

# Bridging The Gap

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There has been a big Gap between the wealthy and the poor and this Gap will remain forever unless, the man realize his role on the earth as nothing but a passing cloud!

The past is gone! The future is uncertain! The present is the only precious present we have! In this present life, we with all our senses should live a separated life that we are called to live as Christians the followers of Jesus Christ!

The Church is called to be the agent that can bring changes in the way the world thinks and behaves. Billions of people who lived before us might have thought like us on bringing changes and might have fought like us. We are a new segment of people talking the things that were talked before. After us a new segment will come and will talk what we are talking now. If this simply goes on as a cycle, there is no meaning for you and me to repeat or do something that would not bring any change.

Do we really need Forums, Conferences, Seminars, Conversations and Workshops to wake up our Consciousness. Don't we really understand what we should do as Christians?

"Do not wait for leaders; do it alone, person to person." Mother Teresa.

If we are faithful to our Christian calling and if we start doing what we should do as individuals, would surely bring a major change in the Gap we see between the Rich and the Poor. We can certainly bridge the gap, if we start now person to person.

## The Present World

Over Three Billion people, which is half of the world, live on less than \$2.50 a day.

Over a Billion people among us in this world do not know to read a book or to sign their names.

Less than one percent of what was spent on weapons every year by the world was needed to put every child into School by the year 2007 and it did not happen so far.

Half of the world's children live in poverty. When one child eats the other starves.

640 Million people live without adequate shelter while 400 Million have no access of safe water.

270 Million have no access to health services .

24,000 Children die everyday due to poverty.

More than 1.5 Billion people live without Electricity.

The GDP of the 41 poor countries {567 Million People} is less than the wealth of the world's 7 richest people combined.

Are There enough resources to feed every one in this world?

Though the Land is cursed by God, it still produces enough resources when the man sweats. More than 3.5 Billion people depend on Oceans for their primary source of food and this could be doubled in twenty years to 7 Billion.

The Ocean is generously yielding its resources. It's the man who is polluting it and causing alarming Danger to his own self. Like wise The Land also faithfully produces its fruits as an answer to the hard work.

The world still has a lot of food in it for all people who live in it.

But still more than eighty percent of the world's population is struggling to Eat one proper meal a day.

Where are those resources? Who is consuming them & How?

Here is a shocking list of the world's priority in 1998.

Cosmetics in USA	\$US 8 Billion
Ice Cream in Europe	\$US 11 Billion
Perfumes in Europe and USA	\$US 12 Billion
Pet foods in Europe and USA	\$US 17 Billion
Business Entertainment in Japan	\$US 35 Billion
Cigaretts in Europe	\$US 50 Billion
Alcoholic Drinks in Europe	\$US 105 Billion
Narcotics Drugs in the world	\$US 400 Billion
Military Spending in the world	\$US 780 Billion

In 1998, the money spent on The Basic Social Services in all Developing Countries

Basis Education for all	\$US 6 Billion
Water and Sanitation for all	\$US 9 Billion
Reproductive health for all women	\$US12 Billion
Basic health and nutrition	\$US 13 Billion

Now we can get a picture of what is going on in the world and why there is so much of Poverty. What can we do as a Church and as Individuals?

We are saved by His grace and fully belong to Him for He has purchased us with His precious Blood. He has chosen us and has appointed us to bear the fruits that would remain. He has commanded us to love our neighbors as ourselves. It is God's desire for the world to see Him through us for we are His representatives.

We Christians should grow and mature in Him. He has taught us where to save our treasures. Every little thing that we do for the deserved ones will be credited into our account in heaven.

I am not talking about the Poverty Gospel or about the Prosperity Gospel. I am talking about being faithful stewards of God.

When Jesus saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion. We His disciples should have that compassion towards the needy ones in our fold as well as the ones not in our fold.

We should live a life of obedience and of discipline. We should work hard. We should efficiently take care of our families. We should cheerfully give to God and also should save some money for the retirement and for emergencies that may arise at unexpected times.

