

Copyright © information:
© 2001 Project WorldReach © 2001 SEAN
all rights reserved

Train & Multiply™

Project WorldReach (T&M™ ministry operation)

Dr. George Patterson (Originating Author)

SEAN International



Contact: **Project WorldReach PWR™**

474 - 800 - 15355 - 24th Ave
Surrey BC, Canada
V4A 2H9

E-mail: pwr@trainandmultiply.com

Website: <http://www.trainandmultiply.com>

036EN01A-01

The Church and Society



Pastoral Leader Training Booklet

36

Train & Multiply™



T&M™

Ask the Lord to help every member of your church to be involved in caring for the needy with love.

THE DOUBLE MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH TO THE WORLD

The two GREAT MINISTRIES of the Church towards people are:

- to help them become disciples of Christ,
- to serve them in love.

The obedient church not only preaches the Gospel but also puts it into practice. (1 Corinthians 13:1)

1 John 4:20-21 says: *“If anyone says, ‘I love God’, yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. And he has given us this command, whoever loves God must also love his brother.”*

4. Faced with his community’s problems, the Christian:
- ☐ only goes to church.
 - ☐ works to solve them, according to biblical principles.
 - ☐ seeks to satisfy only his own needs.

PRACTICAL WORK

- Explain to your congregation the causes of poverty, and the positive effects of sincere repentance.
- Teach how a Christian seeks justice, in his work and with the civil government.
- Learn by heart 1 John 3:18.
- Write down at least three activities that the members of your congregation should start in order to deal with problems of poverty or injustice in your community.

SUMMARY TEST

Mark the correct answers.

1. A Christian's role in society is to:
 - ☐ teach God's Word and leave all matters of social concern to unbelievers and government.
 - ☐ help people to solve social and material problems.

2. When people know Christ, this makes a difference:
 - ☐ only in themselves.
 - ☐ in them and all those around them.

3. Contaminated water is:
 - ☐ a social problem that only the government should deal with.
 - ☐ the cause of needless deaths and therefore a moral challenge for Christians.

The obedient church expresses its love for people in two ways:

- it presents the Gospel to them so that they may be converted to Christ,
- it enables them to deal with their problems with God's help.

The Christian wants to minister to the entire person; to his spiritual hunger and thirst, to his material needs, and also to his social needs.



Christian love towards a neighbor deals with:

- ☐ only the soul.
- ☐ the whole person.

The obedient church changes society.

Throughout the history of the Church, great spiritual renewals have resulted in reforms and improvements in society. They have served the whole man, in all areas of need.

In Europe before the Protestant Reformation, the Roman hierarchy dominated everything including man's conscience. But the reformers solved this problem using God's Word.

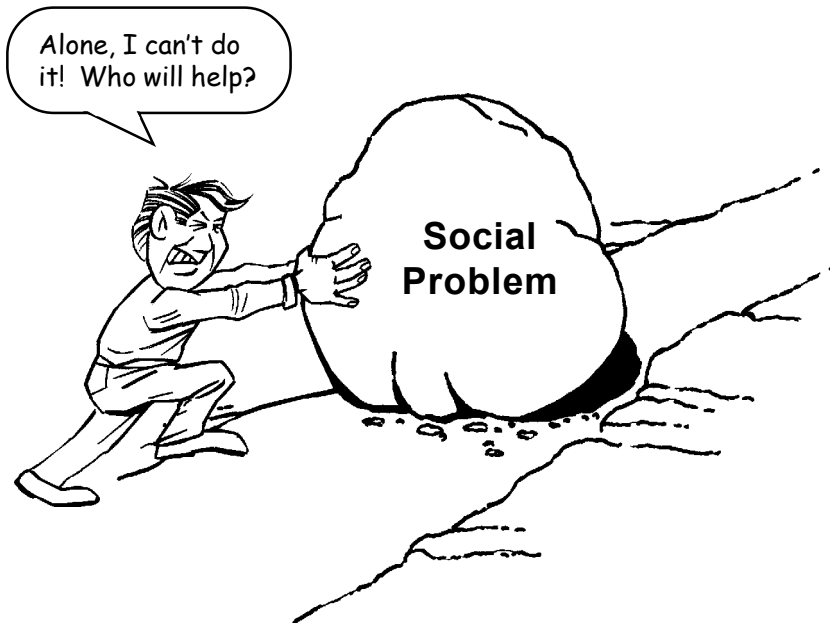
They explained to people that Christ frees us from our sins through His death and resurrection. The evangelical church grew and grew.

