

HOW NOT TO HELP

R. STANLEY, B.E., M.TECH.
*A Building Engineer
turned Bible Teacher*

*Edited from his Telecast Talks
by his daughter,
Evangeline Jones*

StanleyOnBible
13 Church Colony
Vellore 632 006 India
<stanleyonbible@hotmail.com>
www.StanleyOnBible.com

HOW NOT TO HELP

Copyright 2012 R. STANLEY

First Edition : July 2012

Available in the vernaculars also.

These 10 Telecast Talks, English-Tamil,
are available as a 2-DVD Pack from the Author.

Printed by
New Shenbagam Offset,
Sivakasi

Contents

Introduction	...	5
1. Do not consider charity optional.	...	7
2. Do not think you own anything.	...	14
3. Do not be stingy.	...	22
4. Do not always wait for group action.	...	30
5. Do not be overcautious in choosing beneficiaries.	...	36
6. Do not confine charity to special occasions.	...	43
7. Do not publicise charity.	...	49
8. Do not bring the recipients under obligation.	...	55
9. Do not encourage laziness.	...	62
10. Do not grow tired of charity.	...	70

Introduction

As you begin to read this booklet, an understanding of the purpose should be clear with no ambiguity. The twofold purpose is to enable the sincere reader to escape the floods of false doctrine, and to encourage him to embrace the sound doctrine of God's Word.

The Holy Scriptures are loaded with four core profits. They are summed up in 2 Timothy 3:16,17: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for **doctrine**, for **reproof**, for **correction**, for **instruction** in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work." These four benefits can be grouped into two categories or functions: (1) "**Correction**" which includes "reproof;" (2) "**Instruction**" which is through "doctrinal" teaching. Correction and Instruction, that is, Unlearning and Learning.

This booklet, being a part of the "*How not...*" Series, may ring a negative bell in the minds of many. But a positive explanation lies in the principle that unlearning is a prerequisite for

proper learning. We need to consciously come back to the Biblical ways from the ways of the world.

One of the oft-repeated names of Jehovah God in the Old Testament is "**Helper**." The Psalmist sings this in Psalm 54:4 as, "Behold, God is my Helper!" As we move into the New Testament, Jesus assures the insecure Philip in John 14:16, "I will pray to the Father and He will give you another **Helper**, that He may abide with you forever." The Son of God is called the First Comforter, and the Spirit of God is called the Second Comforter. The word "Comforter" carries the meaning, "Helper." As each of the three Persons of Godhead are Helpers, His children cannot be otherwise. Paul, in Ephesians 5:1, admonishes us, "Be imitators of God as dear children."

When God created the universe, He saw that everything He created was good except the man without a helper. There can be no man or woman in the world who would never need the help of others. We all need the help of each other. But because of the sad prevalence of selfishness man desires to be a "recipient" rather than a "giver" of help! Therefore we need more of unlearning than learning in this subject of "Helping Others."

Let's study the subject of "Charity" or "Helping Others" in the following pages as 10 lessons.

1

Do not consider charity optional.

There cannot be an atom of Christianity without charity. Each of the core Christian disciplines and exercises is integrated to charity.

□ Matthew 22:37-39 presents the story of a lawyer who asked Jesus, “Which is the great **commandment** in the law?” Jesus answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and the great commandment. And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbour as yourself.” The second commandment may have been placed second but it is not secondary to any! It is “like” or “equal” to the first commandment.

There came another lawyer who asked Christ with an attitude of self-justification, “Who is my neighbour?” (Lk 10:29-37). Jesus answered him with the story of the Good Samaritan. He ended the narration of the story by throwing back the question to the lawyer asking him, “So which of these three do you think was neighbour to him who fell among the thieves?” The answer was

obvious and the lawyer replied, “He who showed mercy on him.” Then Jesus said, “Go and do likewise.”

Both the lawyers with attitudes of testing and self-justification received the same answer with calmness, certainty and clarity! The first and the second commandments are equally important. Helping those in need is as important as loving God.

□ The kickstart of Christian life is **repentance**. John the Baptist was preaching on repentance. The crowd which listened to him asked him, “What shall we **do** then?” He instantly answered, “He who has two tunics, let him give to him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise” (Lk 3:11). As a fruit of repentance, we are challenged to share our clothing and food with the have-nots.

This was not just John the Baptist’s eccentric theory. Prophet Daniel taught the same. When he called King Nebuchadnezzar to repent, he challenged him to help the poor. Daniel 4:27 sends a shiver down the spine! “O king, let my advice be acceptable to you; break off your sins by being righteous, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor. Perhaps, there may be a lengthening of your prosperity.” Repentance and mercy to the poor are the best of friends! Wow! Look what is assured: “A lengthening of your prosperity!”

□ The first blessing of Christian life is **salvation**. Can any other story but Zacchaeus' drive home the truth that giving to the poor is an undeniable evidence of salvation? Zacchaeus said to the Lord, "Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold." Jesus responded to it saying, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham." Don't miss Zacchaeus' posture when he made this promise: He "stood" and said!

□ The most blessed privilege of a child of God is to call God as, "Abba, Father" and **pray** unto Him. But Isaiah reminds us that prayer is meaningless without charity: Isaiah 1:15-18, "When you spread out your hands, I will hide My eyes from you; even though you make many prayers, I will not hear. Your hands are full of blood. Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes. Cease to do evil; learn to do good; seek justice, rebuke the oppressor; defend the fatherless, plead for the widow." Aren't these difficult words? Yes, difficult words with hard truths! Yes, prayer is meaningless without charity.

Jesus taught first about charity, and then followed prayer and fasting, in His Sermon on the Mount (Mt 6:1-4, 5-15, 16-18).

In the case of Cornelius, both "prayers" and "alms" went up together before God as a memorial before Him (Acts 10:2-4). This passage sees both the serene acts of prayer and almsgiving mentioned hand in glove (vv 2,4). Both exercises are treated with equal regard because they are of crucial importance.

□ Do you notice that even **fasting** is not acceptable before God without charity? Look at Isaiah 58:5,6,7. "Is it a fast that I have chosen, a day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head like a bulrush and to spread out sackcloth and ashes? Would you call this a fast and an acceptable day to the Lord? Is this not the fast that I have chosen: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, to let the oppressed go free and that you break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out; when you see the naked that you cover him, and not hide yourself from your own flesh?" It's so clearly highlighted here that an acceptable and chosen fast in the sight of God is only when acts of charity are graciously and liberally extended to the homeless, foodless and clotheless!

□ There's a revival of **praise** and **worship** everywhere. Amidst this excitement we must not sideline charity. The author of Hebrews beautifully balances worship and charity. Hebrew 13:15,16,

“By Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His Name. But do not forget to do good and share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.” Job in one of his discourses said, “The blessing of a perishing man came upon me, and I caused the widow’s heart to sing for joy” (Job 29:13b). It does not suffice if we ourselves sing and dance. Meaningful worship is when we cause the poor man to sing—that makes the heart of God dance!

□ **Giving to God’s work** is not superior to giving to the poor! Proverbs 19:17 says, “He who has pity on the poor lends to the Lord, and He will pay back what he has given.” Caring for the poor is lending to God!

Jesus was teaching the multitudes and the disciples on various issues when the Scribes and Pharisees were also part of the audience. He warned them, “Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone” (Mt 23:23). Justice and mercy are quoted as “weightier” matters than tithing!

□ What about **preaching**? Who should be our main target group? Luke 4:18 has the answer: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He

has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the **poor**; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.” Our main target group must be the poor and the oppressed.

When Peter, James and John gave a send-off to the first missionaries, Paul and Barnabas, they sent them with an exhortation which was almost a commission: “Remember the poor!” (Gal 2:9,10).

□ We shout so much on **revival** onto our microphones and invariably we quote Nehemiah for practical lessons. Nehemiah’s ministry had two sides: Spiritual Revival and Social Reformation. Chapters 3 and 4 speak of rebuilding the wall. Chapter 5 speaks of the ways in which he helped the poor through personal sacrifice.

This is what happened in the revival of Pentecost too. Acts 2 speaks on the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and the 4th Chapter on sharing.

□ That brings us finally to the **Second Coming**. Matthew 25 opens our eyes to the bottomline of judgment. Those on the left and those on the right will have their sentences pronounced on them. The King will look at those on the right, call them “blessed” and say, “Inherit the Kingdom, for you fed Me when I was hungry,

clothed Me when I was naked, housed Me when I was homeless; you quenched My thirst, you visited Me when I was sick and visited Me in prison.” He will say thus to the sheep on the right. The goats on the left will hear the supreme Judge say, “Assuredly I say to you, in as much as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.” Friend, where would you be grouped? On the left or on the right? A difficult question to be addressed, better late than never!

So we conclude that Christianity is Charity! We do not say, “Charity is Christianity,” but “Christianity is Charity.” True religion is defined in James 1:27 as, “Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.” The first in line is charity. Then comes chastity.

Charity is not optional but obligatory!

HOW NOT TO HELP

2

Do not think you own anything.

