible teaches that governments are accountable to God for how they live up to their responsibilities. One of the key messages brought by the prophets over and over again was that God was not pleased by how the governmental authorities treated the poor. For example, the prophet Isaiah had a gloomy message for the "elders and the princes" of his time:

*The LORD enters into judgment
with the elders and princes of his people:
It is you who have devoured the vineyard;
the spoil of the poor is in your houses.
What do you mean by crushing my people,
by grinding the face of the poor? says the
Lord God of hosts. (Isaiah 3:14-15)*

ABUNDANCE IN AMERICA

It is almost impossible for Americans to grasp just how wealthy they are in comparison to the rest of the world. Abundance is the norm in the United States, and our abundance can lead to us getting caught in the trap of believing that no matter how much we have, it is never enough.

Every day we are bombarded by the messages of our consumer-oriented culture. These messages constantly tell us that we need more, we need bigger, we need better, we need newer, we need to buy this, we need to own that. Our society tells us over and over again that it is not enough to keep up with the Joneses. Instead, we are supposed to want the Joneses to have to keep up with us!

Is it any wonder that Americans accumulate "stuff" on a scale unprecedented in the history of the world? In fact, it is common for us to accumulate so much "stuff" in our houses that it overflows into our garages and we end up parking our cars on the streets. And once our garages are filled up with "stuff" we rent storage space to hold the overflow!

The abundance of food in America is no different than our abundance of "stuff." Most Americans eat for pleasure, not because we are really hungry. And because we eat for enjoyment, we are extraordinarily picky. That is one reason why each year 96 billion pounds of food available for human consumption in the United States is lost at the retail, consumer, and foodservice levels.¹ The annual value of this lost food is estimated at around \$31 billion. But the main point is that roughly 49 million people could have been fed annually by those lost resources.²

What is truly amazing is that the food waste figures just cited do not include losses at the farm level. On American farms a huge amount of food is produced but not harvested because of market forces or for cosmetic reasons. By some estimates, as much as 20% of commercially grown produce in the U.S. does not make it to the marketplace.³



UNIT 3: HUNGER IS A NATIONAL ISSUE

PURPOSE OF THIS UNIT:

- TO UNDERSTAND THE BIBLICAL VIEW OF GOVERNMENT.
- TO RECOGNIZE THE ABUNDANCE WITH WHICH GOD HAS BLESSED AMERICA.
- TO UNDERSTAND THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF HUNGER IN AMERICA.



*The LORD rises to argue his case;
he stands to judge the peoples.*

Isaiah 3:13

HUNGER IN AMERICA

Just as it is difficult for Americans to grasp how wealthy we are, it is difficult for us to recognize the reality of hunger in America. For some reason we are much more inclined to accept that there are 6.7 million people with a net worth over a million dollars in America than we are to accept that there are 36 million Americans who struggle daily to get enough to eat.⁴

For a number of reasons hunger in America is quite invisible. For instance, seldom does anyone starve in the U.S. That results in America's hunger problem not carrying a sense of urgency. Also, when compared to the impoverished in places like Somalia, America's poor seem to be pretty well off. Stereotypes help render America's hungry invisible, as well. When we think of a person in the U.S. who is hungry we tend to think of an unkempt homeless person with a drug or alcohol problem. When we think of the poor in America, we also often think of those living in the inner city. Neither group garners much attention.

While hunger in America might be nearly invisible, it is also pervasive. Every day there are American mothers who must choose between feeding their children or buying medicine or clothing for them. Every day people in the U.S. must struggle to get enough for their families to eat. Every day parents must sacrifice nutrition for volume when feeding their families.

That people go hungry while an incredible amount of food is wasted in the U.S. is nothing less than a justice issue. If God holds nations accountable for "giving deliverance to the needy" and "defending the cause of the poor" we must certainly wonder how God will judge America.



Make sure to have the class materials recommended on page 7 ready for Unit 3.

UNIT 3 OUTLINE:

The two lessons of Unit 3 focus our attention on hunger as a national issue. The first lesson looks at the question, "What are the priorities of a just government?" The second asks, "What is the key to the godly use of power?"

In the first lesson, we will look at what the Bible identifies as the authority, responsibilities, and functions of government. We will also consider the reality of hunger in the midst of the abundance in America.

The second lesson examines what the Bible says about the exercise of political and economic power. We conclude by dealing with the issue of judgment as it relates to nations.

Hunger In America

- In 2001, the number of Americans who were food insecure, or hungry, or at risk of hunger, was 33.6 million. In 2007 that number rose to 46.2 million.
- 3.9 percent of U.S. households experience hunger. Some people in these households frequently skip meals or eat too little, sometimes going without food for a whole day. A total of 11.9 million people, including 3.7 million children, live in these homes
- The U.S. Conference of Mayors reported in 2008 that requests for emergency food assistance increased 18% over the previous year. They also found that 59 percent of those requesting emergency food assistance were members of families with children. Fifteen percent of those requesting assistance were elderly. High fuel costs, housing costs, low-paying jobs, unemployment, and the economic downturn led the list of reasons contributing to the rise.
- *Feeding America*, the nation's largest network of food banks, reports that 25.3 million people turned to the agencies they serve in 2006. Thirty-six percent were from working families.

SOURCE: See note 5

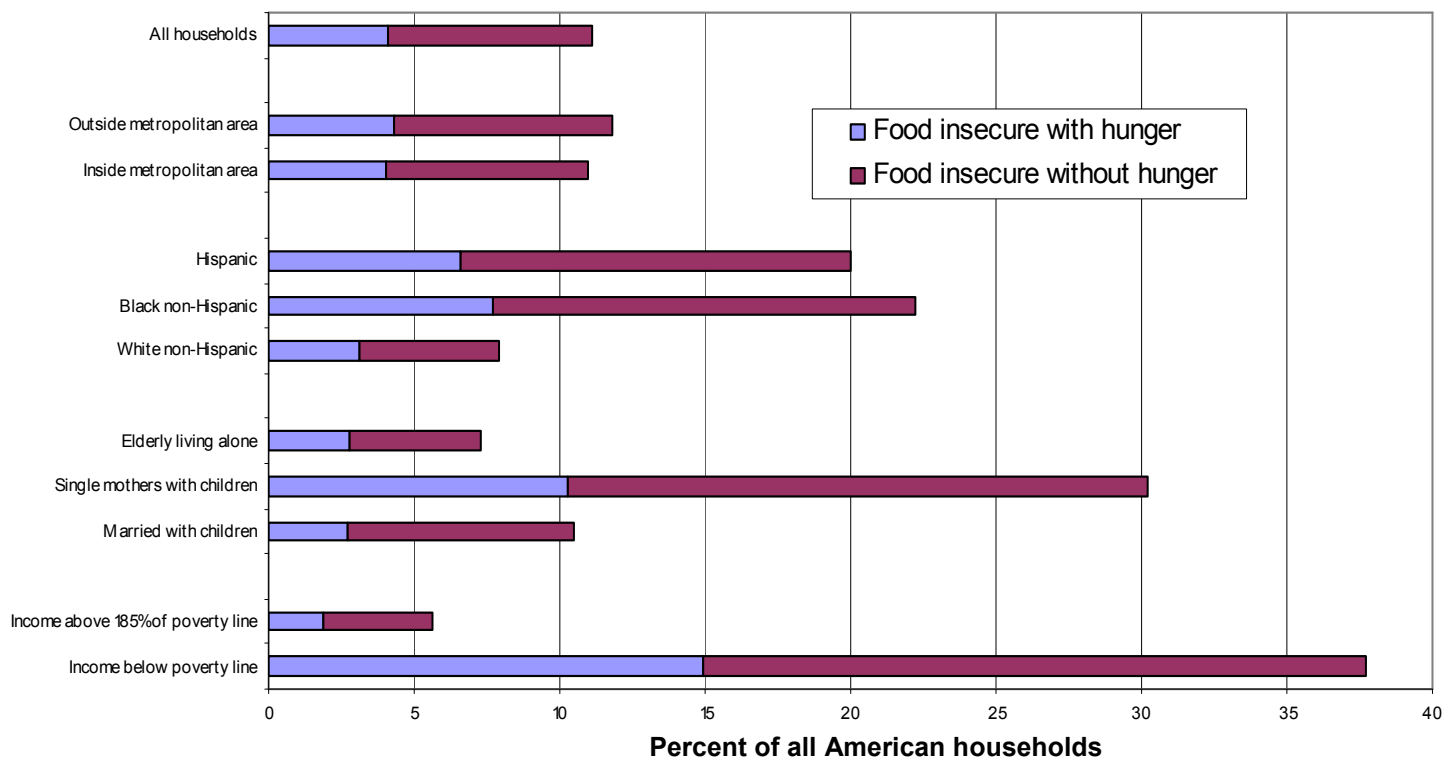


**Who Experienced
Food Insecurity
America's Spending
Priorities**

The Fast That I Choose

A Bible Study On Hunger

Who experienced food insecurity in 2007?



SOURCE: Economic Research Service, USDA, 2008 (ERR-66)

America's Spending Priorities

Ice cream products: _____

Candy: _____

Motion pictures: _____

Restaurants: _____

DVD rentals & purchases: _____

Soft drinks: _____

Pet products: _____

Salty snack foods: _____

Candy: _____

Weight control products: _____

Video/computer games: _____

Music: _____



Lesson 1 WHAT ARE THE PRIORITIES OF A JUST GOVERNMENT?

UNIT 3: *Hunger is A National Issue*

A Bible Study On Hunger

TEACHING LESSON ONE

OPEN WITH WORSHIP

- Point out that in the United States millions of people woke up hungry today.
- Conclude with reading **Isaiah 3:13-15**.
- Collect the offering.

INTRODUCTION

- Remind the class that thus far we have looked at hunger as a God issue and as a global issue. Tell them that today we will start to look at hunger as a national issue.
- Point out that to recognize hunger as a national issue requires that we first understand the biblical view of government.
- Explain that three concepts come into play when considering the biblical view of government:
 - Authority: The legitimate power and resources to accomplish responsibilities.
 - Responsibility: An obligation or duty.
 - Accountability: Subject to being called to account for results in meeting or failing to meet one's responsibilities.

GOVERNMENT AUTHORITY

- Ask the class where, according to the Bible, does government receive its authority? Allow the class to discuss this question for a few minutes.
- Have someone read **Romans 13:1-2** to find the answer.
 - Paul asserts that ultimate authority belongs to God alone.
 - Paul also points out that government authority is delegated by God.
 - **TEACHING NOTES:**
 - ◇ Remember the concept of "authority" above.
 - ◇ Some students may question whether God grants authority to evil governments such as Nazi Germany. However, the government Paul was referring to was the Roman Empire. It was certainly a harsh, corrupt government. Yet Paul says that even its authority came from God.

GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITY

- Ask the class what, according to the Bible, are the responsibilities of government? Allow the class to discuss this question for a few minutes.
- Point out that **Psalms 72** may have been a coronation anthem for Israel's kings. In it we can find an idealized list of responsibilities the monarchy—government—had.
- Divide the class into three groups. Have each group go through **Psalms 72** and list the specific responsibilities of the king.
- Have each group share its list. Record the information on a chalkboard, whiteboard, or newsprint that all can see.
- Have someone read aloud **Deuteronomy 16:18-20**. Ask what government responsibility is identified in this scripture. Add answers to the previous list.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

- Ask the class who, according to the Bible, is government ultimately responsible to? In other words, to whom is government accountable? Allow the class to discuss this question for a few minutes.
- Have someone read aloud **Isaiah 10:1-4**.
- Ask, "What exclusive governmental powers are listed by Isaiah in verses one and two of this scripture?" These are:
 - Making decrees
 - Writing statutes
- Ask what the iniquitous decrees and oppressive statutes enacted by the government of Isaiah's time resulted in. They include:
 - Corruption of justice for the needy
 - Robbing the poor of their rights
 - ◇ **TEACHING NOTE:** You may wish to remind the class of the rights of the poor under Old Testament Law (see Unit 1, Lesson 2).



God pays attention to how societies treat the poor through their use of governmental power.

UNIT 3, Lesson 1: WHAT ARE THE PRIORITIES OF A JUST GOVERNMENT?



*The LORD rises to argue his case;
he stands to judge the peoples.*

Isaiah 3:13

- Discuss whether verses three and four of this passage suggest judgment.
- Point out that many passages in the Bible promise God’s judgment on governments that do not live up to their responsibilities to the poor. Divide the class into four groups, each to look at one of these passages:
 - **Isaiah 3:13-15**
 - **Amos 8:4-7**
 - **Micah 3:1-4**
 - **Psalms 146**
- Ask each group to share what they discovered.
- **Recap:** The Bible tells us that governments are given their authority by God, that God expects them to be just and to care for the needy, and that God will ultimately hold them accountable for doing so.

ABUNDANCE IN AMERICA

- Tell the class that we will now turn our attention to our own nation, beginning with a look at abundance in America.
- Pass out to each student a copy of page 29, *Who Experienced Food Insecurity/America’s Spending Priorities*.
- Point out that Americans are blessed with incredible abundance. Remind the class of the previous lesson’s exercise on *Contrasting Lifestyles*.
- Point out that one measure of the abundance we have in America is how we spend money on things that are not vital to our survival.
- Call the class’ attention to *America’s Spending Priorities* in the handout. Ask each student to guess how much Americans spend per year on each of the items listed. You may give them the answer for ice cream products (\$23 billion) as a hint.
- When all the students have finished, give the answers shown on page 9 and the total for these items.
- Discuss what this list says about the abundance we enjoy in America.
- Ask the students to guess how much food they think goes to waste in America each year. Write their guesses on a chalkboard, whiteboard, or newsprint.
 - Tell the class that 96 billion pounds of food are lost each year at the retail, consumer, and foodservice levels. That amount could feed 46 million people.

HUNGER IN AMERICA

- Explain that hunger remains a reality in America. In 2007 there were 36 million people in the U.S. who did not always get enough to eat.
- **TEACHING NOTE:** See page 11 for definitions of hunger and food insecurity.
- Call the class’ attention to the graphs in the handout (page 29). Point out the following information gleaned from the graph:
 - ◇ 15% of all American households with an income below the poverty line experienced hunger. Nearly 40% of American households experienced food insecurity (bottom bar).
 - ◇ Over 10% of all households in America experienced food insecurity (top bar)
- Ask the class to discuss other findings revealed by the graph. Ask if there are any surprises.
- As time permits, share with the class the information about hunger in America discussed on page 28.
- Ask: How is it possible that anyone in America goes hungry or is food insecure when so much food goes to waste in this country?

ACCOUNTABILITY IN AMERICA

- Discuss who is responsible for hunger in America.
- Ask if God will hold nations accountable for “giving deliverance to the needy” and for “defending the cause of the poor” (**Psalm 72**), then how might God judge America’s government.