People achieved freedom to worship God according to their conscience, following the Bible's teaching.

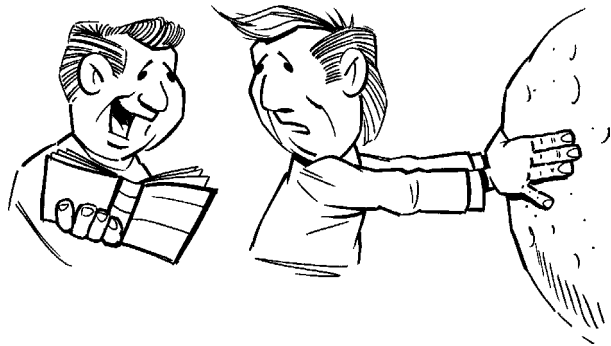
In Christ, one has the infinite power of the Holy Spirit to help him solve the problem.



There will always be problems in society, but WE CAN do something about them:



God wants to help you. There is an answer to the problem in the Bible, for all those who trust in the Lord.

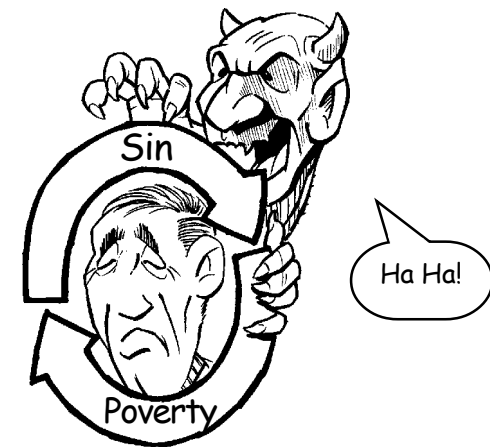


In Mexico, a tribal group could no longer tolerate the racial and social discrimination to which they were subjected. They began to fight, and use violence. The evangelical church approached them, and explained Christ's love to them. The tribe was treated as equals. Thousands were converted to Christ. Later, as a result, they were able to claim their rights in a peaceful and more effective way.

An obedient church, then, deals with spiritual and social problems with the Word of God, using the wisdom and the love the Lord gives us.

THE ROOT OF POVERTY

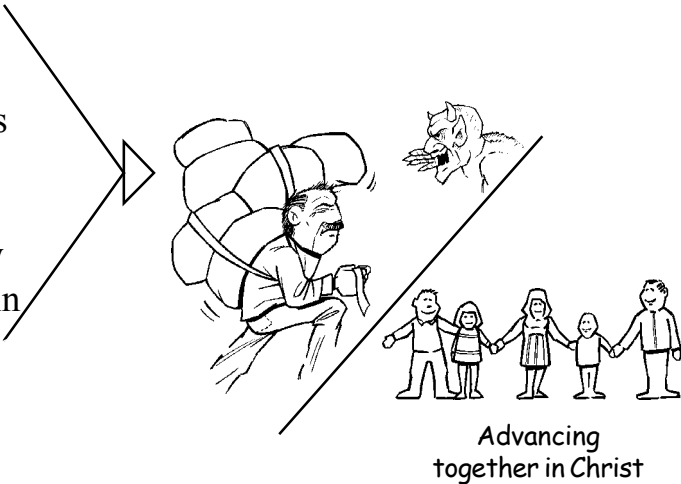
Poverty, like other social evils, is the result of selfishness and injustice, and is fostered by the devil.