The hard truth that we do not own anything is fundamental to develop in us a spirit of helping those in need. This is foundational to the doctrine of Christian giving. The Bible abounds with texts which teach us that **God** is the owner of everything and we are simply the users, trustees or stewards.

In Psalm 50:12, God challenges, “If I were hungry, I would not tell you; for the world is Mine, and all its fullness.” In response to what God says in this Psalm, we are to say, “The heavens are Yours, the earth also is Yours, the world and all its fullness; You have founded them” (Psa 89:11).

There are more texts to seal on this truth—

Haggai 2:8, “The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine, says the Lord of Hosts.” It was this understanding that made the saints of the Old Testament to testify and to make some confessions which are a model for us as we see below—

David confessed in 1 Chronicles 29:14, “But who am I, and who are my people, that we should

be able to offer so willingly as this? For all things come from You, and of Your own we have given You.” What an attitude, beloved, in giving!

God challenges us in Job 41:11, “Who has preceded Me that I should pay him? Everything under heaven is Mine.” Whatever we give to God or to the poor does not belong to us. It’s not ours, it’s what God has given us and everything belongs to Him.

This truth runs through the pages of the New Testament too. Paul says in Romans 11:36, “... for **of Him** and **through Him** and **to Him** are all things, to whom be glory forever, Amen.” Paul and Timothy wrote to the saints in Colosse, “For **by Him** all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created **through Him** and **for Him**. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist” (Col 1:16,17).

Whatever we have is because of God’s generosity. We read in James 1:5, “If any of you lacks wisdom, let Him ask of God who gives to all **liberally** and without reproach, and it will be given to him.” God is a liberal and generous Giver. When Paul addressed the Athenians, he said, “Nor is He worshipped with men’s hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath and all things” (Acts 17:25). Though his audience was pagan, Paul made this important declaration.

While writing to Roman Christians, he said, “God who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also **freely** give us all things?” (Rom 8:32).

Beloved, this truth has been lost over the years. The Day of Pentecost was the beginning of the restoration of this vital truth as we see in Acts 2:44,45, “Now all who believed were together and had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods and divided them among all, as anyone had need.” This was a voluntary act and no one pushed them to do thus. To add royalty to this graceful act, we read in Acts 4:32, “Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul; **neither did anyone say** that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common.” We see the result that flowed out of this behaviour and spirit: “And with **great power** the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And **great grace** was upon them all” (v33). This is the only way to bring a spiritual revolution in our Churches! There is no other way, if today’s Church should experience great power and great grace. We have to come to this acknowledgment that whatever we have is not our own. It’s all God’s!

God gives more to some and less to others of His own sovereign will, because He owns everything. It is not my own imagination. This is what the Bible teaches. Look at Solomon’s wisdom

in Proverbs 22:2, “The rich and the poor have this in common: The Lord is the Maker of them all.” Solomon also brings out how God treats all equally: “The poor man and the oppressor have this in common: The Lord gives light to the eyes of both” (Prov 29:13). If we have more than what others have, it’s not of our merit. It’s only because of what God has given us out of His sheer mercy. We brought nothing into the world, and we are going to take back nothing. Solomon affirms this in Ecclesiastes 5:15, “As he came from his mother’s womb, naked shall he return to go as he came: And he shall take nothing from his labour, which he may carry away in his hand.” Apostle Paul endorsed to Timothy, “We brought nothing into this world, and **it is certain** that we can carry nothing out” (1 Tim 6:7). What is stated in the Old Testament is endorsed in the New Testament with the words, “**It is certain...**”

Therefore, beloved, if we have more than others, there should be no highmindedness whatsoever. There is a rebuke that strongly comes to us in 1 Corinthians 4:7, “For who makes you differ from another?” And what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?” Even if you have more than what others have, it’s because of what you have “received.” You may think that all your money is hard earned because of all the hard work you’ve put in. But even then Deuteronomy 8:17,18 warns us, “Then you say

in your heart, my power and the might of my hand have gained me this wealth. And you shall remember the Lord your God , for it’s **He** who gives you power to get wealth, that He may establish His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day.” Don’t ever claim that anything is “yours.” Who gave us health? Who gave us strength? It’s God who gave us all!

Why does God bless us more than others? It is only to bless others through us. God chose one man called Abraham and told him, “I will make you a great nation. I will bless you, and make your name great, and you shall be a blessing. In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed” (Gen 12:2,3). God chose Abraham and blessed him so that he would bless others. Any blessing that comes to us is to be passed on to others who are in greater need.

If God has given us more than what we need, it’s just in order that we may give to those in need. This is what we call as the “principle of equality.” This principle is strongly stated by Paul in the New Testament in 2 Corinthians 5:13,14, “I do not mean that others should be eased and you burdened: but by an equality that now at this time your abundance may supply their lack, that their abundance also may supply your lack—that there may be equality.” When you have more, give to those who have less. And when others have more, they are supposed to help you when you go through a difficult period.

What is the lesson we learn here from all these passages? A hard lesson though it may be, God is against the rich becoming richer and the poor becoming poorer. God is against over-accumulation of wealth (1 Tim 6:6-10). There are six woes mentioned in Isaiah 5 of which the first of these is what we find in verse 8, "Woe to those who join house to house; they add field to field, till there is no place that they may dwell alone in the midst of the land!" God is against even a King accumulating wealth! Dt 17:17, "Neither shall he the king multiply wives for himself, lest his heart turn away; not shall he greatly multiply silver and gold for himself." Neither "wives" nor "wealth!" See how seriously God looks at overaccumulation of wealth! We have an excellent model prayer in Proverbs 30:8,9, "Remove falsehood and lies far from me; give me neither poverty nor riches—feed me with the food allotted to me; lest I be full and deny you and say, Who is the Lord? Or lest I be poor and steal and profane the name of my God." In plain terms God is not for financial extremes. He wants moderation, and that is "our" responsibility.

Suppose you are already quite rich and God keeps adding riches to you, what should your response be? Follow Zacchaeus! You can keep 50% for yourself and give away the other 50% to the poor. This was also very much in line with the teaching of John the Baptist, the greatest of prophets! (Lk 3:11). Keep a reasonable saving for your future and nothing beyond!

If you are a Colgate toothpaste user, the founder of the Colgate Palmolive company, Mr. William Colgate of America, has a real testimony for us. Would you believe it? He started with giving 10% of his income to God, which grew to 20% and then to 40% and finally to 100%! Dare we do that!

Some people will have to work and earn all their lives to keep a reasonable saving for their future. Others do it in just 5 or 10 years' time. Such people must stop earning for themselves but earn whatever they can in order to give away totally to God and the poor. This is in line with the admonition given in 1 Timothy 6:6-10. Otherwise how much is enough? Here's crystallized wisdom: Ecclesiastes 5:10, "He who loves silver will not be satisfied with silver; nor he who loves abundance, with increase. This also is vanity!"

Don't leave all your savings for your children. The stewardship responsibility is on "you" over what God has given "you." Allow me to share a personal testimony: I have willed one third of all my savings for our only daughter, and two thirds for God and the poor. You can decide your own proportion. A text from the Old Testament throws more light on this point. Ecclesiastes 5:13,14, "There's a severe evil which I have seen under the sun: Riches kept for their owner to his hurt. But those riches perish through misfortune; when he begets a son, there's nothing in his hand." A

reasonable provision by parents for the children has of course Biblical sanction (Prov 19:14; 2 Cor 12:14b).

Here is a statement from a spiritual giant, Oswald J. Sanders (1902-1992): “The question is not how much of our own money we should give to God and to others, but how much of God’s money we can keep for ourselves!” What a challenge, beloved! This is the foundational truth for Christian stewardship.

Do not think you own anything!

HOW NOT TO HELP

3 Do not be stingy.

Whenever God speaks in His Word about “helping,” He emphasizes generosity. All through the Scriptures, God commands generosity in the context of charity. We are given an inevitable command in Deuteronomy 15:7,8, “If there is among you a poor man of your brothers within any of your gates in your land which the Lord your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart nor shut your hand from your brother, but you shall **open your hand wide** to him and **willingly** lend him sufficient for his need, whatever he needs.” God is very specific of His expectation over us in this passage. Verse 11 of the same chapter has a similar emphasis: “For the poor will never cease from the land; therefore I command you saying, You shall open your hand **wide** to your brother, to your poor, and your needy in your land.”

God seems to be even more seriously specific in the 24th chapter of Deuteronomy. Verses 19-21, “When you reap your harvest in your field and forget a sheaf in the field, you shall not go back to get it; it shall be for the stranger, the fatherless

and the widow, that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hands. When you beat your olive trees, you shall not go over the boughs again; it shall be for the stranger, the fatherless and the widow. When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, you shall not glean it afterward; it shall be for the stranger, the fatherless and the widow.” God instructs the harvesters to avoid the second plucking and second gleaning. He states the reason in verse 22, “You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt; therefore I command you to do this thing.” The lesson is: All the profit we get from our fields or business is not just for us. They belong to the poor too!