CLOSING

- Remind the class that there will be people in America who today will go hungry. Ask the class to keep those people in their prayers this week.
- Ask the class to read aloud together **Isaiah 3:13**.
- Close with prayer.



Lesson 2
WHAT IS THE
KEY TO THE
GODLY USE OF
POWER?

UNIT 3: Hunger is
A National Issue

A Bible Study On Hunger

TEACHING LESSON TWO

OPEN WITH WORSHIP

- Remind the class that the previous lesson dealt with the reality of hunger in America and about government authority, responsibility, and accountability.
- Explain that this lesson will look at what the Bible says is the key to the godly use of power. We will also look more closely at the issue of God’s judgment as it relates to nations.
- Read aloud **Isaiah 3:13-15**.
- Collect the offering.

POLITICAL POWER

- Point out that there are different kinds of power. Today we will be looking at political power and economic power and how they can oppress the poor.
- Explain that in the context of this lesson, political power refers to the social, legal, and regulatory systems of communities, states, and nations.
- Have prepared before class a chalkboard, whiteboard, or newsprint with these issues written on it:

| | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| ➤ Housing | ➤ Zoning laws |
| ➤ Lending practices | ➤ Education |
| ➤ Gambling laws | ➤ Voting laws |
| ➤ Unemployment | ➤ Political districts |
| ➤ Health care | ➤ Courts/legal system |
| ➤ Tax laws | ➤ Social Security |
- Ask the class if they can think of any ways that political power in the U.S. might promote injustice against the poor in any of the listed areas. Record their responses.
 - Some ideas to prompt the class:
 - ◇ Lotteries are actually “voluntary” tax on the poor.
 - ◇ Sales taxes on food and other necessities of life disproportionately impact the poor.
 - ◇ Hiking taxes on cigarettes means that the poor will pay higher taxes since lower income people tend to smoke more than those with higher incomes.

- ◇ Some lending agencies take advantage of the poor by charging exorbitant interest rates for short term loans (pay advances).
- ◇ Zoning laws can make it impossible for a free clinic to be established in a low income area and thereby deny the poor convenient access to health care
- Divide the class into groups of three or four.
- Remind the students of the story of Joseph and how he came to rule over Egypt in preparation for seven years of famine (**Genesis 41**).



It is very important to not let the discussions in this lesson devolve into arguments. The purpose of these discussions is to help students understand that how political and economic power is exercised often has consequences for the poor even if those consequences are unintended.

- Ask each group to read **Genesis 47:13-26** and to discuss the various ways Joseph exercised political power in managing the distribution of food during the famine. Here is a breakdown:
 - First he collected all the money in Egypt as he sold grain (vv. 13-15).
 - Second, he sold grain in exchange for all the livestock in Egypt (vv. 16-17).
 - Next, he bought their land in exchange for grain and seed (vv. 19-20).
 - He also bought the people and enslaved them (v. 23)
 - He moved the people to the cities (v. 21-22)
 - He later levied a tax of 20% on the people (v. 24).
- After the groups have finished, hand out a copy of page 34 to each student.
- Using the handout, discuss:
 - Was Joseph’s handling of the famine an example of a Just or an Unjust exercise of political power? Why?
 - How else might Joseph have distributed food during the famine?

UNIT 3, Lesson 2: WHAT IS THE KEY TO THE GODLY USE OF POWER?



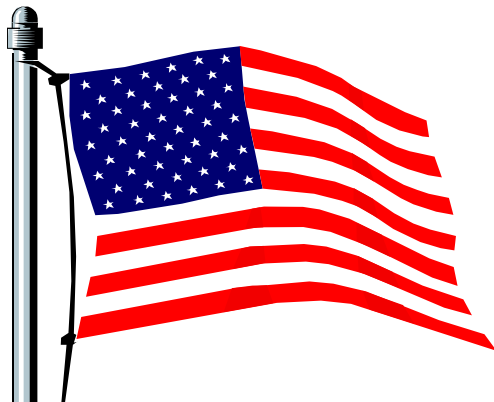
*The LORD rises to argue his case;
he stands to judge the peoples.*

Isaiah 3:13

- **TEACHING NOTE:** There is no “right” answer about the justness of Joseph’s actions. The box on page 34 shows two views of the various situations Joseph faced (there may very well be additional views). The point of this discussion is to get the class to wrestle with the issue of political power and how it can be exercised justly or unjustly.

ECONOMIC POWER

- Explain that economic power is the use of one’s wealth to influence the social, legal, and regulatory systems of communities, states, and nations.
- Ask the class if they can think of any instances of the exercise of economic power by individuals in America.
 - Some ideas to prompt the class:
 - ◇ Political campaign contributions that “buy” an individual access to a politician
 - ◇ A large chain store coming into a community and underselling local merchants
 - ◇ An urban renewal project that displaces the poor
- Assign one or two of the following scriptures to each of the earlier groups of three or four. Each group should discuss what their assigned scripture(s) say(s) about how the affluent should use their economic power.
 - **Nehemiah 5:1-13** ➢ **Isaiah 32:5-8**
 - **Amos 5:11-13** ➢ **James 2:1-7**
 - **Amos 8:4-7** ➢ **Amos 6:3-7**
- Once they have finished discussing their scripture(s), ask each group to share with the class what the scripture says and what they discussed.
- Once all groups have shared, discuss what common themes emerged from the scriptures.



ACCOUNTABILITY FOR EXERCISING POWER

- Note that judgment is often a concept we shy away from. However, there is no escaping the fact that the Bible speaks of judgment.
- Remind the class that we talked about government accountability to God in the previous lesson.
- Have the class read along in their Bibles as you read aloud **Ezekiel 22:23-29**. Ask for their reaction to this scripture.
- Have the class read along in their Bibles as you read aloud **Amos 2:6-8**. Ask for the class’ reaction to this scripture.
- Discuss what Ezekiel and Amos tell us about God’s judgment on the unjust exercise of political and economic power.

THE GODLY USE OF POWER

- Ask the class, in light of the scriptures we have looked at and the examples of political and economic power we’ve discussed, who do they think is accountable for hunger in America. Allow the class to respond.
- Remind the class that in the U.S. it is not a king, nor the president, nor the congress who holds sovereignty. The sovereign in America is “We the People”.
- Ask: If God holds America accountable for hunger in the U.S., exactly who do you think will be held accountable?
- Explain that every American has a degree of economic and political power they can exercise in the United States; some have more and some have less, but everyone has some.
- Discuss: How can we exercise our individual political and economic power in a godly way?

CLOSING

- Read aloud “Some Astonishing Figures” from page 35. Remind the class that we live in a nation where 35 million people have to struggle to get enough to eat.
- Ask the class to read aloud together **Isaiah 3:13**.
- Close with prayer.



**Two Views Of
How Joseph
Exercised Political
Power**

***The Fast That
I Choose***

A Bible Study On Hunger

| Two Views of Joseph's Exercise of Political Power | | |
|---|---|--|
| Situation | One View | Another View |
| In the midst of extreme famine the people came to Joseph to buy food | The people had produced this grain during the seven plentiful years. Joseph actually sold back to them food that they had already produced. | As he was responsible for looking after Pharaoh's interests, Joseph could not simply give them the food. He had to sell it to them |
| When their money ran out, Joseph required the people to pay with their flocks and livestock | By taking their flocks and livestock, Joseph took away from many of the people their very livelihoods. | Joseph recognized that the people could not afford to feed their flocks and livestock. He therefore exchanged them for grain so that the cattle would be supported at Pharaoh's expense. |
| When those were gone, he exchanged food for their land and labor | The rest of the people now had their means of livelihood controlled by Pharaoh. | Joseph was still responsible to Pharaoh's interests so he took the only commodities the people had to sell in order that they might survive. |
| Once the famine was over, Joseph gave seed to the people on the condition they pay a 20% tax on what is produced | Joseph made sure that into the future Pharaoh would benefit from the famine through this high tax. | A 20% tax was not unreasonable. After all, government needs funds to operate. |
| THE RESULT | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Pharaoh came to own all the land except that of the Egyptian priests ➤ All of the people except the Egyptian priests were enslaved ➤ All the wealth of Egypt ended up in Pharaoh's hands. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Joseph's prudent management made sure the people survived seven years of famine. ➤ The interests of Pharaoh were balanced against the needs of the people. ➤ Joseph was hailed as a hero by the people for saving them (v. 25) |
| SUMMATION | The political power that seemed to promise life ended up delivering an economy of slavery. | The prudent application of political power ensured the survival of the people for which they were truly grateful. |



Many Christians believe that social reform emerges from spiritual renewal. In other words, they believe people will change how they live and treat others as a result of their relationship with Christ. To put it simply, they believe that grace leads to justice. While that may very well be true, the biblical witness also makes clear that when God's people work for social justice they give people hope at the same time they win a hearing for Christ's message of love. In other words, the Bible also teaches that justice leads to grace.



UNIT 4: HUNGER IS A COMMUNITY ISSUE

The Fast That I Choose

A Bible Study On Hunger

HUNGER IS WIDESPREAD IN AMERICA

As many as 11.9 million people in the United States were hungry at some time during 2007 because they did not have enough money for food. Single mothers with children had the most difficulty in getting food for their families. Minority households also had rates of food insecurity above the national average.¹

Low income is the biggest factor in food insecurity and hunger in the United States. Nearly 40 percent of households below the federal poverty line experienced food insecurity and almost 15 percent experienced hunger. Hunger afflicts people living in every state in the union.²

Just over half of the households in America that are food insecure participate in federal food assistance programs. Some food insecure households are not eligible for these programs. At the same time, 3.9 million households received emergency food from a food bank, food pantry, or emergency kitchen during the last year.³ However, that was only 20% of all food insecure households. Among those food insecure households that did not use a pantry, 28% reported that there was no such resource in their community and an additional 17% said they did not know if there was. Among those who knew there was a food pantry in their community, only 32% of food insecure households used it.⁴

Hunger is often thought to be only a problem of metropolitan areas in the United States. However, it is a problem in rural areas, as well. In fact, the rate of food insecurity in America's rural areas is slightly higher than the national average.⁵

Despite the pervasiveness of hunger in the U.S., those who experience hunger in our country are usually invisible. In some places the hungry are unseen because they look like everyone else. In other places they simply fade into the scenery where they become simply part of the landscape. Nonetheless, there are hungry people in virtually every community of the nation.

THE FACE OF HUNGER IN AMERICA⁶

Who experiences hunger in America? A comprehensive study of the nature of hunger in the United States was conducted for *Feeding America* (then known as *America's Second Harvest*) in 2006. The study found that of the 25.3 million different individuals served through their network in a year, 40 percent were white, 38 percent were African American, and 17 percent were Hispanic. The remainder were from other racial or ethnic groups. Ten percent of those served were elderly. Only twelve percent were homeless.

Thirty-six percent of *Feeding America's* client households included at least one employed adult. However, 68 percent of the households had incomes at or below the official federal poverty level. Children were members of 36.4 percent of client households.

Those who experience hunger in the U.S. often face very difficult choices. For instance, 42 percent reported having to choose between paying for food or paying for utilities or heating fuel. Thirty-five percent had to choose between paying for food or paying their rent or mortgage bill. Thirty-two percent had to choose between food or medicine or medical care.

Only 35 percent of *Feeding America's* clients received food stamps even though it is likely that many more are eligible.

Some Astonishing Figures⁷:

- **The number of households with a net worth of more than \$5 million reached 840,000 in 2008**
- **The number of households with a net worth of \$1 million or more has more than doubled since 1983 — to total 6.7 million in 2008.**
- **Among those households holding the top 1 percent of assets, 5 percent are headed by someone 35 years of age or younger — compared to only 0.7 percent in 1983.**
- **Forbes magazine identified 357 Americans with a net worth of more than \$1 billion in 2009 — while it could find just 13 in 1982.**
- **The 400 wealthiest Americans in 2006 had a collective net worth of \$1.25 trillion.**

UNIT 4: HUNGER IS A COMMUNITY ISSUE

PURPOSE OF THIS UNIT:

- TO RECOGNIZE THE PREVALENCE OF HUNGER AND POVERTY IN AMERICAN COMMUNITIES.
- TO UNDERSTAND THE FACE OF HUNGER IN AMERICAN COMMUNITIES.
- TO RECOGNIZE THAT THE EXISTENCE OF HUNGER IN OUR COMMUNITY IS A RESULT OF OUR INDIFFERENCE.



He said also to the one who had invited him, “When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, in case they may invite you in return, and you would be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind.

Luke 14:12-13

Thirty-nine percent of their clients were male; 60.8 percent were female. Ninety-three percent were American citizens.

About 30 percent of adult clients were married and over 62 percent had completed high school or higher. Eighty percent of client households had an income of \$20,000 or less over the previous year.

THE HUNGRY IN OUR COMMUNITY

There are people who face food insecurity in virtually every community in America. The hungry are not just someplace else. They are also in your own town, city, or county. The hungry go to your child’s school. They might even sit next to you in church.

Earlier in this study we examined the story of Lazarus and the rich man (Luke 16:19-31). Lazarus had faded into the scenery and the rich man didn’t even notice him. The rich man’s sin was his indifference to Lazarus’ situation (see page 24).

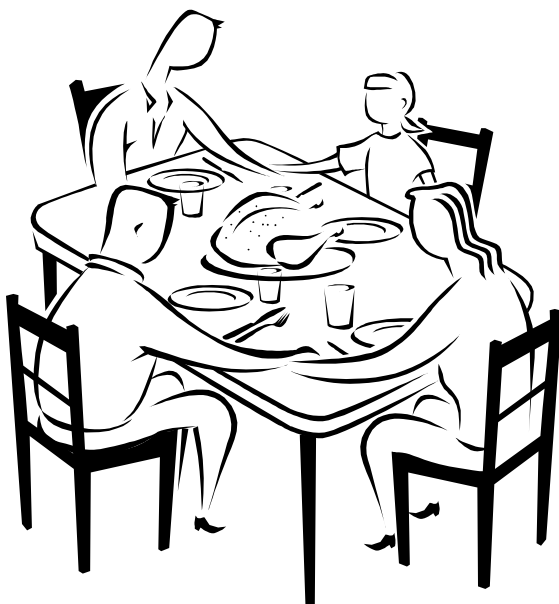
The reality of hunger in our communities points to the indifference we have toward those in need in our own neighborhoods. Hunger exists and food insecurity exists in our communities for only one reason: Because we in the Christian church tolerate it.

UNIT 4 OUTLINE:

The two lessons of Unit 4 focus our attention on hunger as a community issue. The first lesson looks at the question, “Are there hungry people in my neighborhood?” The second asks, “What can we learn from a communal meal?”

The first lesson examines the reality of food insecurity and hunger in communities across America. We will also look at who is hungry in the U.S.

The second lesson involves a class communal meal where we discuss what we can do about hunger in our community as we share food with one another.