This often results in a vicious circle in society. For example, some wealthy employers pay miserable wages, and the poor often fall into apathy, inertia and theft. These rich people take advantage of this to keep the poor oppressed, under suspicion and controlled. To these evils, others are added such as hatred, resentment, violence, ignorance and immorality, etc.

The devil takes advantage of this vicious circle. He encourages suspicion so that people do not look for positive solutions. He fosters immorality and ignorance, so that the poor do not feed their children properly or educate them, nor even think about bettering their situation. He promotes a lack of trust between the poor themselves, so that they do not organize peacefully to solve their problems together.

Distrust
Deceit
Selfishness
Poverty
Ignorance
Immorality
Original Sin



- He votes for the most honest candidates.
- He participates in those community or government activities that his conscience approves.

The church, as Christ's Body on earth, does not make alliances with human government in a way that might compromise our allegiance and obedience to God. Christ said: *"My kingdom is from another place."* (John 18:36) He also said: *"Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's."* (Matthew 22:21) Church and state fulfill different functions. The church does God's Word and will, and the government, if it fulfills its proper role, maintains security, peace and justice for all of the nation's citizens regardless of their religious beliefs. We are careful not to let any political system or secular commercial enterprise make policy for how we follow Christ.

Christian citizens seek the best government for their country without compromising the church. Why do you think Jesus said, *"My kingdom is not of this world?"* (John 18:36)

God will judge any government that uses undue force or abuses its power. Nevertheless, Christian citizens should not use violence against the government, even when it is doing evil things.

(Matthew 26:52, Romans 12:17-18)

God calls Christians to be peacemakers. (Matthew 5:9) This does not mean they should be passive or apathetic, but rather, they should take part actively, intelligently and firmly to achieve reconciliation between men and social justice. The peacemaker proposes just solutions to stop violence and to make peace and equality possible.

In a situation of social violence, what should Christians do?

- ☐ Hide at home.
- ☐ Share in the violence.
- ☐ Be peacemakers.

A responsible Christian citizen fulfills his duties in the community and nation, and cooperates wisely with his government.

- He prays for the authorities and obeys them. (Romans 13:1-7, 1 Timothy 2:1-4)

The real roots of poverty are:

- ☐ political and economic.
- ☐ moral and spiritual.

CAUSES OF POVERTY

Mark those problems that exist in your own community, with which your church could deal positively:

☐ LOW EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

Due to their lack of education, thousands of people in many communities find it impossible to get work.

☐ SUPERSTITION

Through not knowing the Gospel, many spend the little wealth they have on fortune-tellers, mediums, “healers,” etc.

☐ **EXPLOITATION AND LACK OF CONCERN FOR OTHERS**

Yearly, in the whole world, 20 million people die of hunger. Many other millions are so undernourished that they are near death. But this is not due to the lack of food in the world; there is enough food for everyone. It is due to inequality in its distribution, commercial interests, and injustice in the employment of the poor. To provide pure water, food, and education for the needy, would cost an enormous sum of money. But this amount is tiny, compared to what is wasted on illegal drugs and alcohol, spent on combating crime, and on armaments for war.

☐ **UNHEALTHY HABITS AND FRAUD**

Yearly, thousands of millions of dollars are wasted on tobacco in its various forms; doctors estimate that it is the commonest cause of death by cancer, and many other diseases. Thousands of millions of dollars are wagered on games of chance, with the result that countless families worldwide suffer from malnutrition for lack of food and medicine. Thousands of millions of dollars yearly, are stolen from their rightful owners through financial fraud. Ways of cheating people and swindling them, are found all over the world.

Christians in government have an opportunity to work for fair laws, freedom of speech and religion, freedom to organize cooperatives or labor unions when wages are unjustly low, and honesty in all levels of government and elections.