God gives us an example from our forefathers in this regard: Our forefathers were generous and it was well with them. Jeremiah 22:15-17, “Shall you reign because you enclose yourself in Cedar? Did not your father eat and drink and do justice and righteousness? Then it was well with him. He judged the cause of the poor and the needy; then it was well; was not this knowing Me? says the Lord. Yet your eyes and your heart are for nothing but your covetousness, for shedding innocent blood, and practising oppression and violence.” God says that our forefathers were generous but we are greedy. Our forefathers earned so little, but gave so much; but we earn so much, but give little! Is this not so with us?

Stinginess is viewed seriously by God. He calls it the “sin of Sodom.” Ezekiel 16:49, “Look, this was the iniquity of your sister Sodom: she and her daughter had pride, fullness of food and abundance of idleness; neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy.” God pronounces blessing on generosity: Proverbs 11:24-26, “There is one who scatters, yet increases more; and there is one who withholds more than is right, but it leads to poverty. The generous soul will be made rich. And he who waters will also be watered himself. The people will curse him who withholds grain. But blessing will be on the head of him who sells it.” Can words be clearer?

The problem with many Christians is that they struggle with being generous when it comes to charity, whereas they have no difficulty in giving to God’s work. But the Bible generally associates “tithing” with “charity.” Deuteronomy 14:28,29, “At the end of every third year you shall bring out the tithe of your produce of that year and store it up within your gates. And the Levite, because he has no portion nor inheritance with you, and the stranger and the fatherless and the widow who are within your gates, may come and eat and be **satisfied**, that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hand which you do.” We basically have no problem in giving to the “Levites” because they are ministering unto God! But the Bible does not stop with the Levites. It adds the strangers, the fatherless and the widows to the list.

Malachi 3:10 is one of the favourite passages for pastors and preachers regarding tithing. Read that familiar passage afresh carefully: “Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, **that there may be food** in My house, and try Me now in this, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it.” The underlying purpose is that there may be “food.” Food is primarily for the foodless! Beloved, we have twisted so many passages to suit our convenience.

Have you ever realised that there is no direct teaching on tithing in all the Epistles of the New Testament? The only two chapters which dwell exclusively on giving are 2 Corinthians 8 and 9. Texts from these chapters are normally used to raise money for Church building projects. But surprisingly, the context of these two chapters is not about giving to God’s work, but on extending charity to the poor! The 9th chapter of 2 Corinthians begins with the verse, “Now concerning the ministering to the saints...” The entire context of these two chapters is charity. The 7th verse of this chapter, “God loves a cheerful giver,” is one of the most popular texts quoted and printed everywhere. What is actually cheerful giving? To whom should we give cheerfully? Verse 9 gives the answer: “As it is written: He has dispersed abroad, He has given to the **poor**; His righteousness endures forever.” Isn’t this about giving to

the poor? 2 Corinthians 9:9 is actually a quotation from Psalm 112:9. Take time to read and meditate on these two chapters and understand God’s heart for the poor, and how these couplet chapters speak solely about charity and only charity.

I want to serve a warning here, dear friend—if we overlook this truth, we will hang our heads in shame in eternity over the missed opportunities. We read in Matthew 25:42 what the King would tell the ones sent to His left: “I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink.” In contemporary language, “You have failed in charity and your are missing heaven!”

Giving to God is not giving to the poor; but giving to the poor means giving to God. You will arrive at this conclusion if you study your Bible with an open mind. The rich young ruler had no problem in living a moral life (Luke 18). He had kept all the commandments to the letter since his childhood. But he could not move forward when it came to the question of distribution of his wealth to the poor. We meet our short friend Zacchaeus, in the very next chapter, who stood tall when he decided to generously and voluntarily give away 50% to the poor!

Yet another leap! Christ has commanded us not only to give “alms” to the poor, but to prepare “feasts” for them (Lk 14:12-14). He once told one of His hosts, “When you give a dinner or a supper,

do not invite your friends, your brothers, your relatives, nor rich neighbours, lest they also invite you back and you be repaid. But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind. And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you; for you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just.” How much we spend on dinners to treat the rich! Christ teaches us to spend as much on the poor.

Nobody is too poor to be generous. 2 Corinthians 8:1-4 speaks about the intensity of poverty of the Macedonian Christians: “Moreover, brothers, we make known to you the grace of God bestowed on the Churches of Macedonia; that in a great trial of affliction, the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded in the riches of their liberality. For I bear witness that according to their ability, yes and beyond their ability, they were freely willing, imploring us with much urgency that we would receive the gift and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.” Though in deep poverty, they abounded in liberality. How was that possible? What do we read about their attitude? Though the means was meagre, the “desire” came first. Verse 12, “For if there is first a **willing mind**, it is accepted according to what one has, and not according to what he does not have.” You perhaps are a poor man. Don’t rethink on your ability to give. You be generous, too, with a willing mind. God honours that willing mind. Don’t excuse yourself saying that you would give liberally if only

you had lots of money. This excuse has a hidden truth: When we had no money, we had a heart to give; when we have the money, we just don’t have the heart!

There is a stirring testimony from Richard Wumbrand (1909-2001) recorded in his book, *Tortured for Christ*. He was imprisoned for his faith. The prisoners would be given a ration of soup once everyday. Every tenth day he would give his daily ration of soup to a weaker brother. The prisoners were given bread only once a week. Every tenth week he gave his weekly ration to a weaker brother! What a challenging testimony!

If we keep on raising our standard of living, we cannot raise the standard of life of others! Our luxuries will deprive others of their necessities.

A few concluding thoughts on not being stingy—

“**Freely** you have received; **freely** give” (Mt 10:8b).

Do some extra work in order to give to the poor (Eph 4:28).

Though in general the cash box is with men, the key is with the women! The virtuous woman of Proverbs 31 “extends her hand to the poor” (v20).

No help is too big; no help is too small. Even a “cup of water” will be rewarded!

The little boy’s generosity filled multitudes (Jn 6:9-13).

It was in the context of charity (Lk 6:30a,36) Jesus said, “Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom” (v38). Where is stinginess or calculation here?

John Wesley (1703-1791) was absolutely Scriptural when he said,

*Do all the good you can,
To all the people you can,
In all the places you can,
In all the ways you can!*

HOW NOT TO HELP

4

Do not always wait for group action.

Missionary organisations, relief agencies or social service institutions are what spring up in our minds the moment we talk about charity. This is a wrong notion. It's a convenient way of evading personal responsibility. The Bible teaches us throughout that “**personal involvement**” should always be the first and primary step in helping the needy and relieving the poor.

The Books of Psalms and Proverbs carry clear passages to highlight this truth. Psalm 41:1-3, “Blessed is **he** who considers the poor; the Lord will preserve **him** and keep **him** alive; and **he** will be blessed on the earth. You will not deliver **him** to the will of **his** enemies. The Lord will strengthen **him** in **his** bed of illness. You will sustain **him** on **his** sickbed.” Note that in this passage the subject is singular throughout. Next in Proverbs 21:13, “Whoever shuts **his** ears to the cry of the poor, will also cry himself and not be heard.” God wants each one of us to personally involve in acts of charity.

Job is a challenging example for personal involvement in the matter of charity. Job 29:12-17,

*“I delivered the poor who cried out, the fatherless and the one who had no helper. The blessing of a perishing man came upon **me**, and I caused the widow’s heart to sing for joy. I put on righteousness and it clothed **me**; **my** justice was like a robe and a turban. I was eyes to the blind, I was feet to the lame, I was father to the poor, and I searched out the case that I did not know. I broke the fangs of the wicked and plucked the victim from his teeth.”* He adds in Job 31:16-22, that if he had not done these things, let his hands fall! He did it as a single man is the stress in these passages. There is no note of boasting but a bell of testimony.

The disciples in Jerusalem in the first century suffered a bad famine. We see that the response of the other disciples was instant. Acts 11:27-29, “Then the disciples, **each** according to **his** ability, determined to send relief to the brothers dwelling in Judea.” Each one immediately sprang into action. They mobilised funds and sent it through the two-member team comprising of Barnabas and Saul (v30). Interestingly this was the first action of these disciples after they were called “Christians” (v26).

Apostle Paul stressed the importance of personal involvement while giving instructions to the Churches concerning relief work and charity. 1 Corinthians 16:1,2, “Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the Churches of Galatia so you must do also: On

the first day of the week let **each one** of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper that there be no collections when I come.” What is the order? What is the procedure prescribed? “Let **each one** do **his** share.” This Paul exemplified by his own example: Acts 20:34,35, “Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities and for those who were with me. I have shown you in every way, by labouring like this, that you must support the weak, and remember the words of the Lord Jesus that He said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.”

Paul did not want the individuals to burden the Church with something that they themselves could do. When action lies within the capacity of an individual he is not to burden the Church or the group. Paul applied the same principle while writing about widows: 1 Timothy 5:16, “If any believing man or woman has widows, let them relieve them, and do not let the Church be burdened, that it may relieve those who are really widows.” If every Christian family can adopt an orphan child, where will the need for orphanages be? Yes, beloved, this is the truth that we need to restore to Christianity.