We should not be greedy and keep with us more than our need! If the Lord blesses us with more than our needs, it means that He wants us to be a blessing to others around us.

Poverty and Wealth issues are going on for centuries. Some of the Churches too have compromised with the world and are chasing after the wind of the wealth. But, for us the born again Christians, we should pray to God to make us a blessing to others as long as we live.

Knowing The Lord means defending The Poor.

If we claim ourselves as the people Knowing the Lord, then we should be involved in the ministry of defending the poor.

"He defended the cause of the poor and needy, and so all went well. Is that not what it means to know me?" declares the Lord. Jeremiah 22:16

In 1 Samuel 2:8 we see Him as the rescuer of the poor. In Psalm 68:10 we see Him as the Provider of the poor. In Psalm 34:6 we see Him as the Savior of The Poor and in Isaiah 25:4 He reveals Himself as the refuge of the Poor.

He wants to meet the poor and needy through us. We are the ones called to Show all the above said qualities of God through our lives.

Congregational Food Stamp Challenge

U.S representatives, James McGovern, Jo Ann Emerson, Jen Schakowsky & Tim Ryan Had pledged to live on an average food stamp budget with \$3 a day from May 15 - 21 , 2007. Other members too joined in that challenge.

For many of them, It wasn't a pleasant experience. But, The Reality is that more than half of the world lives below the \$2.50 a day.

About 400 Million Indians {41.6 %} live below poverty line of \$1.25 a day. and 76.6 % live below \$2 a day compared to sub saharan Africa.

I am not asking anyone to start the food stamp challenge. But, to live a content life as Apostle Paul lived.

"I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any an every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want." Philippians 4:12

Conclusion

What Legacy shall we leave for the next Generation?

What shall we leave for our beloved ones?

When Alexander The Great was on His death Bed, he requested his Generals for three wishes.

1, He wanted his physicians to carry his coffin.

2, He wanted the path of funeral to be strewn with gold.

3, He wanted his hands dangling out of the coffin.

Why?

1, He wanted the world to know that No doctor can save a person from the clutches of the death. So, he did not want anyone to take their life for granted. That's the reason he wanted his physicians to carry his coffin.

2, He wanted the world to know that not even a fraction of gold he earned all through his life was going with him. All his conquered wealth by losing his health and finally his life was left on the path of his funeral.

3, He wanted the world to know that he came empty handed into the world and empty handed he left the world. Thus he wanted his hands dangling out of the coffin.

Wealth given to us in our life time should be used wisely for us and for the others around us in need! We should not use it without responsibility. One day we will have to give an account for every single blessing we received in this world. Many of us would argue or come up with a reason about saving wealth for our children.

This is where we should know that " A faithful man will be richly blessed, but one eager to get rich will not go unpunished." Proverbs 28: 20

"A faithful man will richly be blessed" Who is the faithful man? The man who is careful to do the will of God all through his life is a faithful man. In his heart he would never think of becoming rich and living in luxury. In all his life time he would be careful to bring glory to God in all that is given to him.

"The righteous man leads a blameless life; blessed are his children after him." Proverbs 20:7

So let us not worry about saving treasures for our children. If we lead a faithful and blameless life, our children will not suffer after us. Faithful man's children would not be found on streets at the time of his home going. He would have surely led his children in the way they should have grown in the Lord.

It is God who preserves our lives and our children's life after us.

In one of the interviews Martin Luther King Jr. was asked this question;

"How would you like others to remember you?"

Martin Luther King Jr. answered this question by revealing some beautiful wishes he had. One such was

"I want you to say that I tried to love and save humanity"

Dear friends, "The Gap" between the Rich and The Poor can be bridged by our faithful living and by our practical love. I said that our life on earth is like a passing cloud. Before we pass away into eternity, let us rain on the Poor with the heavenly blessings.

"If you can't feed hundred people, then just feed one" Mother Teresa.

"tears shed for self are tears of weakness, but tears shed for others are a sign of strength" Billy Graham

God Bless!

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Source: World Bank, Unicef, HDR, Global Issues.