Naturally, the Christian who works in government must not take part in anything that contradicts his faith and Christian ethics. Christ said: *“Be faithful, even unto the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life.”* (Revelation 2:10)

The Christian:

- ☐ is required to obey only church officials.
- ☐ cooperates with the government in what is right.

God’s purpose for governments is that they maintain order, punish evil, and encourage goodness. This is why police forces are used, and legal powers enforce civic order and punish evildoers. (Romans 13:1-7)

CHRISTIANS AND EARTHLY GOVERNMENTS

Christians are citizens of heaven. (Philippians 3:20) Nevertheless, God has put us in the world to live, and to be salt and light here. (Matthew 5:13-16) Therefore we are also temporary citizens of this world.

Governments are ordered by God. (Romans 13:1-7) Often God establishes good governors, such as Joseph in Egypt, Daniel in Babylon, and David in Israel. Other times, governments become corrupt. As God's servants we can do much to improve the government, if we are faithful to Christ in everything, as was Daniel, and pray much for the authorities. Many Christians serve the Lord faithfully in public office.

Christians who serve others in public office need spiritual teaching and guidance. A good, solid discipleship gives them a firm foundation for this important work. Only then will they be able to cope with the pressures, exaggerations and lies so common in politics in many places.

☐ **PORNOGRAPHY AND PROSTITUTION**

Pornography and prostitution corrupt millions of people in many communities (indecent magazines, films, videos, etc.)

☐ **ILLEGAL DRUGS AND ALCOHOLISM**

Drugs and liquor destroy the homes and lives of millions.

☐ **GREEDY GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS**

Bribes to those who govern, corrupt all society. Some large but unethical businesses that organize the traffic in many of the vices mentioned above, give large bribes to members of governments, so they will permit the sale of drugs, or various types of exploitation.

☐ **MILITARY EXPENSES**

Military expenses for unnecessary wars, or to finance a large army that keeps a dictator in power.

☐ **LOSS OF FORESTS AND LAND EROSION**

Misusing land in such a way that fertility is lost.

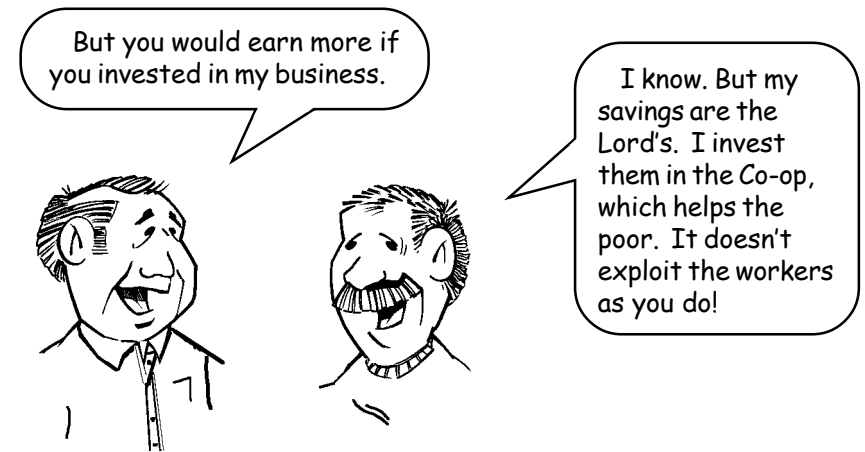
☐ **POLLUTION**

Pollution of water by chemical substances or human excreta.
(Many children, especially, die from diarrhea caused by amoebas or worm larvae in water contaminated by humans and animals.)

Pollution of the air, through toxic vapors from factories, mines, refineries, etc., cause many respiratory and eye problems.

☐ **PERSECUTION AND LACK OF FREEDOM**

Persecution and lack of freedom for Christians and others with different beliefs or opinions.