Apostle James sees eye to eye with Paul, and challenges those who evade individual responsibility in relieving the poor. He questions the twelve tribes scattered abroad, “If a brother or sister is clotheless and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, Depart in peace, be

warmed and filled, but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit?" (Js 2:15,16). He calls it a "dead religion" (v17). He concludes, "Faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead."

Isaiah calls evading personal responsibility as "hiding oneself." Isaiah 58:6,7 lists what is expected of us: "To loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, to let the oppressed go free and that you break every yoke, to share your bread with the hungry, to bring to your house the poor who are cast out; when you see the clotheless that you cover him and not 'hide yourself' from your own flesh." Are we hiding ourselves from our needy brothers and sisters, thinking, Why should "I" bother about it? It's "his" problem! This is the attitude God hates.

As Jesus sermonised on "giving" and "loving" He gave an overarching principle (Lk 6). He spoke about "giving" in verse 30 and on "loving" in verse 32. In the verse in between He says, in verse 31, "Just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise." Do to others what you expect others to do to you. It's natural for you to expect whoever passes by to help you if you happen to be wounded in a road accident. This is just what Jesus wanted to teach us through the story of the Good Samaritan. This is a story loaded with "individual" action (Lk 10:33-35). The Samaritan had compassion on the wounded man and swung into action immediately. He went up to him,

bandaged his wounds, pouring oil and wine, set him on his animal, brought him to an inn and took care of him. And when he had other chores on the next day, he gave two dinarri to the inn-keeper and requested him to care for him and to spend more if needed, and that he would repay on return. Is not this story full of personal action? The Priest and Levite were institutionalised in their minds. They forget their "personal" responsibility. Their minds were filled with thoughts about the Temple and the congregation. For them it's always "temple... temple... temple" (Jer 7:4). Here comes a question for us: Have we done any such thing in the recent past? The Good Samaritan gave first-aid to the wounded man, gave him a lift, admitted him in the hospital, stayed with him overnight, spent for him, and followed him up! We must be willing to spend time, energy and money for the needy. Jesus gave the moral of the story in v39, "Go and do likewise." Someone profoundly said, "There's no better exercise for the heart than reaching down and lifting people up!"

When you see violence anywhere, do whatever you can to help the weak and the oppressed. Here's an interesting incident: Exodus 2:16,17, "The priest of Midian had seven daughters. And they came and drew water, and they filled the troughs to water their father's flock. Then the shepherds came and drove them away; but Moses stood up and helped them and watered their flock!" Moses did not wait till the next Sabbath to mobilize the congregation!

Every other Women's Conference has extensive expositions of the description of the "virtuous woman" as outlined in Proverbs 31:10-31. Why, oh why, have we neglected to spend time on the two preceding verses? Verses 8,9, "Open your mouth for the speechless, in the cause of all who are appointed to die. Open your mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy."

When our minds are rigid on group action or institutional help, we ignore or forget the Lazarus at our doorstep (Lk 16:19-31).

A couple of don'ts to reframe our thinking—

- Don't be always thinking about distant lands.
- Don't be satisfied with supporting relief agencies.

Be a good neighbour to the needy. A good neighbour is better than a brother living far away (Prov 27:10). Every child of God should be a good neighbour. Sometimes, just being there with the sufferer is the greatest help! A candle loses nothing by lighting another candle!

God will reward "each man" according to his work (Rev 22:12). Each individual is going to be rewarded by the Lord on His return. Just jump into action! Don't always wait for group action!

HOW NOT TO HELP

5

Do not be over-cautious in choosing beneficiaries.

In identifying who really deserves help we should not be casual or extremely cautious. In the process, we may miss out on one who truly deserves to be helped. Jesus said, "I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me a drink; I was a **stranger** and you took Me in" (Mt 25:35). Oftentimes Jesus appears to us as a stranger. In verse 43 of the same chapter, Christ speaks on what was not done to Him— "I was a **stranger** and you did not take Me in." Understand the Biblical admonition here in Hebrew 13:1,2, "Let brotherly love continue. Do not forget to entertain **strangers**, for by doing so some have unwittingly entertained strangers." They entertained strangers who turned out to be angels. Who are strangers? They are the ones about whom we know nothing except that they are in need. This passage stressed that we need to show "brotherly love" to strangers too. Who did the writer of the Hebrews have in mind when he referred to angels and strangers? It was Abraham entertaining strangers when later he actually found out that they were angels (Gen 18:1-22).

Isn't it interesting to note that in the Old Testament the angels came as strangers, and in the New Testament Jesus says that He came as a stranger?

The Bible calls us to do good to "all" people, whoever may be in need. Galatians 6:10, "As we have opportunity, let us do good to **all**, especially to those who are of the household of faith." As believers it's natural for us to express a special concern for believers. But the Word of God asks us to show our consideration to "all," and especially to the saints. The same truth is repeated in 1 Thessalonians 3:12, "May the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to **all**, just as we do to you."

In the broader sense, God, as the Creator, is the Father and Saviour of "all" men. This we find in 1 Timothy 4:10, "To this end we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the Living God, who is the Saviour of **all men**, especially of those who believe." This is the truth that Jesus wanted to point out in His Sermon on the Mount. Matthew 5:45, "Your Father in heaven makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good and sends rain on the just and on the unjust." Jesus challenges us saying, "Therefore you shall be perfect just as your Father in heaven is perfect" (v48). What is this perfection that Christ talks about? It is all about showing no difference between the good and the bad, the just and the

unjust!... just as God sends His sunshine and pours out His showers on both. This is true perfection!

The Bible specifically admonishes us to help even our enemies. Exodus 23:4,5, "If you meet your enemy's ox or his donkey going astray, you shall surely bring it back to him again. If you see the donkey of one who hates you lying under its burden, and you would refrain from helping it, you shall surely help him with it." Helping an enemy does not stop with the enemy himself, but his donkey as well! Look at God's sensitivity and how much He emphasises this truth!

We have an outstanding character in the Old Testament who exemplified in this virtue. It was David. Saul died in a backslidden condition. He was an archenemy of David. But the heart attitude of David towards Saul is the challenge. 2 Samuel 9:3, "Then the king asked, Is there still anyone who is left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?" What an attitude! Saul being his enemy, David asks if there was anyone to whom he could show the kindness of God—mind you, he asked this after the death of Saul! Those around told David about Mephibosheth, one of Jonathan's sons, who was crippled in "both feet" (vv 3,13). He was absolutely helpless and dependent. He could not do anything on his own. He confessed his state before David saying, "What is your servant that you should look

upon such a dead dog as I?" (v8). Any survivor of an earlier regime would have been considered a lifelong threat! But David rose above that common notion and enjoyed the joy of being merciful.

We find this truth emphasised both in the Old Testament and New Testament equally. Proverbs 25:21,22, "If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he is thirsty, give him water to drink. For so you will heap coals of fire on his head. And the Lord will reward you." This text is quoted verbatim in Romans 12:20. It's natural to confine our helps to our circle of friends, but it's supernatural to help our enemies. Jesus illustrated this by His death on the Cross. For whom did He die? The death of Christ is the supreme example of loving and helping the enemies. Christ did not die for the good people. "When we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the **ungodly**" (Rom 5:6). As we read further, "For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrated His own love towards us in that while we were still **sinners** Christ died for us" (vv7,8). Verse 10 pivots the truth we are studying here: "For if **when we were enemies** we were reconciled to God, through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." This is the love of Calvary! This is the kind of love God wants us to show all, especially our enemies.

Christ not only exhibited the fullness of His love through His death but also by His ascension. He wanted to bless the ungodly through His ascension. What love! There was love in everything that Jesus did. Love, nothing but love! When Paul wrote about the ascension of Christ in Ephesians 4:8, he quoted Psalms 68:18, "You have ascended on high, You have led captivity captive, You have received gifts among men, even for the **rebellious**, that the Lord might dwell there."

A cultural example: A Jew would never ask a Samaritan for water. That's why when Jesus asked the Samaritan woman for water, she questioned back how He being a Jew could ask her for water. So wide was the divide between the Jews and the Samaritans! But what did the Good Samaritan do? He crossed the cultural barriers to help a Jew in need! (Lk 10). Prejudices of caste and creed should never come in the way of charity.

Never use charity as a bait for evangelism. The only reason for helping the poor should be that he is poor and needy. Deuteronomy 15:11 says, "For the poor will never cease from the land; **therefore** I command you saying, You shall open your hand wide to your brother, to your poor and your needy in your land." Acts of charity by Christians may attract non-Christians towards the Christian faith, but that must not be our primary motive in helping the poor and the needy. Charity

will otherwise become bribery and exploitation. Such acts will only bring forth Ishmaels and not Isaacs! We hear of promises of a new set of clothes if people agreed to be baptised. Such enticements are not in harmony with the Scriptures.

God is interested in “mercy” and not in “religious sacrifices.” Look at the words of Christ in Matthew 12:6,7, “Yet I say to you that in this place there is one greater than the **temple**. But if you had known what this means, I desire **mercy** and not **sacrifice**, you would not have condemned the guiltless.” Everything we do need not have a religious colour. God desires mercy more than the temple and the sacrifices.