Make sure to have the class materials recommended on page 8 ready for Unit 4.
NOTE: *This unit involves the class sharing a meal during the second lesson. Instructions for the meal are on page 41.*



**Self-Sufficiency
Exercise**

***The Fast That
I Choose***

A Bible Study On Hunger

What is the Self-Sufficiency Standard?

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Estimate the hourly minimum wage that a single-parent family with an infant and a preschooler living in your community needs to be entirely self-sufficient (needing no public or private assistance):
\$ _____
2. Look at each cost category in the budget below. Fill in for each category what you think the monthly cost estimate is for each basic need. Do not consider public or private assistance).
3. Add up the estimated costs. Multiply by 12 to get an annual wage. Divide that amount by 2,080 (52 weeks x 40 hours/week) to get an hourly wage.
4. Compare your estimates to the actual costs for a typical American city.

| Item | Cost Estimate | Actual Cost |
|---|----------------------|--------------------|
| Housing (rent for 2 bedroom apartment) | | |
| Child Care (1 infant, 1 preschooler) | | |
| Food | | |
| Transportation | | |
| Health Care | | |
| Miscellaneous (telephone, clothing, etc.) | | |
| Taxes (Federal, State, Local) | | |
| SUBTOTAL | | |
| Subtract: Earned Income Tax Credit | | |
| Subtract: Child Care Tax Credit | | |
| Subtract: Child Tax Credit | | |
| MONTHLY TOTAL | | |
| TOTAL x 12 = ANNUAL WAGE | | |
| ANNUAL WAGE/2080 = HOURLY WAGE | | |

NOTE: The Self-Sufficiency Standard was developed by Dr. Diana Pearce for *Wider Opportunities for Women*. To find the Self-Sufficiency Standard for your area, visit <http://www.sixstrategies.org/states/states.cfm>



Lesson 1
ARE THERE
HUNGRY PEOPLE
IN MY
NEIGHBORHOOD?

UNIT 4: Hunger is
A Community Issue

A Bible Study On Hunger

TEACHING LESSON ONE

OPEN WITH WORSHIP

- Remind the class that we have thus far looked at hunger and poverty from a distance. Today we begin to look at the reality of hunger from a closer perspective.
- Say a prayer.
- Have someone read aloud **Luke 14:12-13**.
- Collect the offering.

THE PREVALENCE OF HUNGER IN AMERICA

- Ask if anyone in the class has experienced working in a soup kitchen or other activity that directly fed hungry people. Ask them to talk about their experience, addressing these points if possible:
 - Where and when did this experience take place?
 - What were the people you served like?
 - ◊ Race, age, sex, etc.
 - ◊ How about clothing, appearance?
 - Did you talk to any of the clients?
 - What was most memorable about your experience?
 - Would you do it again?
- Ask why the class thinks people go to soup kitchens. Allow the class time to discuss.
- Tell the class that only 20% of all food insecure households in the U.S. receive emergency food assistance from a food bank, food pantry, or emergency kitchen. Then ask why they think that is the case. Some reasons might be:
 - Did not know one was available.
 - Too proud to use one.
 - Too ashamed to use one.
 - Federal programs such as food stamps meet their needs.

THE FACE OF HUNGER IN AMERICA

- Share with the class some of the information found in the section, “The Face of Hunger in America,” on page 35.
- Ask the class if any of the statistics surprised them. Discuss.
- Point out that children were members of 36.4 % of the households served by *Feeding America’s* food bank network in 2006.

- Ask someone to read **Lamentations 4:9**. Discuss how this scripture makes the members of the class feel. Ask if they think it is a true sentiment.

SELF-SUFFICIENCY STANDARD

- Divide the class into three or four groups.
- Give a copy of the *Self-Sufficiency Exercise*, page 37, to each group.
- Explain about the self-sufficiency standard:
 - The self-sufficiency standard is the minimum hourly amount that a family wage earner needs in order to live without public or private assistance.
 - This standard is different for various situations. A single-parent family with one child, for instance, will have a higher self-sufficiency standard than will a two-parent family because the two parents can both earn income.
 - This standard also is different for each location across the nation as the cost of living varies.
- Ask each group to follow the instructions on the hand-out.
 - Provide each group with local newspaper classified advertisements and real estate sections to assist them.

The Self Sufficiency Standard for a Single-Parent Family with an Infant and a Preschooler For Charlottesville, Virginia (Sample)

| Item | Actual Cost |
|---|-----------------|
| Housing (rent for 2 bedroom apartment) | \$ 677 |
| Child Care (1 infant, 1 preschooler) | 909 |
| Food | 345 |
| Transportation | 232 |
| Health Care | 153 |
| Miscellaneous (telephone, clothing, etc.) | 232 |
| Taxes (Federal, State, Local) | 607 |
| SUBTOTAL | \$ 3,155 |
| Subtract: Earned Income Tax Credit | 0 |
| Subtract: Child Care Tax Credit | 80 |
| Subtract: Child Tax Credit | 100 |
| MONTHLY TOTAL | \$ 2,975 |
| TOTAL x 12 = ANNUAL WAGE | \$35,700 |
| ANNUAL WAGE/2080 = HOURLY WAGE | \$ 17.16 |

UNIT 4, Lesson 1: ARE THERE HUNGRY PEOPLE IN MY NEIGHBORHOOD?



He said also to the one who had invited him, “When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, in case they may invite you in return, and you would be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind.

Luke 14:12-13

- When they come to number 4, wait until all groups are finished. Then, either use the sample figures for Charlottesville, VA provided on page 38 or those for the Self-Sufficiency Standard for your geographic area (see Note on p. 37).
- Ask the class if anyone knows the minimum wage for your area. Tell them that as of July 2009, the federal minimum wage is \$7.25 per hour. If the minimum wage for your area is different than that, let them know what it is.
- Discuss how families are impacted by the difference between the Self-Sufficiency hourly wage and the minimum wage for your area.
- Ask: What kinds of programs and funding sources are there that can help bridge the gap between the Self-Sufficiency wage and the minimum wage?
 - The Self-Sufficiency wage does not include food stamps, welfare payments, WIC, subsidized housing, and other Federal and state aid (public assistance).
 - It also does not include any private assistance including child care payments by the children’s other parent, emergency food assistance from private organizations, medical assistance from free clinics, etc.
- Ask if the minimum wage is fair. After a few minutes of discussion ask if the current minimum wage is just.
 - If necessary, remind the class about what we mean when we talk about God’s justice (see *To Do Justice ~ To Act Justly*, page 15)
 - **TEACHING NOTE:** The issue of the “fairness” or “justness” of the minimum wage can be a touchy one. For instance, high school students working at a fast-food place do not support families. However, we can’t escape the question about whether it is right for a person working full time to be unable to support his or her family. The purpose here is simply to get the class thinking about these kinds of issues in terms of God’s justice.
- Have someone read aloud **Proverbs 14:20-21** and **Proverbs 28:27**.
 - Ask what these verses suggest to us today with respect to the needy in our own community.
 - Ask:
 - ◇ What does it mean to be kind to the poor?
 - ◇ In what ways do we as a society show our dislike for the poor today?
 - ◇ How does society today give to the poor?
 - ◇ How do we as a community of believers give to the poor ?

WHAT IS FAIR? WHAT IS JUST?

- Point out that we live in a society that pays people based on the value of their work rather than the extent of their need, which is why we do not use a Self-Sufficiency Standard to determine wages.
- Note that with a minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour a person will earn \$15,080 per year. Then ask the class to discuss how a person might support a family on that level of income.

CLOSING

- **EXPLAIN ABOUT THE COMMUNITY MEAL YOU WILL SHARE AT THE NEXT SESSION**
- Read aloud “Community Justice” from below.
- Remind the class that they live in a community where people have to struggle to get enough to eat.
- Ask someone to read **Luke 14:12-13**.
- Close with prayer.

Community Justice

Fiorella LaGuardia was mayor of New York City in the 1930s and 1940s. He presided occasionally at Police Court. One bitter cold day a trembling old man charged with stealing a loaf of bread was brought before him. “I’ve got to punish you,” declared LaGuardia. “The law makes no exception. I can do nothing but sentence you to a fine of ten dollars.”

The mayor then reached into his pocket as he added, “Well, here’s the ten dollars to pay your fine. And now I remit the fine.” LaGuardia tossed a ten-dollar bill into his famous sombrero.

“Furthermore,” he declared, “I’m going to fine everybody in this courtroom fifty cents for living in a town where a man has to steal bread in order to eat. Mr. Bailiff, collect the fines and give them to this defendant!”

The hat was passed around the courtroom and an incredulous old man later left with forty-seven dollars and fifty cents.

SOURCE: Bennett Cerf, *Try and Stop Me*, New York, 1945 as cited by Urban Legends Reference Pages, November 15, 2004 (<http://www.snopes.com/glurge/laguardia.asp>)



STONE SOUP

The Fast That I Choose

A Bible Study On Hunger

There are many variations to this classic story...

A FOLK TALE: STONE SOUP

Once upon a time in Russia, there was a famine. Little food had been harvested that year because of the lack of rain. One day a beggar came into a village carrying a guitar. The beggar went from house to house, offering to play music in return for food and a place to spend the night, but the villagers hid their food and said that they, too, had nothing to eat. Then they would tell the beggar to move on.

So the beggar went to the town square where he built a fire. He found a large pot and filled it with water. Into the pot he placed a large stone. Then he placed the pot over the fire. He sat down and waited for the water to boil. He played beautiful music on his guitar while he watched the fire.

Meanwhile, the villagers became curious about what the beggar was up to. Eventually, several townspeople decided to investigate the matter and approached the beggar. They engaged him in conversation. After a short while the sound of merriment could be heard as the beggar, who turned out to be quite friendly, shared songs and stories about the lands and people he had met on his journeys.

More and more of the villagers gather around the friendly, outgoing beggar. Finally a young boy asked, "Why, sir, are you boiling a stone?"

The beggar replied, "So I may eat stone soup."

"Oh, it must be terribly bland!" said an old woman. "But I have a cabbage. That will add some flavor!"

"And I have a few carrots, which will add color!" said another villager.

"A couple of potatoes!" offered another.

"I have a bit of meat," said still another.

Soon, everyone in the village had contributed a small amount to the soup, which was turning into quite a hearty fare. In fact, as they all shared the soup everyone in the village thought it was the best they had ever tasted.

The very next day, the traveler (who by now could no longer be called "beggar"), continued on his journey, leaving the little town and its people behind. But the villagers never forgot him and the lesson they had learned. In fact, during the hardest of times the little village thrived because the townsfolk never forgot how to make "stone soup".



THE COMMUNAL MEAL

UNIT 4: *Hunger is A Community Issue*

A Bible Study On Hunger

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR THIS LESSON:

This session is unique for this study as it involves the class sharing a meal together.

ADVANCE PREPARATION IS ESSENTIAL.

*The meal cooked and/or served during this class session is “Stone Soup.” There are two ways to approach this lesson. The preferred method is to include the meal preparation as part of the lesson. The impact of the lesson is much greater this way. **However, cooking the meal together will require the class session lasting quite a bit longer than an hour and, of course, calls for the use of a kitchen.** Therefore, you may want to have this session at a person’s home instead of your regular meeting place.*

The less preferred method is to have someone prepare the “stone soup” beforehand and then to simply serve it during the classroom session. If you choose this method, a recipe for “stone soup” is provided on this page. You may substitute this recipe with your own if you prefer.

In deciding which approach to take, take into consideration the class size. “Stone Soup” is better with more ingredients. If you choose to cook the meal during class, simply have each student bring a soup ingredient (vegetables like carrots, celery, potatoes, onion, tomato, corn, etc., and perhaps meat and/or pasta or noodles). For smaller classes, you might ask each to bring two ingredients. Don’t assign particular students to bring specific vegetables, pasta, or meat. Rather, just tell the students that each of them need to bring something to put in a soup. This is more in keeping with the story of Stone Soup.

One person (probably the class leader) should bring the stone, crusty bread enough for everyone, bowls, eating utensils, napkins, a large soup pot, serving spoon, etc.

NOTE: It is best if this lesson is scheduled for a lunch or dinner hour. If you plan to use meat, make sure there are no vegetarians in the class.

PREPARATION FOR CLASS

- During Unit 4, Lesson 1 (the previous session) make sure the students are told about your plans for this lesson. Engage them in setting the time and place of meeting and make sure they understand how long the session will last.
- Explain that the community meal is a vital part of this Bible study on hunger as important lessons are learned.
- If the class wishes, families can be invited. If you decide to do this, adjust plans accordingly for the number of people.
- Make sure you know what you plan to do with any leftovers. Wasting the food is not an option.
- Pray in advance of the meal that God will be present in both the planning and in the gathering.

STONE SOUP FOR FIVE

About 2 quarts water, simmering on stove
1 large smooth stone, scrubbed and boiled to sterilize
Salt and pepper to taste
5 carrots, washed and cut in chunks
3 cups cut-up cabbage
1 pound stew meat, cut into small pieces
4 potatoes, washed and cut in half
1 cup rinsed barley
1 cup milk

Cook the stone soup in large soup pot for about 1 hour, until potatoes are tender and meat is done. Makes five generous servings. Multiply ingredients (except the stone) to accommodate class size.

NOTE: A cup of cooked macaroni may be substituted for the barley. Add the macaroni shortly before serving.



Lesson 2
WHAT CAN
WE LEARN FROM
A COMMUNAL
MEAL?

UNIT 4: *Hunger is A Community Issue*

A Bible Study On Hunger

TEACHING LESSON TWO IF MEAL PREPARATION TAKES PLACE DURING CLASS



Have the soup pot with about two quarts of water for each five students simmering on the stove when class begins.

OPEN WITH WORSHIP

- Remind the class that we in the last lesson we began to look at the face of hunger in the United States and the reality of hunger even in our own community. Today we will consider what we can do about hunger in our community.
- Have someone read aloud **Luke 14:12-13**.
- Have a moment for silent prayer.
- Collect the offering.

PREPARE STONE SOUP

- Make sure everyone has brought their ingredients for Stone Soup.
- Read aloud *A Folktale: Stone Soup*, page 40.
- Add the clean, sterilized stone to the simmering water.
- Have each person prepare his or her contribution to the soup (by cutting, slicing, dicing, etc.) and add it to the simmering water.
 - Simmer the soup for about an hour, or until meat (if any) and potatoes are fully cooked.
 - Season to taste.
 - Bouillon powder or cubes may be added as desired.
- Ask each person as they prepare their contribution to explain why he or she chose the particular item he or she brought to share.

WHILE THE SOUP COOKS

- Ask the class to think about the story of Stone Soup. Discuss:
 - ◇ Why did the villagers lie about having no food?
 - ◇ Do you think the beggar was manipulative? Why or why not?
 - ◇ What is the moral of the story?