The Christian is God's steward. He is responsible, before God, for the way he manages money, crops and other material things.
(Matthew 25:14-30) We help the needy, provide sources of work, help with building houses for the poor, set up training centers, etc., so that young people and workers can progress.

All that we have has come from an important source. What is it?

- ☐ Our own efforts.
- ☐ God the Creator and giver of all good gifts.

We are stewards of all that God has given to us, to use to His glory.
That is why we pay our bills punctually and joyfully.

The Christian businessman manages his business for the glory of God and the good of all; the workers, the clients and himself. He does not exploit others to his own unfair profit. He fulfills the demands of the laws of taxation and social benefits for his employees, and moral and ethical laws such as regards his methods of advertising, sales, prices, etc. Thus the whole community benefits.

The Christian always keeps his word. Cheating and lying are a menace to society. When there are bribes and fraud, people break contracts, then loans are hard to get without paying excessive usury. No one can trust another's word. The community cannot progress and all suffer.

To borrow money with no intention of repaying, after assuring the lender of repayment, is worse than simply stealing. Why?

- ☐ The lender may not want to loan anything again in the future.
- ☐ The borrower has added deceit to the sin of theft.

Borrowing what one has no intention of returning is theft. It damages human relations, because it adds cheating to theft. It is an abuse of confidence.

☐ **DIVORCE AND ADULTERY**

Divorce and adultery are a worldwide plague that destroys thousands of homes and families yearly. They bring misery and poverty, and leave children damaged with deep emotional hurts, wounded feelings and damaged relationships for the rest of their lives.

Satan wants us to lose hope and courage when we see so much evil in the world, and therefore, not attempt to defeat wickedness with love. But 1 John 4:4 says: *“the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.”*

Let us pray that the Lord will do His will and bring in His kingdom; let us evangelize so that people will be converted and begin a new life. Let us teach the poor practical ways to solve their material problems; in this way we will see great victories.

Jesus Christ commands us to love our neighbor, just as the Good Samaritan helped the Jew who had been beaten by thieves. In fact, what the Lord Jesus was emphasizing was that if we do not obey this

command to love our neighbor in a practical way, we are not behaving like true Christians. (Luke 10:25-37, Matthew 25:31-46) Loving and helping others are natural consequences of our love for, and personal relationship with, our Lord Jesus Christ.

What other need is there in your community, with which you or your church should help? (Besides the causes of poverty that you already marked on the previous list.)

God has always used His people to combat poverty and injustice. The greatest poverty and misery exists in precisely those parts of the world where the Gospel has not yet penetrated, or where churches have not yet obeyed the command to love one's neighbor as oneself. When we put into practice the Word of God, we replace superstition, ignorance, exploitation, selfishness and deceit by love with generosity and justice. God wants us all to be blessed in every way. (3 John 2)

The apostle Paul says: *"Were you a slave when you were called? Don't let it trouble you - although if you can gain your freedom, do so."* (1 Corinthians 7:21)

Whenever possible, the Christian citizen seeks freedom from injustice, for himself and others, by using peaceful means.

Christians:

- ☐ work only for their own and their families benefit.
- ☐ strive peacefully for justice and fair wages for all.

We should be concerned for social justice, fair wages, education and public health, not only for our own welfare, but also for the whole community.

Christian employers should:

- ☐ seek to get rich quickly.
- ☐ administer their businesses as a service to God and men.
- ☐ avoid paying taxes.

When one group or race exploits another, it causes poverty. But in Christ there are no differences between races or social groups.
(Ephesians 2:14-16)

CHRISTIANS AND WORK

From the beginning, God has given mankind work. (Genesis 2:15)
Proverbs 6:6 warns, *“Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider its ways and be wise!”* Paul says, *“Whoever does not want to work, should not eat.”* (2 Thessalonians 3:10)

The Christian works conscientiously and honestly.

The worker deserves his wages. (1 Timothy 5:18) He must receive a fair wage, and work in hygienic and humane conditions.