As long as secular relief organisations have right motives and activities they can enjoy our support. If they are genuine and have unquestionable objectives, it’s alright to even work alongside them. Did not God bless us “before” we became His children? Did we not receive help from believers “before” we came to the Christian faith?

You may ask, “Has not Jesus promised rewards if a cup of water is given in the name of only a **disciple** or a **prophet**?” (Mt 10:42). This is not a passage of general charity and hospitality. This was specifically to encourage the 12 disciples who went forth with the Gospel not knowing where their next meal would come from.

We must not be overcautious in choosing the beneficiaries; at the same time don’t thrust help when it’s not absolutely necessary or called for! Don’t throw away help recklessly. The Bible warns us against pledging for someone in haste (Prov 6:1-5). It’s important to be discerning, prayerful and extend help in consultation with family and friends in major issues like launching a relief project! Help with open eyes!

6

Do not confine charity to special occasions.

Most of us confine charitable deeds to the Season of Christmas, Birthdays or Anniversaries. We even call the month of December a Season of Giving! Beggars wonder why Christmas comes only once a year! What can they do with the excess of sweets and eatables collected on the morning of Christmas day? Prisoners wonder why so many visitors turn up in the month of December only! The same is the lot of inmates of orphanages, old-age homes and leprosariums. This kind of occasional charity is not Biblical.

What was the teaching given to the early Church? Paul wrote to the Corinthian believers, "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the Churches of Galatia, so you must do also: **on the first day of the week** let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come" (1 Cor 16:1,2). This is an admonition to all of us. Paul asks us to set aside something for the poor "every" week. Why has the Apostle specified the first day of the week? Following the Resurrection of Jesus which was on the "first day"

of the week (Jn 20:1), the early Christians began gathering customarily on the "first day." Acts 20:7, "Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread..." This has become the common practice till today. We call our Church gathering on this day as the Sunday Service or Sunday Worship. Why haven't we thought of hosting a Sunday Charity following the Sunday Worship, which is very much in line with Hebrews 13:15&16? "Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of **praise** to God, that is the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His Name. But do not forget to do good and to **share**; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." As much as we emphasise Sunday Worship, shouldn't we also lay emphasis on Sunday Charity? Yes, friend, charity should not be occasional or seasonal but regular.

Both the Testaments teach us how charity should be a regular affair. Deuteronomy 15:11, "For the poor will **never cease** from the land; therefore I will command you saying, You shall open your hand wide to your brother, to your poor and your needy in your land." Jesus brought out the same truth in a very interesting situation. We know how that woman broke the perfume bottle and poured it on Jesus' feet. On that occasion Jesus said, John 12:8, "The poor you have with you **always**, but Me you do not have always." Don't we pray for our "daily" bread? Are we not then to give "daily" food to the poor as we read in James

2:15,16? “If a brother or a sister is clotheless and destitute of **daily food**, and one of you says to them, Depart in peace, be warmed and filled, but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit?” This may come to us as a hard teaching but we can in no way evade it, as it’s the voice of the Bible!

The Hindu Newspaper of 11 January 2012 gave this statistics: 42% of Indian children are underweight due to malnutrition. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has called it a “national shame!” An old and true proverb goes like this— “If you sumptuously feed someone’s child, your child will grow prosperously on its own!” Beloved, these are maxims we should never forget.

The Bible calls us to “maintain” good works. Paul wrote to Titus, “This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm **constantly**, that those who have believed in God should be careful to **maintain** good works. These things are good and profitable to men... and let our people also learn to **maintain** good works to meet urgent needs that they may not be unfruitful” (Tit 3:8,14). Paul asks Titus to continue teaching so men would **continue doing**. Doing good works should become a regular practice.

We are called to “remember” the poor. This is what the senior Apostles told Paul and Barnabas (Gal 2:10). We need to keep the poor always in

our “remembrance.” We are also admonished not to “forget” to share (Heb 13:16). These two passages stress that the poor should have a constant place in our minds.

Why did the early Church need deacons? When were they appointed? The very purpose of appointing deacons was to “serve tables,” that is to care for the poor widows in the Church (Acts 6). This was an ongoing ministry. The Apostles told the believers, “Brothers, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may **appoint** over this business” (Acts 6:3). Though they were not literally called “deacons” in Acts 6, the word, “table-servers” is rooted in the same Greek word translated as “deacons.” This was to be an ongoing thing. That’s why Paul later gives qualifications for deacons (1 Tim 3:8-13).

Look at the devotional disciplines of Cornelius. Both “prayers” and “almsgiving” were **regular** exercises for him. Acts 10:1,2, “There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of what was called the Italian Regiment, a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, who gave alms **generously** to the people and prayed to God **always**.” Almsgiving and praying went hand in hand. Charity cannot be occasional or seasonal. It must be regular as praying. This is the only way to befriend the poor. We are given a challenging statement in Proverbs

14:20, "The poor man is hated even by his own neighbour; but the rich has many friends." A more explicit statement is Proverbs 19:7, "All the brothers of the poor hate him; how much more do his friends go far from him! He may pursue them with words, yet they abandon him." Why do such statements find a place in the Bible? We need to befriend the poor because they are usually friendless. Let's go to the poor instead of the rich.

Regular charity is also the only way to associate with the humble. Romans 12:13,16, "**Distributing** to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality. Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the **humble**." Jesus associated and identified Himself with the poor and humble.

Never postpone charity! We are warned against it in Proverbs 3:27,28, "Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in the power of your hand to do so. Do not say to your neighbour, Go and come back, and tomorrow I will give it, when you have it with you." Do it now! Do it today! Why have we forgotten all these precious truths? He who gives quickly gives twice! Don't wait for attractive appeals! Don't wait to be asked. Keep your eyes wide open. If you do, God will lead you to the needy.

Go where the poor are! Try to visit them as often as you can.

Do not limit helps to conventional ways—

- Carry with you sarees and dhoties while travelling in your vehicles and give them away to the poor on the highways.
- Help the poor avail relief schemes of the government.
- Adopt poor children to pay for all their expenses.
- Arrange periodic dinners for the poor.
- Write a will for relief organisations.
- Don't save the used clothes of the elder child for the younger one.
- Don't use clothes and footwear till they wear out.
- Give away one set of clothes when you get a new one.

Have you thought of donating your vital organs? Register organs with agencies even when you are well and alive. Let your family know this so that the information would reach the hospital as soon as you die. Let your eyes let a blind man see. Let your lungs and liver be given to someone in need. So many wait for kidney donors. Stretch your imagination to help people in need. With such sacrifices God is well pleased!

7

Do not publicise charity.

Our Lord Jesus has dealt with so many spiritual disciplines in His Sermon on the Mount of which the very first one was almsgiving. His stress was that we should not publicise charity! (Mt 6:1-4). This can be called the “Discipline of Secrecy.” Charity in secret is the secret of charity!

In this passage in Matthew 6, Jesus mentioned two specific places where folks tried to publicise charity: “synagogues” and “streets.” The first refers to helping the poor in the Church, and the next helping the poor in the society.

If we are taught on doing charitable deeds in secret, then what could Matthew 5:16 ever mean? “Let your light so shine before men that they may **see** your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.” We need to understand here that what Jesus taught in Matthew 5:16 is not about charity primarily but more about our lifestyle. In verses 13-15 of the same chapter Jesus challenges us to have a life of “saltiness” and “brightness.”

There is another point to be noted in what Jesus said in Matthew 6:2. “Therefore when you

do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the **hypocrites** do...” Hypocrisy here means heartlessness and lack of genuineness. That is heartless charity. Any act of charity must be born out of a heart of love. The exemplary acts of the Good Samaritan bring out deep principles on charity. The primary motive behind all his acts of charity was “compassion” (Lk 10:33). All his actions followed his attitude of compassion.

What was Jesus’ driving force when He went about doing good? “Compassion.” Matthew 14:14, “He was moved with **compassion** for them and healed their sick.” He had “compassion” on the two blind men when they pleaded for mercy, touched their eyes and healed them. They were appealing to the character of compassion and mercifulness of the Lord (Mt 20:30). Jesus, moved with compassion, touched the leper and healed him (Mk 1:40,41). After Jesus delivered the man possessed with many evil spirits, He told him to go to his home and tell his family and friends about the Lord’s “compassion” on him (Mk 5:19). In the face of sorrow, at a funeral of the son of the widow of Nain, Jesus had “compassion” on her. He touched the open coffin and the boy rose (Lk 7:13). Whatever Jesus did by way of helping people flowed out of a heart full of love, compassion and mercy.

A study of the Gospels, especially the Gospel of Mark, will highlight what Jesus often said to the beneficiaries of His compassion: “Tell no man!” Jesus was never interested in publicity but only in charity. Just in the Gospel of Mark alone, Jesus has said, “Tell no man!” seven times!