- Ask: How do you think the villagers would have reacted if the beggar suggested from the beginning that everyone pool their resources? Allow time to discuss.
- Ask the class if “Stone Soup” has any application to our own community today.
- Point out that God made provisions in Old Testament Law to insure that no one in the community ever went hungry.
 - Have someone read aloud **Deuteronomy 14:28-29**.
 - Discuss the meaning and ramifications of this scripture.
- Point out that our key verse for this Unit is **Luke 14:12-13**. Ask someone to read it aloud. Discuss:
 - Why does Jesus tell us to invite the poor, the lame, and the blind when we have banquets?
 - What do you think would happen if we took this seriously and invited such people to our next church dinner?
 - Does Jesus expect us to take these verses seriously? If so, why don’t we do as he says?
- Discuss the kinds of things we can do in our community to address hunger as individuals and as a church. Make a list that can be posted in the classroom where you regularly meet.

SERVE THE MEAL

- Once the Stone Soup is done, before it is served ask God’s blessing on the meal.
- Serve the soup in bowls. Pass bread to all if it has been brought. Serve water as a beverage.
- During the meal, ask if anyone has heard a different version of the Stone Soup story. Allow them to share what the versions have in common and how they are different.

CLEAN UP

- Once everyone has finished eating, everyone should share in the cleanup tasks.
- Thank everyone for participating.
- Close with prayer.

UNIT 4, Lesson 2: WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM A COMMUNAL MEAL?



He said also to the one who had invited him, “When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, in case they may invite you in return, and you would be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind.

Luke 14:12-13

TEACHING LESSON TWO IF THE MEAL IS PREPARED BEFORE CLASS



Have the soup prepared earlier brought to the gathering in a crock pot or have some other means to keep it hot.

- Point out that our key verse for this Unit is **Luke 14:12-13**. Ask someone to read it aloud. Discuss:
 - Why does Jesus tell us to invite the poor, the lame, and the blind when we have banquets?
 - What do you think would happen if we took this seriously and invited such people to our next church dinner?
 - Does Jesus expect us to take these verses seriously? If so, why don't we do as he says?
- Discuss the kinds of things we can do in our community to address hunger as individuals and as a church. Make a list that can be posted in the classroom where you regularly meet.

OPEN WITH WORSHIP

- Remind the class that we in the last lesson we began to look at the face of hunger in the United States and the reality of hunger even in our own community. Today we will consider what we can do about hunger in our community.
- Have someone read aloud **Luke 14:12-13**.
- Have a moment for silent prayer.
- Collect the offering.

BEFORE THE MEAL

- Read aloud “A Folktale: Stone Soup” from page 40.
- Tell the class that you have prepared Stone Soup using similar ingredients from the story. Share the recipe you used.
- Ask the class to think about the story of Stone Soup. Discuss:
 - ◇ Why did the villagers lie about having no food?
 - ◇ Do you think the beggar was manipulative? Why or why not?
 - ◇ What is the moral of the story?
- Say: “How do you think the villagers would have reacted if the beggar suggested from the beginning that everyone pool their resources?” Allow time to discuss.
- Ask the class if “Stone Soup” has any application to our own community today.
- Point out that God made provisions in Old Testament Law to insure that no one in the community ever went hungry.
 - Have someone read aloud **Deuteronomy 14:28-29**.
 - Discuss the meaning and ramifications of this scripture.

SERVE THE MEAL

- Before the soup is served ask God's blessing on the meal.
- Serve the soup in bowls. Pass bread to all if it has been brought. Serve water as a beverage.
- During the meal, ask if anyone has heard a different version of the Stone Soup story. Allow them to share what the versions have in common and how they are different.

CLEAN UP

- Once everyone has finished eating, everyone should share in the cleanup tasks.
- Thank everyone for participating.
- Close with prayer.





UNIT 5: HUNGER IS A CHURCH ISSUE

The Fast That I Choose

A Bible Study On Hunger

THE POLITICS OF HUNGER

When it comes to hunger and poverty, many people look to government for the solution. While it is clear from our earlier lesson that government does indeed have an important role to play in addressing hunger and poverty, it is also clear that government has been unable to solve those problems.

To illustrate the inability of governments to end hunger, consider this: According to the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the cost required to eradicate world hunger, over what is being spent today, is \$30 billion per year.¹ That is less than the amount of money Americans spend on diet products each year!² It also represents less than one percent of the President's \$3.6 trillion Fiscal Year 2010 budget for the United States government.³ On a global basis, \$30 billion represents only 2.1% of the amount of the world's annual military expenditures and a just minuscule amount of the \$70.65 trillion gross world product.⁴ Clearly, the financial resources are available for government to bring hunger to an end. Yet still hunger persists.

In 1963 President Kennedy said, "We have the means, we have the capacity to eliminate hunger from the face of the earth in our lifetime. We need only the will."⁵ The will has been lacking. And that should not surprise us. After all, governments establish their political priorities based on a variety of factors. Ending world hunger obviously has not been one of those priorities. One reason the political will to end hunger is lacking is that the hungry and the poor have little or no political power. All too often they are invisible. All too often they have no voice in the citadels of power.

A UNIQUE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CHURCH

The people of God have always had a specific mandate to alleviate hunger and to meet the needs of the poor. We addressed this to some extent in Unit 1, *Hunger Is A God Issue*. While government certainly has a role in addressing hunger, the obligation to address hunger and poverty is especially clear with respect to the church.

In Luke's account of the beatitudes, Jesus concluded with a call to action. Give to those in need without question or hesitation, he demanded. Do unto others as you would have them do unto you, he commanded (Luke 6:27-31). In Matthew 25:34-40 he made it clear that what we do to meet the needs of

others is not just done "for" Jesus but, in a very significant sense, to him. These and so many more teachings of Jesus constitute an unambiguous calling for his followers to feed the hungry.

The early church continued Jesus' stress on concern for the poor and the needy. For example, members of the Christian community in Jerusalem shared all things with one another so that "there was not a needy person among them" (Acts 4:32). This concern was not limited only to those in the church, however. When Paul's ministry to the Gentiles was endorsed by the church's leadership in Jerusalem, he reported that they asked only that he remember the poor (Galatians 2:10).

There are numerous exhortations in the New Testament for the church to share its resources with those in need. For example, the writer of Hebrews called on his readers to "not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God" (Hebrews 13:16). Passages such as this make clear that concern for those forced to live a marginal existence is not an optional activity for the people of God, nor is it only a minor requirement. Indeed, our identification with these persons is at the heart of what it means to be the community of faith.

EVANGELISM VERSUS JUSTICE

There are those who question the church's role as an instrument for social justice even in the face of such evidence as that cited in the preceding section. They argue that the primary mission of the church is contained in the Great Commission: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19). Those who subscribe to this view argue that the church's energy and resources should be devoted almost exclusively to evangelism, to "making disciples."

There is no doubt that the church is called to "make disciples." However, the Great Commission actually continues through verse 20 where it calls us to teach these new disciples all that Jesus commanded. Jesus commanded us to give to the needy (Luke 12:33) and to do good even to those who hate us (Luke 6:27). That means that justice relates to evangelism since we will not complete the Great Commission until the people we evangelize work also to alleviate hunger.

UNIT 5: HUNGER IS A CHURCH ISSUE

PURPOSE OF THIS UNIT:

- TO EXAMINE THE UNIQUE CALLING OF THE CHURCH TO RESPOND TO HUNGER.
- TO UNDERSTAND THAT THE CHURCH HAS A RESPONSIBILITY TO ADDRESS HUNGER.
- TO RECOGNIZE THE VARIETY OF WAYS THE CHURCH CAN ADDRESS HUNGER AND POVERTY.



Little children, let us love not in word or speech, but in truth and action.

1 John 3:18

Justice also relates to evangelism because our active concern for the hungry and impoverished validates the reality of God in our lives. It is our love of Christ and his love for us that drives us into action to meet the needs of the impoverished and the hungry. And while we are involved in such action our witness has great power because it is certified by active love.

The connection between justice and evangelism highlights the fact that the church's focus on evangelism should never become an excuse to not engage in Biblically mandated acts of love, namely feeding the poor and doing good to all (Galatians 6:10). Nor should we become so focused on justice issues that we fail to be evangelists. As Christians, we are called to do both.



THE CHURCH'S CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY

The principle mission of the church is to make disciples for Jesus Christ. Its responsibilities include preaching, teaching, healing, nurturing, giving, administering, building, and many other tasks. As a result, church congregations have a dramatic positive impact on society. In fact, 92% of America's 353,000 congregations provide services to their communities designed to meet basic human needs.⁶

A study of churches in Philadelphia calculated that if the city had to pay for the services provided by its 1,376 congregations, it would cost \$247 million a year. That turns out to be \$178,000 per church! And

the study made the point that the real financial impact was probably many times more than that.⁷

Studies have shown that local churches are vital to the social fabric of their neighborhoods and that they have a major role in meeting the needs of people in their communities. In fact, in many ways churches are the true social safety net for those in need in America. As the Philadelphia study put it: "From mentoring programs for children to feeding the hungry, congregations are the most visible and frequent community institution to which people in need apply."⁸

Not only do churches provide direct services to those in need, but church people help beyond what their churches do. Some 85 percent of households that give to churches also give to other kinds of organizations. In fact, the majority of financial support received by secular non-profit organizations comes from those who give to churches.⁹

The impact of churches also extends to volunteering. About 67% of church goers donate their time to charity work while only 44% of those who do not go to church regularly volunteer.¹¹

UNIT 5 OUTLINE:

The two lessons of Unit 5 focus on the claim that hunger is a church issue. The first lesson asks, "What are the church's priorities?" The second asks, "How do we worship God rightly?"

In the first lesson, we will consider the constraints and limitations on the ability of governments to end hunger. We will also look at what the Bible identifies as the principle responsibilities and functions of the church.

The second lesson examines what the Bible says about how the people of God should worship the Lord. We conclude by dealing with the question of what it means to love in truth and action by looking at a variety of ways the church can address hunger.



Make sure to have the class materials recommended on page 8 ready for Unit 5.



Lesson 1 WHAT ARE THE CHURCH'S PRIORITIES?

UNIT 5: *Hunger is A Church Issue*

A Bible Study On Hunger

TEACHING LESSON ONE

OPEN WITH WORSHIP

- Tell the class that this lesson begins our look at the responsibilities of the church in addressing hunger in the world.
- Pray aloud this prayer from Latin America:
**O God,
to those who have hunger give bread,
and to those who have bread
give the hunger for justice. Amen.**
- Read aloud **1 John 3:18**.
- Collect the offering.

CONSTRAINTS ON GOVERNMENTS

- **NOTE:** You may wish to post (or point out if they are still posted) the lists created by the class in lesson 1 of Unit 3.
- Explain that in Unit 3 we examined the authority and responsibility of government to address justice issues including hunger.
- Point out that in Unit 3 we also talked about governments' accountability to God for treating their people justly.
- Finally, remind the class that in Unit 3 we reached the conclusion that God pays attention to how societies treat the poor through their use of governmental power. We even discussed how God might judge the U.S. government for how it "defends the cause of the poor."
- Divide the class into four groups. Give each group a copy of the *Millennium Development Goals*, page 48.
 - Explain that these eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were adopted at the United Nations Millennium Summit on September 8, 2000
 - Tell the class that member nations pledged to meet these goals by 2015.
 - Ask each group to spend a few minutes going over the MDGs and discussing them
- Ask each group to reach a consensus for each of the first six MDG as to whether the world is on track to meet the goal or not.
- After the groups are finished, ask each to give their consensus for Goal 1. Then give them the actual

status as reported by the United Nations *2008 Millennium Development Goals Report* (these are given in the bullets below). Then do the same for Goal 2 and so on through goal 6.

- **Goal 1:**
 - ◇ **Poverty Rate:** The overarching goal of reducing absolute poverty by half is within reach for the world as a whole; however, the proportion of people in sub-Saharan Africa living on less than \$1 per day is unlikely to reach the target.
 - ◇ **Hunger and Malnutrition:** While the malnutrition rate has decreased since 1990, progress is insufficient to reach the MDG by 2015.
- **Goal 2:** In almost all regions, the net enrolment ratio in 2006 exceeded 90 per cent, and many countries were close to achieving universal primary enrolment.
- **Goal 3:** Of the 113 countries that failed to achieve gender parity in both primary and secondary school enrollment by the 2005, only 18 are likely to achieve the goal by 2015.
- **Goal 4:** Between 1990 and 2006, about 27 countries – the large majority in sub-Saharan Africa – made no progress in reducing childhood deaths.
- **Goal 5:** At the global level, maternal mortality decreased by less than 1 per cent per year between 1990 and 2005 – far below the 5.5 per cent annual improvement needed to reach the target.
- **Goal 6:** The number of deaths from AIDS fell from 2.2 million in 2005 to 2.0 million in 2007, and the number of people newly



Governments could have eradicated hunger long ago. That hunger remains the moral failure of our age suggests that government, by itself, is incapable of ending hunger. That means the church has a critical role in eliminating the scourge of hunger in our world.

UNIT 5, Lesson 1: WHAT ARE THE CHURCH'S PRIORITIES?



Little children, let us love not in word or speech, but in truth and action.

1 John 3:18

infected declined from 3.0 million in 2001 to 2.7 million in 2007. The incidence of tuberculosis is expected to be halted and begin to decline before 2015.

- Tell the class that according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, it would take \$30 billion a year on top of what is currently being spent to reach the hunger MDG. Then point out:
 - That is about what Americans spend on diet products each year.
 - It represents less than 1% of the U.S. president's 2010 budget.
 - It is just 3% of the world's expenditures on arms.
 - It is a tiny slice of the \$70.65 trillion gross world product.
- Discuss: Why do you think governments are falling short of accomplishing Goal 1?

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CHURCH

- Tell the class that we will now begin to look at the responsibilities of the church.
- Ask the students what they think the responsibilities of the church are. Record their responses where all can see.
- After the list has been compiled, assign each of the four groups one or more items on the list.
- Ask each group to use a concordance to find at least one reference in the Bible that assigns the church responsibility for the item(s) they have been assigned.
 - **TEACHING NOTE:** While references abound regarding the responsibilities of Jesus' followers, the goal is to find references that pertain to the church as an institution. For instance, one might say that "helping church members in need" is a responsibility of the church. A reference that gives the church that responsibility is **Acts 6:1-6**, where the early church dealt with the problem of food distribution amongst its members.
 - Accept whatever references the groups provide even if they do not refer specifically to the church but rather to individual followers of Jesus. Ask them to highlight what the verses say. Record the scripture next to the item on the list.
 - Possible references include:
 - ◇ Worship: **Acts 2:46-47**
 - ◇ Evangelism: **2 Corinthians 5:18-20**

- ◇ Care for the poor: **James 1:26-27**, **Galatians 2:10**,
- ◇ Doing good works: **Titus 3:8**
- ◇ Generosity: **2 Corinthians 8:1-7**
- ◇ Healing: **Acts 5:12-16**
- ◇ Help one another: **Galatians 5:13-14**

- Ask: Where does the church get its mandate to feed the hungry and help the poor? Use the following to guide a class discussion:
 - What is the Greatest Commandment.?
 - What is the second greatest?
 - Have someone read aloud each of these scriptures:
 - ◇ **Matthew 22:34-40**
 - ◇ **Mark 12:28-34**
 - ◇ **Luke 10:25-28**
 - What does it mean to "love your neighbor".
 - Read the key verse, **1 John 3:18**. Ask what it means to love in "truth and action."
- Ask if there are any other groups of people besides the church that have such a mandate.