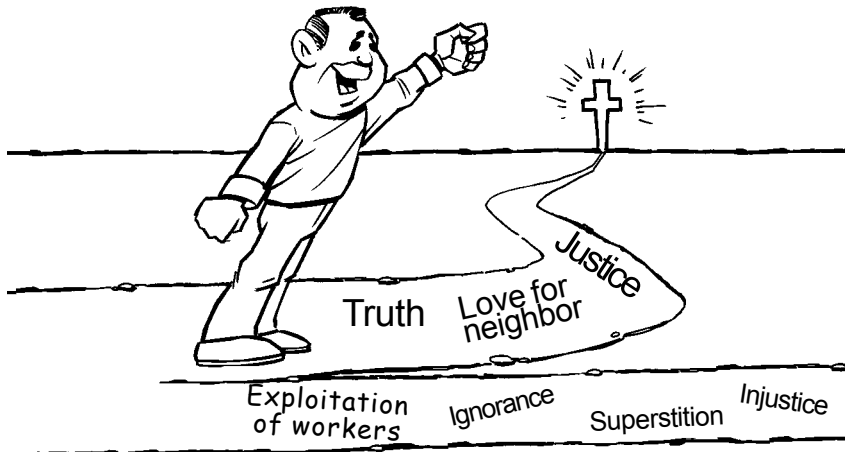
Christians must exert influence to help attain laws that protect workers. We must help exploited workers to organize themselves to obtain justice peacefully, and no longer be oppressed by the powerful.

True repentance brings change and blessings, for the converted as well as for all the community.

Repentance from sin does not mean simply to leave obvious public sins such as drunkenness. It means a change of heart, being born all over again spiritually, in Christ, by the work of the Holy Spirit.

This change of attitude includes:

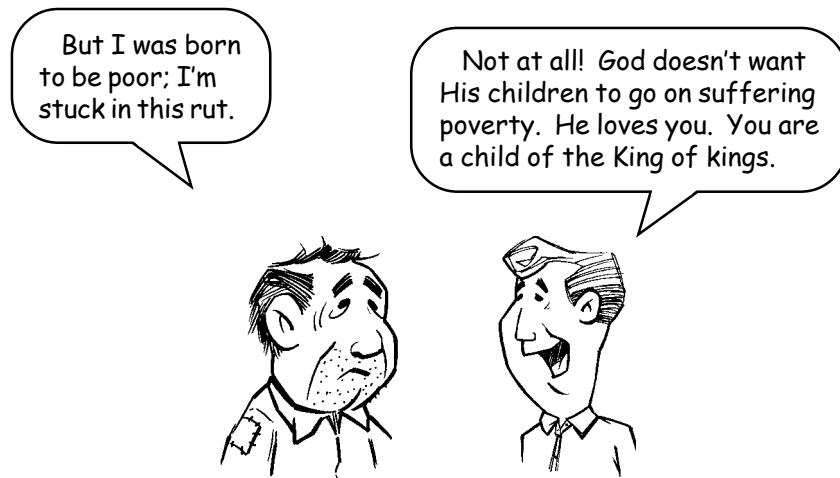
- having very clear priorities; putting God’s Kingdom first, (Matthew 6:33)
- truly caring for your family, (1 Timothy 5:8)
- paying fair wages and being just, (James 5:4)
- sharing with others and being compassionate, (Hebrews 13:16)
- submitting to the authorities, (Romans 13:1-2)
- paying taxes, (Romans 13:6-7)
- working honestly, (Ephesians 4:28)
- being responsible in the use and management of natural resources. (Genesis 1:28-31)



When someone repents of his or her sins, the result should be a better life:

- ☐ only for them.
- ☐ for themselves and for their neighbor.

Being converted to Christ has a good effect on all the community.



The water can be shaken to oxygenate it. The sun's rays kill 99.9% of the microbes that cause disease. If the water is muddy, filter it first through sand or a filter made for the purpose (not merely a cloth), or let the mud settle at the bottom before pouring it into the containers.