Friend, heartless giving is useless giving! We read in the love chapter of 1 Corinthians 13:3, “Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but I have not love, it profits me nothing.” Is this possible? Could anyone give all his belongings to feed the poor without a heart of compassion? It’s possible! Yes, you cannot love without giving; but you can give without loving!

There should be two dominant driving forces for charity: (a) We extend charity because it’s **commanded by God**. Hence, charity is obedience to God. Deuteronomy 15:11, “The poor will never cease from the land; therefore, I **command** you, saying, You shall open your hand wide to your brother, to your poor and your needy in your land.” Yet, another practical and humorous command is in Deuteronomy 24:19-24 that the Israelites should refrain from going back to pick up the sheaves, olives and grapes that they had forgotten and left behind in the field with the remembrance that they had been slaves one day and in need. (b) We should extend charity because of **compassion for people**. For example, what should be our attitude towards ministering to the prisoners?

Hebrews 13:3, “Remember the prisoners as if chained with them—those who are mistreated—since you yourselves are in the body also.” We are asked to empathise with the prisoners and walk into their shoes so that our love would be more real towards them. We will be primarily interested in publicity, if we don’t have these motives.

This was the prayer of Bob Pierce the Founder of World Vision: “Lord, let that which breaks Your heart break mine too!” Our God is a God of the poor, the fatherless and the widows! A beautiful name given to Him in 2 Corinthians 1:3 is the “Father of Mercies.” This is His very character.

Jesus said, “When you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing” (Mt 6:3). How is this practically possible? This simply means that our thoughts should not dwell on what we have given or done to a poor man. Acts 9:39 brings out the underlying concept that he who has shown kindness should be silent and he who has received it should speak of it! This passage is about a woman called Dorcas who was full of good works and charitable deeds. She fell ill and died. Peter was literally moved when he saw a scene there of the beneficiaries who showed the acts of charity of Dorcas who had passed away.

Have you ever thought how quietly our internal organs function? There’s absolutely no glamour

or showing off of the vital organs like the heart, lungs, liver and brain. We don't even recognise them until they fail! A basic rule and a warning: Never boast of what you do; let another praise you (Prov 27:2).

What about Periodicals and Calendars which publish photographs of acts of charity by Mission agencies? This must be strictly kept to the minimum. There can be a place for legitimate sharing. But it should not cross the boundaries and creep into perverse publicity. There's too much of commercialisation in Christianity in the name of charity. God abhors it. If one of us were in that place of receiving alms, would we like our photograph to be so published? We should help the beneficiaries maintain their dignity.

Why then was Barnabas named a donor in Acts 4:36,37? We read that people sold all their properties and laid the proceeds at the feet of the Apostles. Barnabas, though a Levite, did the same. The Levites not to own any land was the law of the land in Palestine. This perhaps was not applicable in countries like Cyprus where Barnabas came from. It could have been his family property. Beware of appeals promising "Name Plates!" Do I need God's rewards or man's applause? (Mt 6:1,4b).

Beware of being charitable just to evade tax! Giving to the poor means lending to God. Will God borrow or accept black money?

In the previous chapter we mentioned organ donation. Quietly tell your family on what to do in the event of your death, if you have registered your organs for donation.

Follow up "secret giving" by "secret praying" for the poor. This principle is laid out in 2 Corinthians 1:11. Pray that God might bless your help to the recipient. Pray for God's peace and comfort to overshadow the poor. If what you've given would not meet his entire need, pray that God would open up other channels for him. God will reward you openly!

8

Do not bring recipients under obligation.

All of us need help at some time or the other. So should all of us help others some way or the other. It's very natural for us to expect gratitude as an immediate response from a recipient of help. Though this might be right and legitimate the endtime world is known for its ungratefulness. This is what Paul wrote to Timothy: "In the last days perilous times will come. For men will be... **unthankful...**" (2 Tim 3:1,2).

Even in the ministry of Jesus only a small percentage of the people who enjoyed His goodness was grateful to Him! We know of the occasion where 10 lepers were healed (Lk 17). After that Jesus sent them to be seen by the priest as was the custom. "And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned and with a loud voice glorified God and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks." Jesus asked, "Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine?" Yes, in general not even 10% will be grateful. Jesus did not expect an expression of gratitude to feel good about Himself but wanted "God to be glorified." He asked, "Were there not any found

who returned to give **glory to God** except this foreigner?" If someone thanks you and expresses gratitude, accept it gracefully. Don't hold a grudge against those who fail to thank you. Don't show it the next time the person comes to you for help.

Don't bring people under obligation to do whatever is pleasing to you, just because they were blessed by you. This is not God's nature. Paul told about God in Acts 14:16,17, "Who in bygone generations allowed all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless He did not leave Himself without a witness, in that He did good, gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons filling our hearts with food and gladness." Though He let people live as they liked and did not control them to live to His pleasure, He continued to do good to them and made them glad. It's told about God that "He gives to all liberally and **without reproach**" (Js 1:5). When God gives without reproach, it means that He gives with no grudge, no faultfinding, no displeasure, no bitterness and without making us feel guilty. Beloved, this is the spirit of God which we all should imbibe.

God does not desire that anyone should live under obligation to another person. That's why Paul wrote, "Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law" (Rom 13:8). This is because we are asked to love our neighbours as ourselves (v9). Would we ourselves like to come under any obligation?

If we don't like that on us, we should never allow this pressure to come on anybody. There's a Tamil proverb which may sound right but should find no place in Christian charity: "The borrower is a slave to the lender."

God urges us to free all men from any obligation. The Lord's Prayer found both in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke talk about forgiveness. In both the Gospels we read, "Forgive us our **debts** as we forgive our **debtors**" (Mt 6:12; Lk 11:4). This is Christ's personal teaching. But contemporary translators have conveniently changed the words "debts" and "debtors" into "trespasses" or "trespassers!" Though "trespasses" or "offences" are implied in this passage, primarily the application is to "debt" and "debtors" (Mt 6:14).

The Biblical teaching is that we must help the needy without expecting anything in return. We should cultivate a selfless attitude which would solely be interested in the welfare of others. 1 Corinthians 10:24 says, "Let no one seek his own but each one the others' wellbeing." There should be no taint of selfishness. We should always think of the wellbeing of other people. When Paul wrote this, he exemplified himself for this said character. 2 Corinthians 12:5, "I will very gladly spend and be spent for your souls; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I am loved." He says the more he loves them, the less they love

him in return. But that would not stop him from helping them. When Paul would run out of his resources, he was willing to spend himself for them. What a glorious example and a challenge!

This is where the Scribes and Pharisees failed. They set a bad example. They prayed for the widows... even made long prayers but their eyes were on their purses! Never take advantage of anyone's weakness and manipulate that person. We are expected to show mercy with cheerfulness, with no hypocrisy. Romans 12:8,9, "... he who gives with liberality; ...he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be without hypocrisy..." Mercy should have no other motive.

Never ever speak roughly to the poor man whom you help. "The poor man uses entreaties; but the rich answers roughly" (Prov 18:23). Let this not be said of us. Never remind anyone of the help rendered to him in the past.

God's heart is always for freeing people. The Old Testament taught that when a slave was set free and sent away, he should be sent with lots of goodies and not emptyhanded (Dt 15:12-15). God emphasises in verse 18, "It shall not seem hard to you when you send him away free from you: for he has been worth a double hired servant in serving you six years. Then the Lord your God will bless you in all that you do." This is the heart of God. The God of the Bible has been teaching this lesson consistently, all through.

Not only in the matter of material help, but also in spiritual matters we must not bring anyone under obligation, or whip that person. Be extremely cautious about your attitude when you help a backslider get back on his feet. Dare you broadcast his sins. When we help a backslider into restoration, we need to cover his sins and save the person. "Brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins" (Js 5:19,20).

Rebukes should be gentle. David said, "Let the righteous strike me; it shall be a **kindness**, and let him rebuke me; it shall be as excellent **oil**; let my head not refuse it" (Psa 141:5). Galatians 6:1 puts this practically: "Brothers, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of **gentleness** considering yourself lest you also be tempted." Never use any confidential information, that a backslider may have shared with you, as a whip against him, when you restore him. The vulnerable should never feel threatened as to what you can do with his secrets. This does not go in tangent with the spirit of Christ.

There may rise occasions when those who worked against you need your help. Never make them feel guilty then. Take the attitude of Joseph. When he revealed himself to his brothers, he told

them, "I am Joseph, your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. Please come near to me... But now do not be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life. So now it was not you who sent me here but God; and He has made me a father to Pharaoh and lord of all his house and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt" (Gen 45:4,5,8).

Another facet of our study: Involve and identify yourselves in the sufferings of others; but never "interfere" in their affairs! Keep a distance from family or marital discords which can subtly turn into a form of manipulation. Several families are devastated because of unwise counselors.