WHY GOOD WORKS?

- Point out that feeding the hungry, calling on the sick, helping those in need, visiting the imprisoned, etc. are classified as "Good Works" by the church.
- Have someone read aloud **Ephesians 2:8-10**. Have another class member read aloud **Colossians 1:9-11**. Then discuss:
 - Based on these scriptures, is our doing good works connected to our salvation? How?
 - Why does our doing good works please the Lord?

CLOSING

- Have someone read aloud **Matthew 5:14-16**.
- Read aloud *Let Your Light Shine* from page 8.
- Remind the class that as people of God we are called to do good works to the glory of Jesus Christ.
- Close with prayer.





**UNITED NATIONS
MILLENNIUM
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS**

The Fast That I Choose

A Bible Study On Hunger

Millennium Development Goals

Goal 1: Eradicate extreme hunger and poverty

- Halve, between 1990 and 2015 the proportion of people whose income is less than \$1 a day
- Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger

Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education

- Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling

Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women

- Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005 and in all levels of education no later than 2015

Goal 4: Reduce child mortality

- Reduce by two-thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate

Goal 5: Improve maternal health

- Reduce by three-quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio.

Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases

- Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS
- Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases

Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability

- Integrate the principles of sustained development into country policies and programs and reverse the loss of environmental resources
- Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water
- Have achieved, by 2020, a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers

Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development

- Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, nondiscriminatory trading and financial system
- Address the special needs of the least developed countries
- Address the special needs of landlocked countries and small island developing states
- Deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries through national and international measures in order to make debt sustainable in the long term
- In cooperation with developing countries, develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth
- In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable, essential drugs in developing countries
- In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications

SOURCES: <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals>
The World Bank, *World View: 2003 World Development Indicators*



Lesson 2 HOW DO WE WORSHIP GOD RIGHTLY?

UNIT 5: *Hunger is A Church Issue*

A Bible Study On Hunger

TEACHING LESSON TWO

OPEN WITH WORSHIP

- Tell the class that this lesson continues our look at the responsibilities of the church in addressing hunger in the world.
- Say a prayer.
- Read aloud **1 John 3:18**.
- Collect the offering.

CHARITY AND JUSTICE

- Ask the class if anyone can explain the difference between justice and charity in the modern Christian context. The points below can be used to guide the discussion.
 - Charity (or mercy):
 - ◇ Typically involves private individual acts.
 - ◇ Is in response to immediate needs.
 - ◇ Involves things like providing direct services, food, clothing and shelter.
 - ◇ Requires actions to be repeated.
 - ◇ Directed at the EFFECTS of social injustice or its symptoms.
 - Justice:
 - ◇ Directed at the root CAUSES of social injustice.
 - ◇ Promotes social change.
 - ◇ Responds to long-term need.
 - ◇ Can require public, collective action to be achieved.
 - ◇ Often called “Social Action”.
- Point out that in the Christianity community charity and justice are sometimes approached as “either-or” rather than “both-and”. In other words, Christians sometimes tend to either extend charity or engage in social action rather than doing both.
 - Ask the class if they can think of any examples of this phenomenon.
 - Ask if this ever happens in their church.
- Discuss this statement: Christians are called both to help those who suffer by meeting their immediate needs as well as to work to change the unjust social structures that led to the suffering in the first place.

WORSHIPING GOD

- Remind the class that one of the priorities of the church is to worship God (refer to the previous lesson).
- Note that when we talk about worshipping God, one of the first issues we must deal with is how can we worship God rightly.
- Divide the class into three groups. Assign each group one of these scriptures:
 - **Acts 2:43-47**
 - **1 Corinthians 14:26-33**
 - **1 Corinthians 11:17-34**
- Ask each group to list the elements of worship identified in the assigned scripture. Then ask each group to share their list aloud with the class, recording the items on a chalkboard, white board, or newsprint.
- Have the class turn in their Bibles to **Isaiah 1:8-20**. Ask them to follow along as you read aloud the scripture. Then discuss:
 - What elements of worship are identified in this scripture?
 - How do they correspond to the list the class has just created?
 - How does God in this scripture react to the worship of the Israelites?
 - What does God desire in our worship?

THE BODY OF CHRIST

- Keeping the three groups from the previous section, assign one of these scriptures to each group:
 - **Romans 12:1-8**
 - **1 Corinthians 12:12-31**
 - **Ephesians 4:1-16**
- Ask each group to identify and list the spiritual gifts described in their assigned scripture.
- After the groups have completed their lists, ask one of the groups to write its list on a chalkboard, white board, or newsprint.
- Have the remaining two groups in turn add to the list any gifts identified in their assigned scripture that have not yet been listed.
- Referring to the scriptures, discuss why members of the Body of Christ are given spiritual gifts.

UNIT 5, Lesson 2: HOW DO WE WORSHIP GOD RIGHTLY?



Little children, let us love not in word or speech, but in truth and action.

1 John 3:18

- Read aloud **1 Peter 4:8-11** from the NIV or NLT translations (see Teaching Notes below).
 - Ask: What, according to this scripture, is the purpose of the spiritual gifts given to us?
 - Discuss: How can we use our spiritual gifts to glorify God
 - **TEACHING NOTES:**
 - ◇ This scripture in the NRSV calls on Christians to love and serve one another with their spiritual gifts. (v. 10) From this, one could conclude that the purpose of one's gifts is exclusively to build up the church. However, other English translations put it slightly differently.
 - ◇ For the purposes of this study, the NIV or NLT is a better translation of this scripture.
 - ⇒ The NIV says gifts should be used to "serve others"
 - ⇒ The NLT says, "*God has given gifts to each of you from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Manage them well so that God's generosity can flow through you.*"
- Point out that the imagery we have used in discussing spiritual gifts is that of the Body of Christ.
- Discuss: What attributes does this description suggest? Some possible ones are:
 - Members relate to one another and depend on one another.
 - The church is more than a collection of people.
 - The church is equipped to do all that God calls it to do.
 - The church is the physical body of Christ present in the world.
- Ask: If the church is indeed the physical body of Christ present in the world, in what ways could local your church address hunger as Jesus would? Record the answers on a chalkboard, white board, or newsprint. Some ideas might include:
 - Operate a food pantry or soup kitchen
 - Meals on Wheels
 - Pray for the hungry
 - Help people fill out food stamp applications
 - Write to legislators
 - Have a hunger awareness Sunday
- Once the list is completed, ask the students to identify those which their local church is currently doing. Then identify those which their regional or national level church is doing.

CLOSING

- Have someone read aloud **1 John 3:18**.
- Read aloud **2 Thessalonians 3:10**
- Read aloud *Are Their Limits To Compassion* from below.
- Remind the class that as people of God we are called to be Christ's body at work in the world.
- Close with prayer.

Are There Limits To Compassion?

2 Thessalonians 3:10

Paul wrote to the church in Thessalonica that "anyone unwilling to work should not eat". How do we square this sentiment with the compassion for the hungry shown in so many other places in scripture?

The answer to this question lies in the understanding that as followers of Christ, God's will for us is that we give and work as much as we can to alleviate hunger and suffering in Jesus' name.

Apparently there were those in the church in Thessalonica who had lapsed into idleness. They had quit working altogether and ended up just sponging off other Christians. Paul's response was simple. As harsh as it might sound, he said that if they would not work, then don't feed them.

There are two points that need to be made about this scripture. First, Paul's admonition applied specifically to those within a particular community of faith who refused to work. It would be over-reaching to conclude that this verse has universal application.

The second point is that the idle ones in Thessalonica were failing to practice real love. They not only had stopped working to feed themselves, but they had also stopped working to help others. At the same time, by taking advantage of the compassion of the church, they were reducing the church's capacity to feed the hungry outside the church. Therefore, Paul's instructions to the church were designed to get the slackers back to working to do God's will. They were not a general call for the church to feed only those who work.

The limit to our compassion should be no less than the limit to Jesus' compassion for those in need.



TEN STEPS TO FIGHT HUNGER

The Fast That I Choose

A Bible Study On Hunger

Hunger is a complex and many-faceted tragedy that holds much of the world's family in bondage. Because of the scope of hunger, many of us feel there is nothing that one person can do. We think the tragedy is too massive for one person's action to be effective. Such is not the case. Each of us can make an impact on behalf of our hungry brothers and sisters. Here are ten steps to help you fight the unnecessary evil of hunger.

1. **PRAY:** Pray for those of our human family who do not have sufficient food. Pray also for wisdom in discovering what you can do to help those who are hungry.
2. **BECOME MORE INFORMED:** Learn more about hunger. Read and study books, magazine articles, and newspaper stories dealing with hunger and related issues. Learn about hunger in your own community.
3. **DISCUSS THE TRAGEDY OF HUNGER WITH YOUR FAMILY:** It is important to help our families realize the scope of hunger. Take time to discuss the issues raised by living in a hungry world with those nearest you.
4. **RAISE AWARENESS OF OTHERS:** When you share what you learn about hunger with others, you will find out that you are not alone in your concern for the hungry. Many of your friends and neighbors are also looking for ways to help.
5. **FORM A LOCAL HUNGER ACTION GROUP:** Help interested people in your church and/or community to organize on behalf of the hungry. Working together provides inspiration and support to tackle hunger head-on.
6. **CONTRIBUTE TO A HUNGER MINISTRY:** Most hunger ministries provide high service return. Many spend every dollar donated on hunger relief.
7. **WORK TOWARD A MORE RESPONSIBLE LIFE STYLE:** Most of us can consume less of the world's resources than we now use. We certainly can be less wasteful and more mindful of the needs of our hungry world.
8. **BECOME AN ADVOCATE FOR THE HUNGRY:** Speak on behalf of the hungry. They have little or no voice, but you can support public policies that help the hungry around the world as well as around the corner.
9. **VOLUNTEER:** Most hunger relief organizations need the help of volunteers. Become involved in ministering directly to the needs of others by helping at a soup kitchen, food pantry, etc. You can even help salvage food from farmers fields or grocery stores and deliver it to those in need.
10. **START NOW:** There is no better time to begin than right now. If you wait for a better time to come along, it probably won't. Begin your fight against hunger right now. A journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step. Do something now.



UNIT 6: HUNGER IS MY ISSUE

The Fast That I Choose

A Bible Study On Hunger

GOD'S WILL

As we approach the end of this study we turn to look at what we as individuals can do about hunger in our world. This is possibly the most difficult unit of study because it challenges us to respond individually to the reality of hunger in light of our faith.

Throughout this study we have noted that it is God's desire that no one ever goes hungry. We have pointed out how God has given the world all the resources necessary to bring that desire into reality. And we have also shown that despite God's abundance, the world community has consistently failed to achieve a hunger-free world. Even progress toward that end is often stymied.

The result is that hunger remains an enormous problem across the globe. Hundreds of millions of people across the planet suffer daily from the consequences of grinding poverty and malnutrition. Even in the United States there are millions who experience hunger. So enormous is the hunger problem that it can seem to be as overwhelming as it appears to be intractable. Even so, it remains God's will that hunger come to an end.

LOVING GOD AND NEIGHBOR

When faced with a seemingly insurmountable problem, it is easy to simply give up. Yet that is exactly the wrong response for a Christian when it comes to the twin problems of hunger and poverty. It is the wrong response because a Christian should not be concerned about being successful in tackling such issues. Instead a Christian should be concerned only with being faithful in carrying out God's will.

The two great commandments Christians are called to obey are found in Matthew 22:34-40. First, we are to love God with all our heart, soul, and mind.



Our love for God actually is an answering love; it is in response to God's unfailing love for us. And our response should be to love God totally, with everything in us... with our intellect, with our emotions, with our every heart beat, with our every breath, with our every decision, with our every action, with our every thought.

Secondly, we are to love our neighbors as ourselves. This love for others is closely tied to our love for God. In fact, it is so closely tied that our love for others actually springs out of our love for God. If our love for God is genuine, then we cannot help but love all others unconditionally. And this love for others, if genuine, will translate into action to improve their lives.

It is important to understand that as Christian individuals, we probably are not being called by God to end world hunger—or even hunger in America. That is because seldom are we called to achieve an end result. Instead, we are called simply to be faithful. In the case of hunger we are called to be a visible manifestation of God's love for the hungry and the impoverished. What precisely does that mean? It means we are to be engaged in doing something about hunger.

James makes the compelling case that there is a connection between our faith and our works. *If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill," and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that?* (James 2:15-16). Since our faith rests on the principle of loving God and loving neighbor, our faith must result in some good being accomplished for our neighbor in God's name.

WORDS AND ACTION

There is much truth in the old saying, "Easier said than done." Often we see a huge gap between one's words and actions. For instance, the world's nations have agreed that the 22 richest nations would provide 0.7 percent of their gross national product for development assistance designed to lift the poorest nations out of poverty and to alleviate hunger amongst their populations.¹

By 2008 the only countries that have done met the 0.7 percent target are Denmark, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden. Most of the aid donors hovered around 0.45 percent. The United States traditionally devotes a relatively small (0.15 percent) share of its GDP to foreign aid.²

UNIT 6: HUNGER IS MY ISSUE

PURPOSE OF THIS UNIT:

- TO RECOGNIZE THAT EVERYONE CAN DO SOMETHING ABOUT HUNGER.
- TO UNDERSTAND THAT ENDING HUNGER BEGINS WITH PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT.
- TO BECOME AWARE OF THE VARIETY OF WAYS AN INDIVIDUAL CAN ADDRESS HUNGER ISSUES.



What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you?

James 2:14

In contrast, authentic Christian discipleship does not permit a gap between our words and our actions. As people motivated by love for God and neighbor, the words at 1 John 3:16-18 must guide us:

We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us—and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. How does God’s love abide in anyone who has the world’s goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help? Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

Jesus identified himself with the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the prisoner, and so on when he said they were “members of my family” or “brothers of mine” (Matthew 25:34-40). Since we are called by our faith to be like Jesus, we too should identify with them (1 John 2:6).

With that in mind, it is no stretch to make the claim that every Christian is called by Jesus to do something about hunger. While it is true that not every Christian is called by Christ to do the same thing, each is called to do something. As Mother Theresa once said, “If you can’t feed one hundred people, feed just one.”