Much poverty comes through racial or social prejudices. The Christian respects people of other cultures and races. In Christ all are united. (Galatians 3:28)

Often there are quarrels between whites and blacks, socialists and capitalists, Arabs and Jews, natives and non-natives, employers and employees.

Another example: We show repentance not only when we stop getting drunk, but also, when knowing the dangers of drinking contaminated water, we take the trouble to boil the water or protect wells or springs from contamination.

If it is a sin to destroy oneself with alcohol, is it also a sin to destroy our children by allowing them through negligence to drink contaminated water?

- ☐ Yes.
☐ No.

Everyone knows that alcohol harms the body. But giving contaminated water harms innocent children, who do not know that it contains harmful microbes, amoebas, and larvae of worms. Millions of children die needlessly each year because of bad water. Yet in some societies little is done about it.

Note: How to Purify Water

To disinfect water, it is best to boil it for ten minutes. Another way is to leave the water in the sunlight in transparent, covered containers, for two whole days.

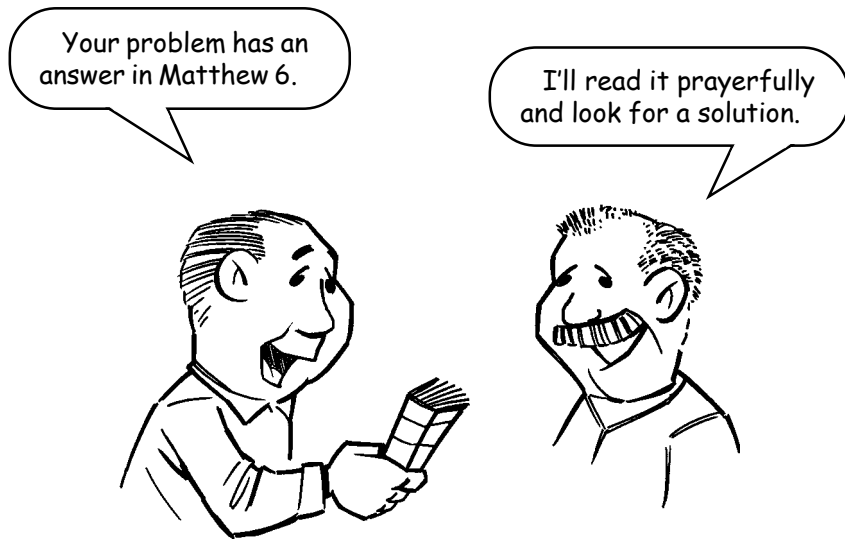
The poor must discipline themselves and set apart some of their income, even if it is a little, to be able to educate and feed their children better, to repair their house, etc. Christians are to be an example to all, in the way they live. (Matthew 5:13-16)



The poor believer must:

- ☐ accept his poverty.
☐ work and save what he can.

The Lord has promised to provide our needs. (Luke 12:29-31)



A wise believer is a good steward of all that is his responsibility.



The Christian also gives the Lord at least a tenth part of all his income. This way, he receives abundant blessings from God. (Malachi 3:10-12) The church must take care of the material things God has given it. The church's leaders must set the example in being generous, fair and honest.

An example: a church member obtained a lot of Bibles on credit in a bookstore. He sold them but did not pay the bookstore. His church knew, but did NOTHING. Next, he cheated a member of the congregation, and then the church DID correct him.

But why did the church not act in the first instance over the theft of the Bibles? By not taking measures after that theft, the impression was given that lack of honesty towards unbelievers is not important. So the man continued sinning, and the affair became a public scandal, as well as a stumbling block for new believers.

When we see sin, we should call it by its name, admonish those concerned and encourage them to let God change them. In cases of theft they should restore what was stolen. The most loving thing we can do for an erring Christian is to correct him gently, as Galatians 6:1 requires.