We should not expect anything in return from the poor and needy when we help them; at the same time don't be too egoistic to accept any help from them when it's offered. They will be more than pleased if you accept it politely. Give them a chance to help you. Didn't Jesus use the donkey, boat or upper room of someone else? God at times uses the poor to save us in a crisis. Solomon illustrates this in Ecclesiastes 9:14-16, "There was a little city with a few men in it; and a great king came against it, besieged it, and built great snares around it. Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city. Yet no one remembered that same poor man. Then I said, Wisdom is better than strength. Nevertheless, the poor man's wisdom is despised and his

words are not heard.” Doesn’t this sound sad and wrong? It’s nothing but arrogance for people to feel too proud to accept help from the poor. As much as we feel good in helping others, we should also be graceful enough in accepting help from others!

A concluding thought: Free your beneficiaries to accept help from anyone. Don’t expect to know all the details of the benefactor and the benefits.

HOW NOT TO HELP

9

Do not encourage laziness.

As we are learning the art of helping others, it becomes increasingly clear that charity is an integral part of Christianity. There can be charity without Christianity; but there can be no Christianity without charity.

It would always be right to meet the needs of others, and at the same time we should be careful not to spoil our beneficiaries. We have a strong Apostolic teaching in 2 Thessalonians 3:10, “If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat.” The Apostles presented themselves as examples here. They too had lots of needs! They testify in 2 Corinthians 11:27, “In weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness...” In this situation of need and deprivation, they endeavoured to set an example explained by them in 2 Thessalonians 3:7-9, “For you yourselves know how you ought to follow us, for we were not disorderly among you; nor did we eat anyone’s bread free of charge but worked with labour and toiled night and day that we might not be a burden

to any of you, not because we do not have authority, but to make ourselves an example of how you should follow us.” They worked for their food, and toiled night and day though they were physically and emotionally drained.

The Bible speaks about two kinds of “burden” in Galatians 6. Verse 5, “Each one shall bear his own load.” Verse 2, “Bear one another’s burdens.” What is the difference between these two statements? One speaks about the personal responsibility of each person to handle the burdens of life. The other refers to burdens which individuals cannot normally carry themselves but need the help of others. We have no right to expect help from others until we have done all that’s possible to help ourselves. A saying sums it all: Help yourself and heaven will help you! God helps those who help themselves!

The many causes of poverty can be removed if the poor give diligent attention to them. It is the Book of Proverbs which says, “He who has pity on the poor lends to the Lord; and He will pay back what he has given” (19:17). This same Book highlights some common causes of poverty which can be avoided. A few examples—

“Poverty and shame will come to him who disdains **correction**. But he who regards a rebuke will be honoured” (13:18). Anyone who is unwilling to receive correction will end up in poverty.

“Do not love **sleep** lest you come to poverty; open your eyes and you will be satisfied with bread” (20:13).

“He who loves **pleasure** will be a poor man; he who loves wine and oil will not be rich.” This refers to pleasure-seeking and overspending (21:17).

“The **drunkard** and the **glutton** will come to poverty, and **drowsiness** will clothe a man with rags” (23:21).

There are still others who will not work unless the **working conditions** are ideal and conducive. Such personalities are referred to in Proverbs 20:4, “The lazy man will not plow because of winter; he will beg during harvest and have nothing.” These people would always seek white-collar jobs and are unwilling in their attitudes to dirty their hands and adopt to any situation. Though they might be literally “starving” they would not like to be underemployed. They think very high of themselves falsely and feel heavyheaded over the jobs offered. Such folks must be taught the dignity of labour. No work is inferior or superior to the other.

What the poor need is not just “relief” to have their immediate needs met but also “rehabilitation.” If you give fish to a hungry man, you are only helping him satisfy his hunger for that particular day. But if you teach him fishing, you are actually catering to his needs for a lifetime.

Meet with the staff of relief agencies to learn some basics of rehabilitation principles and techniques. When people come to us begging we can offer them some odd jobs within our capacity and pay them for it. This will make them feel good that they have earned their bread. A beggar can be asked to sweep our frontyard and then be fed with a full meal. He can even be asked to clean our two or four wheelers with supervision.

This Biblical principle is beautifully illustrated in the story of Ruth. To escape the famine Naomi the widow went with her two daughters-in-law, Orpah and Ruth, from Moab to Judah in search of bread. One day Ruth went to the field of Boaz who was her relative. Look at the Christian response of Boaz: Ruth 2:15,16,17, "When she rose up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men saying, Let her glean even among the sheaves and do not reproach her. And also let grains from the bundles fall purposely for her. Leave it that she may glean, and do not rebuke her." "So she gleaned in the field until evening, and beat out what she had gleaned and it was about an ephah of barley." Harvest is best done in the heat of summer. Under the hot sun Ruth worked morning till evening to glean just one ephah of barley which could be an equivalent of one kilogram of barley. Boaz let her go home with that small measure. And on the next day he gave her six ephahs (Ruth 3:5). Ruth was willing to toil for that minimal amount and did not hesitate to

bend her back. Gleaning is not a white-collar job! One plus six ephahs made it seven for her! Are we able to see the underlying principle in the story?

There are those who resort to stealing to escape poverty. The Bible indicated such a possibility in Proverbs 30:8,9, "Remove falsehood and lies far from me; give me neither poverty nor riches—feed me with the food allotted to me, lest I be full and deny You and say, Who is the Lord? or lest I be poor and steal and profane the name of my God." I believe Paul probably had such a possibility and situation in mind. When he gave a similar exhortation to Ephesians, He wrote, "Let him who stole, steal no longer; but rather let him labour, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need" (Eph 4:20). This verse simply says that if a person is driven to stealing because of poverty, the Biblical exhortation is that he should not only stop stealing but also make an effort to work with his own hands, earn something for himself and also to give to those in a greater need.

However, begging is not totally condemned in the Bible. Many are driven to it, though it's not desirable. It's very true in India. Such an Indian situation is portrayed in Job 24:1-12. India can be seen in this passage! Verse 4, "They **push the needy off the road**; all the poor of the land are forced to hide." Verse 10, "They **cause the**

poor to go naked, without clothing; and they take away the sheaves from the hungry.” Verse 12, “The dying groan in the city, and the souls of the wounded cry out.” We should hence be very careful in our thoughts and in our actions not to despise beggars. Do not treat them with contempt; rather be kind to them.

We see Jesus being sensitive and kind to blind Bartimaeus who was a beggar (Mk 10:46-49). When Bartimaeus heard that Jesus was coming that way, he cried out, “Jesus, Son of David, have **mercy** on me.” We read that the mob around warned him to be quiet, but “Jesus stood still” and asked for him to be brought to Him. Jesus opened his eyes, let him see and spoke to him words of comfort and cheered him up. That made Bartimaeus make a lifetime decision of following Christ. Bartimaeus, being a beggar, made no difference to Christ in the way He ministered to him. He treated the whole person.

Have you ever noticed in the story of the rich man and Lazarus that the rich man’s name is not even mentioned, but the beggar is addressed so many times by name (Lk 10). Would we know the names of the beggars who come to us regularly?

The first healing miracle of the early Church was on a beggar! (Acts 3). This is no accidental happening. It’s the heart of God! Walk the extra mile and take disabled beggars to healing

crusades—just like the four men who took the paralytic to Jesus (Mk 2:3-5). At the pool of Bethesda the paralytic man told Jesus, “No one helped me.” Where are the Good Samaritans? Can you be one? Arrange for available medical help and explore possibilities of any relief schemes of the government for such helpless folks.

Apostle James speaks of the possibility of some struggling believers who are more or less in need like beggars. Sometimes even their basic needs like clothing and food are unmet. Can we dare to send them away with soft words to quieten our conscience? “If a brother or sister is clotheless and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, Depart in peace, be warmed and filled, but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body what does it profit?” (Js 2:15,16). Beware of empty words!

Be extremely kind to the disabled. The government today calls them “Differently Abled.” Is handicap a fault? Kindness is a language that the deaf can hear and the blind can see! We should strike a fine balance between not spoiling people encouraging laziness and at the same time despising the totally helpless!

Another thought before we conclude this chapter: Make the poor to ultimately look to God as “the” Source. There was a great famine in Samaria. Even a donkey’s head was sold for eighty

shekels of silver! There was a demand for dove droppings also! At that time when the King of Israel was passing by on the wall, a woman cried out to him saying, "Help, my Lord, O King!" The King's answer has an eternal truth: "If the Lord does not help you, where can I find help for you?" (2 Ki 6:25-27). Lead the poor to the God of the poor. As you give the poor the bread *for* life, give them the additional and abiding blessing of the Bread *of* Life! Mary brought out in her song that the God of the poor is the God of Salvation: "My spirit has rejoiced in God my **Saviour**... He has filled the **hungry** with good things" (Lk 1:47,53).

HOW NOT TO HELP

10 Do not grow tired of charity.

When we emphasise the need to integrate acts of charity with our Christian faith it might appear that a religion of "works" is promoted. Are we not saved by "grace" through faith? Ephesians 2:8-10 is a vital passage in the context: "By grace you have been saved through faith and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, **not of works**, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus **for good works**, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." We are not saved "by" works but "for" works! James stressed the same in James 2:14,17, "What does it profit, my brothers, if someone says that he has faith, but does not have works, can faith save him? Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead." Paul wrote to the Ephesians that works are not a "condition" for salvation. James taught in his Epistle that works are an "evidence" of salvation. In other words, Paul referred to works which "precede" salvation; and James to works which "follow" salvation.