There are a variety of ways for Christians to become involved in anti-hunger efforts, many of which are covered in the lessons of this unit. Among these many ways are five that practically every Christian can do: (1) pray, (2) become aware, (3) contribute financially to a hunger relief ministry, (4) volunteer your time to help feed the hungry, (5) lobby our government about hunger issues.

First on the list is praying. Including the hungry and impoverished as well as those who minister to them in our prayers is very important. However, our involvement in addressing the hunger problem should not end with prayer. There is a lesson for us in the account of the Israelites fleeing Egypt as Pharaoh's army bore down on them, God told Moses to stop praying and get moving! (Exodus 14:5-18)

While it is certainly true that praying should have a vital place in our lives, there is also a time for action. Sometimes we know what to do, but we pray for

more guidance as an excuse to postpone doing it. When it comes to hunger, as a consequence of this study we know what we should do. For us, it is now time to take action.

A COMMITMENT

1 John 2:6 points out that “whoever says, ‘I abide in him,’ ought to walk just as he walked.” That is why when we think about making a commitment to action about hunger, it is helpful to look at Jesus’ ministry for guidance.

While the Gospels record that Jesus withdrew frequently to pray and to have time alone with God, they also make clear that Jesus was a man of action.

The accounts of Jesus’ ministry teach us that he was constantly engaged in meeting people’s needs. He healed, he taught, and he challenged the norms of the day. If we are to “walk as Jesus walked” then we, too, need to be involved in meeting human needs and challenging the norms of our day. These last two lessons will guide us in looking at specific ways we can address hunger as disciples of Jesus Christ.

UNIT 6 OUTLINE:

The two lessons of Unit 6 turn our attention to the idea of hunger as a personal issue. The first lesson seeks to answer the question, “What can just one person do?” The second lesson invites the students to say when it comes to working to eradicate hunger, “Here am I, Lord!”

In the first lesson, we will consider the ways that Jesus met people in their need. We then will discuss the variety of ways we as individuals can fight hunger.

The second lesson examines what the Bible says about committing oneself to following Jesus. We conclude by asking each student to make a personal commitment to serve God by in some concrete way serving the hungry.



Make sure to have the class materials recommended on page 8 ready for Unit 6.



Lesson 1 WHAT CAN JUST ONE PERSON DO?

UNIT 6: *Hunger is My Issue*

A Bible Study On Hunger

TEACHING LESSON ONE

OPEN WITH WORSHIP

- Tell the class that this lesson begins the last unit of this study. The focus of this lesson is on hunger as a personal issue.
- Read aloud **James 2:14**.
- Say a prayer.
- Collect the offering.

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

- Ask the class to define “love” from a Christian perspective. Record the responses on a chalkboard, white board, or newsprint.
- Have someone look up “Love” (or *Agape*) in a Bible Dictionary. Ask him or her to explain “Agape love” as defined in the dictionary.
- Compare the dictionary’s definition to that which the class came up with and discuss the differences and similarities.
- Have the class turn to **Colossian 3:12-17** and have them follow along as you read the text.
 - Ask the students to identify in this scripture the marks of Christian living.
 - Point out that Paul reminds us that as Christians we represent Jesus at all times.
 - Discuss:
 - ◇ What impressions do people have of Christ when they see or talk to you?
 - ◇ What happens to us when we “clothe ourselves with love?”
 - ◇ What happens to others when we do so?.
- Ask the class to turn to **John 14:12** and have someone read it aloud.
 - Discuss what it means to do the works that Jesus did.
 - Then discuss what it means to do greater works than Jesus did.
 - **TEACHING NOTE:** Don’t get bogged down by focusing on miracles like Jesus turning water into wine, or even turning five loaves and two fish into enough to feed 5,000. In other words, don’t focus on the means. Instead, focus on the results of what Jesus did. For instance Jesus fed 5,000. A single Christian ministry today can feed millions. Jesus healed a dozen lepers. Christian

sponsored vaccination and health programs can prevent leprosy for thousands.

- Ask: If we are to live the Christian life, how should we respond to the issue of hunger? Let the class respond.

KEEPING THINGS IN PERSPECTIVE

- Remind the students that as we have talked about hunger in the world and the U.S., it can look like an insurmountable problem.
- Ask the class to find where it says in the Bible that Christians are to solve the hunger problem. Allow students to use concordances and other Bible study resources to find applicable scriptures.
 - **TEACHING NOTE:** There are no such scriptures. And that is the point. Christians are not called to solve problems like world hunger. However, we are called to feed the hungry and to work toward achieving God’s justice for the poor. In other words, we are not called to be successful but we are called to be faithful.
- Read the two quotes from Mother Theresa in the box below without saying who made them. Ask the students to guess who you quoted. Congratulate any who guessed correctly.
- Ask if Mother Theresa’s perspective is one we should adopt since it focuses on what we can do rather than on the immensity of the problem we face.

WHAT CAN JUST ONE PERSON DO?

- Divide the class into three groups and assign each group one of these scriptures:
 - **1 John 14-15**
 - **Mark 11:22-24**
 - **Matthew 7:7-11**
- Ask each group to determine from their assigned scripture one thing that all Christians can do about hunger.

“I never take care of crowds, only of one person. If I stop to look at crowds, I would never begin.”

“If you can't feed a hundred people, then just feed one.”

— Mother Theresa

UNIT 6, Lesson 1: WHAT CAN JUST ONE PERSON DO?



What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you?

James 2:14

- Note: Each of these scriptures deals with prayer.
- Discuss who we should be in prayer for when it comes to the issue of world hunger or hunger in the U.S.
- Assign each group one of the following scriptures and repeat the process described above. These scriptures deal with hands-on ministry (good works) to those in need. Discuss what kinds of good works the students can do for the hungry and poor.
 - **TEACHING NOTE:** Try to avoid discussing financial contributions to the poor at this point. Instead, try to get the class to look at ways they can devote their time to assist the hungry through their hands-on efforts.
 - **Titus 3:14** ➤ **Matthew 5:14-16**
 - **Colossians 1:9-10**
- Continue the process with the following scriptures dealing with interactions with governmental powers on behalf of the poor and oppressed. Then discuss ways the students can interact with different governments (local, state, federal, world) to help the hungry.
 - **Exodus 3:9-10** ➤ **Amos 1:1, 2:6**
 - **Jonah 1:1-2**
- Finally, repeat the same process with the scriptures below that deal with giving to the poor. Then discuss different ways that the students can assist the poor through their financial contributions.
 - **Matthew 5:42** ➤ **2 Corinthians 9:7**
 - **Luke 12:33-34**
- Point out that we have discussed just four ways the Bible shows us that we as individuals can get involved in addressing hunger : Prayer, Volunteering, Lobbying, and Giving. There are more ways to get involved.
- Pass out a copy of *Ten Steps To Fight Hunger*, page 51, to each student. Ask them to consider during the next week which of these things they personally can do.

CLOSING

- Have someone read aloud **James 2:14**.
- Point out that we are indeed saved by faith. Then read **James 2:15-17**.
- Have the students to listen as you read the article “*Beggar*” at the bottom of this page. When you have finished, ask for their immediate reactions. Once everyone has responded, tell the class that we will discuss the issues raised by this reading in the next lesson.
- Close with prayer.

Beggar

She’s a regular, they tell me. Comes there every day at the same time. “Two dollars is all I need. Jus’ two dollars for the city bus. Two dollars.” She stammers the same chorus, tugging at her faded pink sweater. Her eyes dart nervously about and with a shaking hand she wipes the sweat from her forehead.

She caught me off-guard, the money in my hand: a 10 and a wad of ones. “Jus’ two dollars,” she pleaded. “For the city bus.” Before I had time to think, I passed her the two dollars, and she slipped off around the corner. I turned back to face the man gathering my food and was met by his scowl. “She’s a regular. Every night. The same thing.” His face insisted that my money was not going to the city bus. And for a moment, I was angry. He’s right. That money is not going to public transportation. It’s going to her next hit, or to her next drink, or something equally horrible. And then I remembered.

I am the beggar in the pink sweater, worrying at its fraying sleeve, stammering out a request. And my ever-gracious Father in Heaven gives, knowing that I will take His gift and twist it into a grotesque caricature of His intention. I will take the good He gives and use it for my own purposes. I will even misrepresent myself when I ask... I dare to come back again, time after time, boldly asking for more after I have abused His goodness. And still He gives. How amazing is that kind of grace and mercy?

I don’t know where my two dollars went. And I don’t know where that woman went (although I sincerely hope it was the city bus...). But I know this: next time I go to the mall in the evening, I will have my two dollars ready.

— Dawn Morrow



Lesson 2 HERE AM I, LORD

UNIT 6: *Hunger is My Issue*

A Bible Study On Hunger

TEACHING LESSON TWO

OPEN WITH WORSHIP

- Tell the class that this lesson is the last of this study.
- Read aloud **James 2:14**.
- Say a prayer.
- Collect the offering. Announce to the class the total amount collected during the study.

GIVING TO THE POOR

- Tell the class that focus of this last lesson is on making a personal commitment to do something about hunger.
- Point out that sometimes actually doing something about hunger and poverty is difficult. Ask the class to discuss why that is the case.
 - **TEACHING NOTE:** If the issue does not come up naturally in the discussion, bring up how our own preconceived ideas, attitudes, and prejudices come into play in how we react to the poor. It is common for us to think that the poor bring their situation upon themselves by making poor choices, for example. The result of such an attitude is that we might think the poor don't deserve our help.
- Remind the class of the article *Beggar* that was read at the end of the last lesson. Ask if they remember their reaction to the article. Discuss briefly.
- Read *Beggar*, page 55, aloud again. Ask, what would you have done in the author's shoes? Then ask, would you have your two dollars ready the next time? Give everyone a chance to respond.
- Ask this question: "Imagine that I stop for a traffic light, and a rumpled, dirty, scraggly man with a crudely lettered sign made of torn cardboard approaches me with a plastic cup. The sign says, "I need food," but his breath smells of alcohol. Should I give him some money?" Discuss. Make sure that students are asked to give reasons for their answers.
- Have everyone turn to **Matthew 5:38-42**. Ask the class to follow along as someone reads the scripture aloud.

- Read aloud verse 42 again. Ask if anyone wants to change their answer from before based on this scripture.
- Divide the class into three groups and give each group a copy of *Give To Everyone Who Begg?*, page 57.
- Have someone in each group read aloud *Give To Everyone Who Begg?* and then discuss:
 - Why do you think Jesus tells us to give to everyone who begs?
 - How do our preconceived ideas, attitudes, and prejudices affect our personal decisions concerning the poor?
 - How can we overcome these ideas, attitudes and prejudices to become more like Christ?

HOW ARE WE DOING? A REPORT CARD

- Remind the class of the handout given at the last lesson about *Ten Steps To Fight Hunger* and of the "homework" assignment to consider which of those ten things they personally can do.
- Briefly discuss each of the items to make sure everyone understands what they involve.
- Pass out a copy of *Report Card*, page 58, to each student.
- Go over the instructions at the top of the *Report Card* and then ask each student to complete their *Report Card*, assigning grades in each column for every item.
 - **TEACHING NOTE:** Not all items will be a "perfect fit" for each column. Give whatever guidance is needed to help the students give scores. For instance "Raise Awareness of Others" by a local church might include efforts to raise awareness by other churches rather than raising awareness within its own congregation.
- Have each student double the total for each column to come up with a percentage score. A perfect score is 100.
- Ask the class to share and discuss their "grades" for each item in the ME column.
- After everyone has had a chance to share, develop a consensus grade for each item for MY LOCAL

UNIT 6, Lesson 2: HERE AM I, LORD!



What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you?

James 2:14

CHURCH and MY CHURCH DENOMINATION.
Record these grades on a chalkboard, white board, or newsprint.

- For every item with a consensus grade of three or less, ask the class to identify specific things they as individuals can do to raise the grade for their local church or their denomination.
 - Record responses on a chalkboard, white board, or newsprint.
- Ask the class if any students are willing to commit to actually doing any of the things listed. If so, mark them accordingly

COMMITMENT

- Ask the students to now consider the first column of grades they assigned. Ten things are listed. Ask them to identify any that they cannot do. Record their answers on a chalkboard, white board, or newsprint.
- Ask the class if they are willing to make a commitment to do all the items that they can do.
- Discuss the various commitments made by the students, focusing on specifics.

- Record the commitments made by each student. Tell the class you will provide copies of all the commitments to everyone so we can hold one another accountable for meeting the commitments we have made.

CLOSING

- Have someone read aloud **Exodus 14:5-18**.
- Point out that there is a lesson for us from that scripture:
 - God basically told Moses to quit praying and to get moving.
 - Point out that as we have come to learn about the reality of hunger in our world, we need to keep praying but we also need to get moving.
 - God is calling us to action as God's people to do something about hunger.
- Tell the class that as this study ends, each of us knows what we should do. Now it is time for each of us to take action.
- Close with prayer.

Give To Everyone Who Begg?

Matthew 5:38-42

I see a beggar. I size him up. If I decide that he will likely misuse my gift, then I don't give to him. After all, I don't want to be taken advantage of. On the other hand, if I decide that he will use my gift appropriately, if he will use it in the way I want him to, I do give to him.

Think about what is actually happening in this scenario. My relationship with the beggar hinges on whether I think he will respect and honor me by using my gift appropriately. If I think he will insult me by abusing my gift, I won't give to him. It is only when I think he will treat me properly by respecting my gift that I will give.

The problem with acting this way is that Jesus tells us that how we relate to other people should never depend upon how they treat us. Instead, it should depend solely upon our relationship with God.

Now someone might protest that in this scenario if I give the money to the beggar he will use it for some evil purpose, for alcohol or drugs or whatever. But here is the hard lesson: Jesus said, "But I say to you, Do not resist an evildoer.... Give to everyone who begs from you, and do not refuse anyone who wants to borrow from you."

A few words in the passage were left out to highlight the fact that Jesus commands us to give to those who beg even when they are evildoers! He commands us to give money to the beggar who will misuse it, and to lend to the borrower who will not return it!

We might think that this teaching is over the top. But guess what? It is no more over the top than loving our enemies and praying for those who persecute us. And that is exactly what Jesus tells us to do in the verses following these!

The truth is that you and I do not need to be commanded to give to those who are "worthy." So why on earth would Jesus bother to tell us to do things we are prone to do anyway? The answer is, he wouldn't. Instead, Jesus tells us to do the hard thing. He tells us to give to those who don't deserve it.

And in the final analysis that makes sense. After all, if it did not matter to Jesus whether we were worthy of our salvation, why should it matter to us if the rumpled man on the street corner is worthy of our five-dollar bill?