Growing tired or losing heart is common in any Christian devotional discipline. As it's very human to lose heart in prayer, Christ has strongly encouraged that we "always ought to pray and not lose heart" (Lk 18:1). Likewise it's also possible to lose heart in charity. Helping others is no exception for man to get tired of. Paul writes to the Galatians, "Let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we **do not lose heart**. Therefore as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith" (Gal 6:9,10). For how long are we expected to do good without growing weary? As long as there's opportunity (v10). That's as long as there's need!

How long will there be a need to help the poor? The Bible answers, "The poor will **never** cease from the land" (Dt 15:11). Yes, charity can never end! Jesus endorsed the same in John 12:8, "The poor you have with you **always**." The Old Testament says that the poor shall "never" cease from the land; the New Testament says that poor are with us "always."

There are many reasons why we may get tired of charity. People may not be grateful, oftentimes. Rarely do we receive any appreciation from people for the kind deeds we do. But the truth remains that God will never forget whatever we have done. His book of memory is always updated. Haven't we read that, "God is not unjust to forget your work and labour of love which you

have shown toward His Name, in that you have ministered to the saints and do minister"? (Heb 6:10). "And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope **until the end**" (v11). The writer of Hebrews acknowledges that the Hebrew believers have already been ministering to the saints. He wants them to continue on that because it will never be forgotten by God.

No one hesitates to talk about growing in general virtues. Why are we apprehensive when it comes to the question of charity? But Paul boldly teaches the believers in 2 Corinthians 8:7, "As you abound in everything— in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all diligence and in your love for us—see that you abound in this grace also." "This grace" that Paul talks about refers to "uplifting the poor." The example is Jesus who became poor to make us rich! (v8). Paul wants us to abound in the grace that was on Jesus— i.e. on becoming poor to make others rich! Though the example of Jesus here refers to emptying of Himself of His "heavenly" glory, the context is charity.

Keep giving until it pinches you! In Luke 11 we read, "Give alms of such things as you **have**" (v41). But in the following chapter Jesus says, "**Sell** what you have and give alms" (v33). He speaks here about "selling" what we "have" in order to give to others! This means we are to keep growing in the levels of charity.

We can think of so many levels in the School of Charity: Kindergarten, Elementary, Secondary and Graduate level. Those at the Kindergarten level never give anything. The ones in the Elementary level give only when there is an appeal, impulsively. Those at the Secondary level give legalistically. Only a few have grown up to the Graduate level; they are those who give sacrificially. Which level have you grown up to?

Be creative and invent new ways of giving and helping the poor. We read in Isaiah 32:8, “A generous man devises generous things and by generosity he shall stand.” His thoughts are on devising plans and schemes on how well he can help the poor and not on new ways of saving!

Never give ear to the thought that you have done enough to help people. Here is an interesting Scripture: Ecclesiastes 11:1,2, “Cast your bread upon the waters, for you will find it after many days. Give a serving to seven and also to eight, for you do not know what evil will be on the earth.” Don’t stop alms after giving to the seventh person! Go on to the eighth and keep helping as many as you can. Keep casting your bread on people.

In the previous chapter we saw how we must not encourage laziness. At the same time we must not stop doing charity. The Apostles wrote, “When we were with you, we commanded you this; If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat... But as

for you, brothers, do not grow weary in doing good” (2 Thess 3:10,13). As said here, we should strike a balance between not spoiling the beneficiaries thus encouraging laziness and at the same time not refraining from giving!

Another thought we should not entertain: “Can I help the entire world and uplift everyone?” When this question was posed to Mother Teresa (1910-1997) she replied, “I will help one at a time!” Yes, we may not be able to help everyone in the world, but we can definitely feed the Lazarus at our doorstep, bandage the wounded on our road, support the poor in our assembly and uphold the weak in our workspot!

The greatest motivator for charity is “eternal” rewards. We might not receive immediate blessings for our charitable deeds during our lifetime, but they are certain to come in eternity. Read these words of encouragement—

Luke 6:35, “Love your enemies and do good and lend, hoping for nothing in return and your reward will be great and you will be sons of the **Most High**, for He is kind to the unthankful and evil.”

Luke 12:33, “Sell what you have and give alms, provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the **heavens** that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor destroys.” Swiss banks may fail but our charity will become savings in the Bank of Heaven! The more we give to the

poor the more we'll become heavenly-minded. "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Lk 12:34).

Luke 16:9, "I say to you, make friends for yourselves by unrighteous mammon, that when you fail, they may receive you into an **everlasting home**." What a welcome that would await us!

Luke 18:22, "Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in **heaven**; and then come and follow Me." Just after Jesus said this to the young man, He gave the illustration of the camel and the needle! He said, "It's easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the **Kingdom of God**" (v25). Indian Railways has this slogan: *Less luggage, more comfort, make travel a pleasure!*"

One may wonder why so many references to charity in the Luke's Gospel. As a medical doctor, Luke was very humane. The story of the rich man and Lazarus is also in Luke's Gospel only (Ch 16).

Look at Paul's teaching on eternal rewards for charity—

1 Timothy 6:17-19, "Command those who are rich in this present age... Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to a good foundation for **time to come**, that they may lay hold on **eternal life**."

2 Corinthians 9:6, "He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully." 2 Corinthians 9 is a chapter on charity. He goes on to say in verse 9, "He has dispersed abroad, He has given to the poor; His righteousness **endures** forever."

John Wesley (1703-1791) said, "I value all things only by the price they will bring in eternity!"

An inscription on an old gravestone reads as—

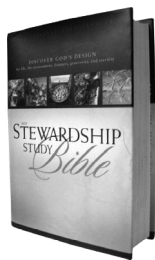
*What I spent I had;
What I saved I lost;
What I gave I have!*

The voice that spoke to John echoes to us: "Their **works** shall follow them!" (Rev 14:13c). Nothing else will come with us! Let's decide today whether on the last day we would be sent to the right or to the left! (Mt 25).

Don't grow tired of charity!

I recommend...

Stewardship Study Bible



*God is the owner of everything.
We are simply users, trustees or stewards.
In this Study Bible you will discover
God's plan for life, the environment,
finances, generosity, and eternity.*

New International Version (NIV)
Centre-column References
365 one-page Stewardship Articles
Biblical Index on Money
Topical Index & Concordance
Hard Cover, 1906 pages

Price Rs. 1400/-; forwarding Rs. 100/-

Buy this Bible from Christian Bookstores,
or order from—

R. Stanley
13 Church Colony
Vellore 632006, India
Tel: 00 91 98437 07600
<stanleyonbible@hotmail.com>

**Other titles published
or to be published in this Series—**

- ▣ How not to Pray*
- ▣ How not to Meditate*
- ▣ How not to Give*
- ▣ How not to Worship*
- ▣ How not to Battle*
- ▣ How not to Minister*
- ▣ How not to Think*
- ▣ How not to Repent*
- ▣ How not to Believe*
- ▣ How not to Suffer*
- ▣ How not to Plan*
- ▣ How not to Work*
- ▣ How not to operate Gifts*
- ▣ How not to Fellowship*
- ▣ How not to Sanctify*
- ▣ How not to Sorrow*
- ▣ How not to Grow*

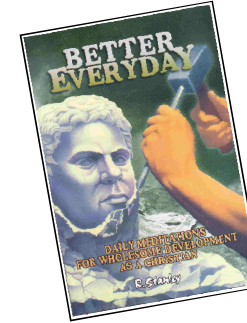
Other Books by the author—

- r Apples of Gold*
- r Balanced Christian, The*
- r Blessed are the Obedient!*
- r Dare to be Different!*
- r Enlightening Essays*
- r Faith Life*
- r Fire in My Bones*
- r Five Loaves & Two Fish*
- r Frank Answers (Vols 1 & 2)*
- r Happy Harvest*
- r Higher Ways Higher Thoughts*
- r How not to Meditate*
- r How not to Pray*
- r How to be Anointed with the Spirit*
- r How to be Saved*
- r Inspired Insights*
- r Little Foxes*
- r Open Heaven*
- r Patience makes the man!*
- r Power belongs to God!*
- r Pray in this manner...*
- r Preachers & People*
- r To Dear Students...*
- r Unless someone guides me...*
- r Wild Honey*
- r With God Again!*

These books and the author's Bible Talks
in CDs and DVDs are available from—

Blessing Literature Centre
21/11 West Coovam River Road, Chintadripet,
Chennai 600002, India
Tel: 00 91 44 28450411 <blc@bym-india.org>

**Daily Meditations
for wholesome development
as a Christian...**



*Compiled from what Brother Stanley
has written during 40 years.*

*A new release
that is liked by Christians of
all Churches,
all age groups and
all backgrounds!*

Available in Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi,
Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Oriya,
Tamil and Telugu also.

Available from—

R. Stanley
13 Church Colony
Vellore 632006, India
<stanleyonbible@hotmail.com>