The Fast That I Choose

A Bible Study On Hunger

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. For each of the items listed on the Report Card, give a grade between 0 and 5 for you, your local church, and your church denomination. A score of 0 means that the item is not done at all. A score of 5 means that it is done all the time, and/or it is done very well.
2. After you have assigned a grade in each block, total the scores in each column.

| Report Card | Me | My local church | My church denomination |
|---|-----------|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Pray for the hungry daily | | | |
| Pray for at least one hunger ministry daily | | | |
| Become more informed about hunger and poverty issues | | | |
| Discuss hunger with family members/congregation | | | |
| Raise awareness of others about hunger | | | |
| Form a local hunger action group | | | |
| Contribute financially to one or more hunger ministries | | | |
| Work toward a more responsible lifestyle | | | |
| Become an advocate for the hungry | | | |
| Volunteer to help at a local hunger ministry | | | |
| TOTALS: | | | |



ENDING THE STUDY

The Fast That I Choose

A Bible Study On Hunger

WRAPPING UP

When the study concludes the class leader has a few follow-up tasks to perform. These include:

1. Processing the class offering in accordance with church policies. If you have decided to support the publisher of this study, send the check to the Society of St. Andrew, 3383 Sweet Hollow Road, Big Island, VA 24526. Otherwise, send it to whatever the other ministry the class has chosen. Make sure you indicate that the donation is a Bible Study offering.
2. Getting a copy of the class commitments to each student.
3. Encouraging students to follow through on their commitments.

FEEDBACK

The Society of St. Andrew is very interested in hearing your thoughts about the study you have just completed. You may call 800-333-4597, email your comments to sosahra@endhunger.org, or write to:

Bible Study
Society of St. Andrew
3383 Sweet Hollow Road
Big Island, VA 24526



NOTES

The Fast That I Choose

A Bible Study On Hunger

UNIT 1: HUNGER IS A GOD ISSUE

- ¹ The 4.3 pounds of food produced per person per day globally comes from Frances Moore Lappe, Joseph Collins, and Peter Rosset, “The Myth—Scarcity, The Reality—There Is Enough Food,” Institute for Food and Development Policy *Background*, Summer 1998, Vol. 5, No. 1. (<http://www.foodfirst.org/pubs/backgrdrs/1998/w98v5n1.html>). The 4.3 pounds per day figure is admittedly dated. However, if anything, it actually under-estimates current food availability. That is because real per capita food production has increased since 1998. According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, the global per capita food index in 1998 was 97. The index had increased to 106 in 2008. Historical and current figures on food production is available at <http://faostat.fao.org/>
- ² Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, *World Agriculture: Towards 2015/2030; Summary Report*, 2002, p. 1. This FAO prediction has been borne out by actual food production trends between 2002 and November, 2008.
- ³ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, *The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2008*, p.6.
- ⁴ *U.S. News & World Report*, “Malnutrition Responsible for a Third of Child Deaths Worldwide.” January 17, 2008.

UNIT 2: HUNGER IS A GLOBAL ISSUE

- ¹ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, *The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2008*, p.6.
- ² United Nations World Food Programme, *World Hunger Series 2006: Hunger and Learning*
- ³ *Ibid.*
- ⁴ *Ibid.*
- ⁵ James Orr, ed., *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, “Neighbor,” 1998.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*
- ⁷ United Nations. *The Millennium Development Goals Report 2008*. New York, 2008.

UNIT 3: HUNGER IS A NATIONAL ISSUE

- ¹ Linda Scott Kantor, Kathryn Lipton, Alden Manchester, and Victoria Oliveira, “Estimating and Addressing America’s Food Losses,” *Food Review*, Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture. January-April 1997, p. 3. Published studies on food losses in America are difficult to come by, partly because they are controversial. For example, a 2004 study by Timothy Jones, an

anthropologist at the University of Arizona, Tuscon, Bureau of Applied Research in Anthropology was commissioned by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Jones had previously spent 10 years measuring food loss at all levels of food production and consumption. He discovered that about half of the food produced in America was discarded, and that much of it could feed people who need it. On top of that, the rate of food loss, even partially corrected, could save U.S. consumers and manufacturers tens of billions of dollars each year. The USDA never published his report. (for an article on his results, see <http://www.foodproductiondaily.com/Supply-Chain/Half-of-US-food-goes-to-waste>). The 1997 USDA report cited here is the most recent, even though it is conservative. Jones' report is entitled "Using Contemporary Archaeology and Applied Anthropology to Understand Food Loss in the American Food System" and can be found here: <http://www.communitycompost.org/info/usafood.pdf>

²U.S. Department of Agriculture, *A Citizen's Guide To Food Recovery*, USDA Publications, 1996, Section II. (<http://www.usda.gov/news/pubs/gleaning/content.htm>). Also, see Jones, 2004.

³The USDA report on food loss (see note 1) was not able to quantify food losses that occur on the farm or between the farm and retail levels. It did, however, point out that such losses can be significant. See p. 4. Jones' 2004 report says that some crop losses reach 29%.

⁴Stephanie Baum, "Millionaire levels plummet," *Wealth Bulletin*, March 11, 2009. Mark Nord, Margaret Andrews, and Steven Carlson. Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, *Household Food Security in the United States, 2008*, Food Economic Research Report No. (ERR-66), November 2008, p. 14.

⁵Mark Nord, Margaret Andrews, and Steven Carlson, ERR-66, p. 14. United States Conference of Mayors, *2008 Status Report on Hunger & Homelessness*, December 2008, pp. 5-7, 10. Rhoda Cohen, Myoung Kim, and Jim Ohls, *Hunger in America 2006*, prepared for America's Second Harvest, March 2006

UNIT 4: HUNGER IS A COMMUNITY ISSUE

¹ Mark Nord, Margaret Andrews, and Steven Carlson. pp. 10, 17.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 10, 21.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 33-34.

⁵ Feeding America, <http://feedingamerica.org/faces-of-hunger/hunger-101/rural-hunger.aspx>, 2009.

⁶ The information contained in this section is from Rhoda Cohen, Myoung Kim, and Jim Ohls.

⁷ Baum, *Wealth Bulletin*, March 11, 2009. Luisa Kroll, Matthew Miller and Tatiana Serafin, "The World's Billionaires," *Forbes.com*, March 11, 2009. Matthew Miller and Tatiana Serafin, eds., "America's 400 Richest," *Forbes.com*, September 21, 2006.

UNIT 5: HUNGER IS A CHURCH ISSUE

NOTES

- ¹ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, “The world only needs 30 billion dollars a year to eradicate the scourge of hunger” (<http://www.fao.org/Newsroom/en/news/2008/1000853/index.html>). Eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were adopted at the United Nations Millennium Summit on September 8, 2000 and member nations pledged to meet them by 2015. One MDG is to halve the portion of people suffering from hunger. To learn more about the MDGs, please visit this web site: <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>
- ² “Pamela Sherrid, “Piling on the Profit,” *U.S. News & World Report*, June 8, 2003. (<http://health.usnews.com/usnews/health/articles/030616/16profit.htm>)
- ³ Office of Management and Budget, *Budget of the United States Government Fiscal Year 2010*, February 26, 2009. Summary Tables. (http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/assets/fy2010_new_era/Summary_Tables2.pdf)
- ⁴ Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook*, online edition, March 2009. (<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/print/xx.html>). World military expenditures are about \$1.4 trillion dollars (2% of Gross World Product).
- ⁵ Quoted in Bread for the World Institute, *Are We On Track To End Hunger? Hunger Report 2004*, p. 93.
- ⁶ Susan K. E. Saxon-Harrold, et.al., *America’s Religious Congregations: Measuring Their Contribution to Society*, Independent Sector, 2000, pp. 3 and 6.
- ⁷ Ram A Cnaan and Stephanie C. Boddie, “Philadelphia Census of Congregations and Their Involvement in Social Service Delivery,” *Social Service Review*, The University of Chicago, December 2001, pp.573-574. The reasons the study suggested a higher replacement value include: (1) the study did not count more than five programs per congregation, (2) numerous types of informal aspects of congregation help were not included, (3)clergy members’ volunteer time at other community service organizations was not counted, and (4) the value of “spin-off” services that started as congregational programs was not included.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 575
- ⁹ Christopher Toppe, et. al., *Faith & Philanthropy: The Connection Between Charitable Behavior and Giving to Religion*, Independent Sector, 2002, p. 9.
- ¹⁰ Arthur C. Brooks, “Religious Faith and Charitable Giving,” *Policy Review*, October & November 2003 (<http://www.hoover.org/publications/policyreview/3447051.html>)

UNIT 6: HUNGER IS MY ISSUE

- ¹ United Nation, Preparatory Committee for the International Conference on Financing for Development, *Final outcome of the International Conference on Financing for Development*, (The Monterey Consensus) January 30, 2002, p. 9 (Item 42).
- ² Edith M. Lederer, “U.N. Report Urges Aid to Poor Countries,” The Associated Press, January 17, 2005. *The Millennium Development Goals Report 2008*, pp. 44-47. Neil Macfarquhar, “Donors’ Aid to Poor Nations Declines, U.N. Reports,” *The New York Times*, September 4, 2008.



APPENDICES

The Fast That I Choose

A Bible Study On Hunger

The material presented in these appendices may be used to supplement the lessons or given to students for additional reading material.

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APPENDIX 1

The Medford Declaration to End Hunger in the U.S.

We can end hunger in America, and we can end it now.

Three decades ago a new President challenged our nation with two goals: to reach the moon and to end domestic hunger. We have reached only one of these goals. It is time to achieve the other.

Hunger has no place in the new world tomorrow brings. It is a form of economic suicide. Hunger is also inconsistent with our conscience. If anything is un-American, it is hunger.

We believe Americans have reached a consensus on ending hunger. We come to this consensus from many points of view.

Many of us are moved by the belief that the United States is losing its economic leadership, and that we must invest more in our children and families to insure national productivity in a more competitive world. Others are moved by enlightened self-interest, pointing out that we either pay now or pay later for preventable problems.

Still other citizens address domestic hunger out of strong moral or religious convictions. And many in the fields of education and health are moved by the crippling impact of hunger on the health and learning capacity of our children.

From many walks of life, we are one people — a people who agree that we can eradicate hunger in our country. A people who believe we must do so.

Abolishing hunger at home will require two steps.

In the short term we must use existing channels to see that food is available to the hungry on an adequate and consistent basis. If we fully utilize existing public programs in conjunction with the heroic efforts of voluntary food providers in local communities — we can end hunger very soon.

But we must move as a nation to end the causes of hunger as well. Many things can be done to increase the purchasing power of American households, and to fulfill the desire for independence and self-reliance which so characterizes our people.

We can achieve this two-step goal before the start of the new century.

**We can begin with children...
and we can virtually eliminate domestic hunger by 1995.**

Programs exist to insure that all Americans have enough to eat by 1995. Within months we can meet emergency needs by moving surplus foodstuffs into the communities of the nation as quickly as we ship goods to feed our military personnel overseas. Within two years we can fully use existing federal food programs to prevent hunger.

We must begin with children. We can reach every needy child with the school lunch and breakfast program. We can start with the six million poor youngsters who often begin their school day with no food. We can fully use the highly effective WIC program to help insure that poor mothers do not give birth to undernourished babies — protecting four million more youngsters who presently are at risk.

We can expand the benefits of food stamps which help unemployed households make it through economically difficult times. And we can insure that no elderly citizen goes without the nutrients provided by Meals on Wheels and congregate feeding.

These steps alone can virtually wipe out domestic hunger by mid-decade.

We can achieve economic self-reliance for most American households by the year 2000.

Promoting adequate purchasing power is the way to achieve the goal of a hunger-free United States. This nation will have defeated chronic hunger when its people achieve “food security” — regular access to an adequate diet through normal means.

A variety of steps can be taken this decade to accomplish this end: market-based employment and training programs to build skills and expand jobs; making sure child care is available so parents can work; expanding concepts such as earned income tax credits and children’s allowances so that the tax system strengthens families. The goal is to increase the purchasing power of employed heads-of-households so that work raises families out of poverty.

The current window of world peace now gives us the opportunity to abolish domestic hunger. We can increase the competitiveness of our work force and protect the vital energies of our young. And we can assist emerging democracies of the world with pride because all Americans will enjoy the most basic fruit of our own democracy — freedom and family security.

We stand at a special moment in history. Perhaps for the first time, our desire to end hunger is converging with the opportunity to do so. We have moved from ability to consensus. We now need the political leadership to achieve the longheld goal of an America free of hunger.

December, 1991

NOTE ABOUT THIS DECLARATION:

In 1991 a committee of U.S. hunger organizations convened at Tufts University in Medford, Massachusetts to draft a declaration that set standards for ending domestic hunger. The resulting Medford Declaration outlines the steps needed to virtually eliminate domestic hunger by 1995 and achieve self-reliance for most American households by the year 2000. The document was endorsed by more than 2,000 local, state and national leaders and over 1,000 organizations representing 100 million people.

Of course, ending hunger in the United States was not achieved by the year 2000 and hunger remains a difficult problem in the U.S. to this day.

APPENDIX 2

It's Not That Simple: a treatise on fishing lessons

by Christopher Bryan and Katie Cook

How often we hear quoted the ancient Chinese proverb: "Give a man a fish and feed him for a day. Teach him to fish and feed him for a lifetime." Though well-intentioned and-at first glance-logical, this adage does not really address the complex issues facing hungry people.

One of the inherent dangers in the saying is that it implies that people who don't have enough to eat are the sole cause of their predicament. The logic suggests that they are in control of their own fate, at fault because of their own deficiencies. And our idea of self-sufficiency, of "learning to fish," assumes that, if they learn our uniform (most often translated "Western") methods for growing food and supporting themselves, they'll be all right.

Another danger in the proverb is that it grossly oversimplifies the problem of food security. It encourages us to ignore a significant number of major factors that cause hunger. At work here are much more than ignorance or lack of tools. Before we ask them to fish for themselves, we must ask: Do the fisherfolk have access to a lake? Who owns the lake? Who controls transportation to the lake? Is it polluted? If so, who polluted it? Is it overfished by industrial interests? Who owns the hooks and lines?

Our global economy has turned even the most basic natural resources into commodities, making it sometimes impossible for people with plenty of native knowledge and expertise to earn a decent living or put food on their own table.

We as responsible people of faith should examine the roots of these problems. Political instability and vast privatization have led to circumstances in which knowing how to fish-so to speak-doesn't necessarily grant self-sufficiency. The raw truth is that people do not go hungry because they are lazy, or because they don't know how to fish. They go hungry because they don't have access to power.

The solution lies in helping people around the globe, and in our backyards to empower themselves. Instead of urging them to learn to fish, we should speak on their behalf regarding injustices barring them from food resources. That means we, who claim we care, should listen to people who work firsthand with the hungry and malnourished-and we should listen to the hungry and malnourished themselves. Once we have heard from them, we can set about to fight the oppression that causes their hunger.

Of course, this is not a popular rallying cry. It is much easier to fall back on a proverb that makes those of us in the developed world feel a little less responsible, a little less guilty. It is always easier to blame poverty on the poor.

In addition to our aversion of guilt, we also fear the idea of transferring power to the powerless. We fear that we may have to change our own lifestyles. We are also afraid because such ideas tend to draw enmity from the people who hold most of the power.

And we may not know for sure how to go about transferring that power. We will probably disagree about the best ways to begin. But it seems that, once we realize that some of those folks already know how to fish better than we do, we've made a very important step.

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Universal Declaration on the Eradication of Hunger and Malnutrition

Recognizing that :

(a) The grave food crisis that is afflicting the peoples of the developing countries where most of the world's hungry and ill-nourished live and where more than two thirds of the world's population produce about one third of the world's food-an imbalance which threatens to increase in the next 10 years-is not only fraught with grave economic and social implications, but also acutely jeopardizes the most fundamental principles and values associated with the right to life and human dignity as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

(b) The elimination of hunger and malnutrition, included as one of the objectives in the United Nations Declaration on Social Progress and Development, and the elimination of the causes that determine this situation are the common objectives of all nations;

(c) The situation of the peoples afflicted by hunger and malnutrition arises from their historical circumstances, especially social inequalities, including in many cases alien and colonial domination, foreign occupation, racial discrimination, apartheid and neo-colonialism in all its forms, which continue to be among the greatest obstacles to the full emancipation and progress of the developing countries and all the peoples involved;

(d) This situation has been aggravated in recent years by a series of crises to which the world economy has been subjected, such as the deterioration in the international monetary system, the inflationary increase in import costs, the heavy burdens imposed by external debt on the balance of payments of many developing countries, a rising food demand partly due to demographic pressure, speculation, and a shortage of, and increased costs for, essential agricultural inputs;

(e) These phenomena should be considered within the framework of the on-going negotiations on the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, and the General Assembly of the United Nations should be urged unanimously to agree upon, and to adopt, a Charter that will be an effective instrument for the establishment of new international economic relations based on principles of equity and justice;

(f) All countries, big or small, rich or poor, are equal. All countries have the full right to participate in the decisions on the food problem;

(g) The well-being of the peoples of the world largely depends on the adequate production and distribution of food as well as the establishment of a world food security system which would ensure adequate availability of, and reasonable prices for, food at all times, irrespective of periodic fluctuations and vagaries of weather and free of political and economic pressures, and should thus facilitate, amongst other things, the development process of developing countries;

(h) Peace and justice encompass an economic dimension helping the solution of the world economic problems, the liquidation of under-development, offering a lasting and definitive solution of the food problem for all peoples and guaranteeing to all countries the right to implement freely and effectively their development programmes. To this effect, it is necessary to eliminate threats and resort to force and to promote peaceful co-operation between States to the fullest extent possible, to apply the principles of non-interference in the internal affairs of other States, full equality of rights and respect of national independence and sovereignty, as well as to encourage the peaceful co-operation between all States, irrespective of their political, social and economic systems. The further improvement of international relations will create better conditions for international co-operation in all fields which should make possible large financial and material resources to be used, inter alia , for developing agricultural production and substantially improving world food security;

(i) For a lasting solution of the food problem all efforts should be made to eliminate the widening gaps which today separate developed and developing countries and to bring about a new international economic order. It should be possible for all countries to participate actively and effectively in the new international economic relations by the establishment of suitable international systems, where appropriate, capable of producing adequate action in order to establish just and equitable relations in international economic co-operation;

(j) Developing countries reaffirm their belief that the primary responsibility for ensuring their own rapid development rests with themselves. They declare, therefore, their readiness to continue to intensify their individual and collective efforts with a view to expanding their mutual co-operation in the field of agricultural development and food production, including the eradication of hunger and malnutrition;

(k) Since, for various reasons, many developing countries are not yet always able to meet their own food needs, urgent and effective international action should be taken to assist them, free of political pressures.

Consistent with the aims and objectives of the Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order and the Programme of Action adopted by the General Assembly at its sixth special session,

The Conference consequently solemnly proclaims :

1. Every man, woman and child has the inalienable right to be free from hunger and malnutrition in order to develop fully and maintain their physical and mental faculties. Society today already possesses sufficient resources, organizational ability and technology and hence the competence to achieve this objective. Accordingly, the eradication of hunger is a common objective of all the countries of the international community, especially of the developed countries and others in a position to help.

2. It is a fundamental responsibility of Governments to work together for higher food production and a more equitable and efficient distribution of food between countries and within countries. Governments should initiate immediately a greater concerted attack on chronic malnutrition and deficiency diseases among the vulnerable and lower income groups. In order to ensure adequate nutrition for all, Governments should formulate appropriate food and nutrition policies integrated in overall socio-economic and agricultural development plans based on adequate knowledge of available as well as potential food resources. The importance of human milk in this connection should be stressed on nutritional grounds.

3. Food problems must be tackled during the preparation and implementation of national plans and programmes for economic and social development, with emphasis on their humanitarian aspects.

4. It is a responsibility of each State concerned, in accordance with its sovereign judgement and internal legislation, to remove the obstacles to food production and to provide proper incentives to agricultural producers. Of prime importance for the attainment of these objectives are effective measures of socio-economic transformation by agrarian, tax, credit and investment policy reform and the reorganization of rural structures, such as the reform of the conditions of ownership, the encouragement of producer and consumer co-operatives, the mobilization of the full potential of human resources, both male and female, in the developing countries for an integrated rural development and the involvement of small farmers, fishermen and landless workers in attaining the required food production and employment targets. Moreover, it is necessary to recognize the key role of women in agricultural production and rural economy in many countries, and to ensure that appropriate education, extension programmes and financial facilities are made available to women on equal terms with men.

5. Marine and inland water resources are today becoming more important than ever as a source of food and economic prosperity. Accordingly, action should be taken to promote a rational exploitation of these resources, preferably for direct consumption, in order to contribute to meeting the food requirements of all peoples.

6. The efforts to increase food production should be complemented by every endeavour to prevent wastage of food in all its forms.

7. To give impetus to food production in developing countries and in particular in the least developed and most seriously affected among them, urgent and effective international action should be taken, by the developed countries and other countries in a position to do so, to provide them with sustained additional technical and financial assistance on favourable terms and in a volume sufficient to their needs on the basis of bilateral and multilateral arrangements. This assistance must be free of conditions inconsistent with the sovereignty of the receiving States.

8. All countries, and primarily the highly industrialized countries, should promote the advancement of food production technology and should make all efforts to promote the transfer, adaptation and dissemination of appropriate food production technology for the benefit of the developing countries and, to that end, they should inter alia make all efforts to disseminate

the results of their research work to Governments and scientific institutions of developing countries in order to enable them to promote a sustained agricultural development.

9. To assure the proper conservation of natural resources being utilized, or which might be utilized, for food production, all countries must collaborate in order to facilitate the preservation of the environment, including the marine environment.

10. All developed countries and others able to do so should collaborate technically and financially with the developing countries in their efforts to expand land and water resources for agricultural production and to assure a rapid increase in the availability, at fair costs, of agricultural inputs such as fertilizers and other chemicals, high-quality seeds, credit and technology. Co-operation among developing countries, in this connection, is also important.

11. All States should strive to the utmost to readjust, where appropriate, their agricultural policies to give priority to food production, recognizing in this connection the interrelationship between the world food problem and international trade. In the determination of attitudes towards farm support programmes for domestic food production, developed countries should take into account, as far as possible, the interest of the food-exporting developing countries, in order to avoid detrimental effect on their exports. Moreover, all countries should co-operate to devise effective steps to deal with the problem of stabilizing world markets and promoting equitable and remunerative prices, where appropriate through international arrangements, to improve access to markets through reduction or elimination of tariff and non-tariff barriers on the products of interest to the developing countries, to substantially increase the export earnings of these countries, to contribute to the diversification of their exports, and apply to them, in the multilateral trade negotiations, the principles as agreed upon in the Tokyo Declaration, including the concept of non-reciprocity and more favourable treatment.

12. As it is the common responsibility of the entire international community to ensure the availability at all times of adequate world supplies of basic food-stuffs by way of appropriate reserves, including emergency reserves, all countries should co-operate in the establishment of an effective system of world food security by:

Participating in and supporting the operation of the Global Information and Early Warning System on Food and Agriculture;

Adhering to the objectives, policies and guidelines of the proposed International Undertaking on World Food Security as endorsed by the World Food Conference;

Earmarking, where possible, stocks or funds for meeting international emergency food requirements as envisaged in the proposed International Undertaking on World Food Security and developing international guidelines to provide for the co-ordination and the utilization of such stocks;

Co-operating in the provision of food aid for meeting emergency and nutritional needs as well as for stimulating rural employment through development projects.

All donor countries should accept and implement the concept of forward planning of food aid and make all efforts to provide commodities and/or financial assistance that will ensure adequate quantities of grains and other food commodities.

Time is short. Urgent and sustained action is vital. The Conference, therefore, calls upon all peoples expressing their will as individuals, and through their Governments, and non-governmental organizations, to work together to bring about the end of the age-old scourge of hunger.

The Conference affirms :

The determination of the participating States to make full use of the United Nations system in the implementation of this Declaration and the other decisions adopted by the Conference.

Adopted on 16 November 1974 by the World Food Conference convened under United Nations General Assembly resolution 3180 (XXVIII) of 17 December 1973; and endorsed by General Assembly resolution 3348 (XXIX) of 17 December 1974

APPENDIX 4

Rich Woman, Poor Woman

A dramatic reading for two people.

INSTRUCTIONS: Two people alternate reading in turn. One reads the bold lines, the other the regular type.



I am a woman.
I am a woman.

I am a woman born of a woman, whose man owned a factory.
I am a woman born of a woman, whose man labored in a factory.

I am a woman whose man wore silk suits, who closely watched his weight.
I am a woman whose man wore tattered clothing, whose heart was constantly strangled by hunger.

I am a woman who watched two babies grow into beautiful children.
I am a woman who watched two babies die because there was no milk.

I am a woman who watched twins grow into popular students with summers abroad.
I am a woman who watched three children grow, but with bellies stretched from no food.

But then there was a man:
But then there was a man:

And he talked about the peasants getting richer by my family getting poorer.
And he told me of days that would be better, and he made the days better.

We had to eat rice!
We had rice!

We had to eat beans!
We had beans!

My children were no longer given summer visas to Europe.
My children no longer cried themselves to sleep.

I felt like a peasant.
I felt like a woman.

A peasant with a dull, hard, unexciting life.
Like a woman with a life that sometimes allowed a song.

And I saw a man.
And I saw a man.

And together we began to plot with the hope of a return of freedom --
I saw his heart begin to beat with hope of freedom, at last.

Someday, the return of freedom.
Someday freedom.

But then, one day
But then, one day

There were planes overhead, and guns firing close by.
There were planes overhead, and guns firing in the distance.

I gathered my children and went home.
I gathered my children and ran.

And the guns moved farther and farther away.
But the guns moved closer and closer.

And then, they announced that freedom had been restored!
And then, they came, young boys really ...

They came into my home along with my man.
They came and found my man.

Those men whose money was almost gone --
They took all the men whose lives were almost their own.

And we had drinks to celebrate.
And they shot them all.

The most wonderful martinis.
They shot my man.

And then they asked us to dance.
And then they came for us.

Me.
For me, the woman.

And my sisters.
For my sisters.

And then they took us --
And then they took us --

They took us to dinner at a small, private club.
They stripped from us the dignity we had gained.

They treated us to beef.
They raped us.



It was one course after another.
One after another they came at us.

We nearly burst, we were so full.
Lunging, plunging ... sisters bleeding, dying.

It was magnificent to be free again.
It was hardly a relief to have survived.

And then we gathered our children together.
And then they took our children --

And gave them some good wine
And they took their scissors -

And then we gave them a party
And then they took the hands of the children ...

(Pause)

The beans have almost disappeared now.
The beans have disappeared.

The rice I've replaced with chicken or steak.
The rice, I cannot find it.

And the parties continue night after night, to make up for all the time wasted.
And my silent tears are joined once more by the midnight cries of my children.

I feel like a woman again.
They say I am a woman.

Written by a working class Chilean woman following the overthrow of Chile's President Salvador Allende in 1973, this reflection recalls, sadly, more recent violations of human rights in Rwanda, the Balkans, and East Timor. After you present it, be sure to leave time for silent reflection and discussion.

APPENDIX 5

Count your blessings: I Need, I Have, I Want Survey

According to your own definition of "need" and "want", check the following items. If you have more than one, indicate how many you have, how many you need, and how many you want. It is possible to check more than one column.

| Need | Want | Have | | Need | Want | Have | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1. More than 5 shirts or blouses | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 21. More than 2 pairs of shoes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. CD player and CDs | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 22. Air conditioning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3. Coats and/or jackets | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 23. VCR and/or DVD player |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. Hairdryer | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 24. Stereo and/or radio |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5. College degree | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 25. Car |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6. TV | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 26. Skirts or slacks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7. Jeans | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 27. Email |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 8. Sweatshirts or sweaters | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 28. Several close friends |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 9. Success at work or school | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 29. Sports equipment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 10. Makeup | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 30. Dishwasher |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 11. Christmas presents | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 31. More than one Bible |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 12. Soft drinks | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 32. Fans |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 13. Bicycle | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 33. Computer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 14. Books, magazines | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 34. My own cell phone |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 15. A job | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 35. Time to relax |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 16. Three meals per day | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 36. Indoor plumbing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 17. A private room | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 37. A church home |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 18. Receive love | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 38. Parental love |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 19. Fresh, clean water | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 39. Bathe every day |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 20. Eating at fast-food restaurants | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 40. Vacation away from home |

Developing Nations Data Sheet



For every 100 people in developing nations, 31 live in abject poverty and face hunger daily.

If there were 100 people representing developing countries

- ... 16 would lack safe drinking water
 - ... 44 would live in urban areas
 - ... 77 would be literate
 - ... 15 would live in sub-Saharan Africa
 - ... 31 would live in South Central Asia
 - ... 11 would live in Latin America and the Caribbean
 - ... 9 would live in the Middle East and North Africa
 - ... 38 would live in East Asia and Africa
 - ... 55 would be undernourished.
- Your life expectancy averages 67 years.
-

If there were 100 people representing the United States

- ...79 would live in urban areas
 - ... 1 would lack safe drinking water
 - ...3 would be undernourished
 - ...85 would be high school graduates
- Your life expectancy would be 78 years
-

If my group lived in a developing nation

- _____ would be undernourished
- _____ would lack safe drinking water
- _____ would live in an urban area
- _____ would be literate
- _____ would live in South Central Asia
- _____ would live in Africa



Figures for this exercise were gathered from several sources including *United Nations Human Development Reports, 2008*, *World Population Highlights*, the World Health Organization, and other sources.



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