

Biblical Basis for the Ministries of Ascension's Community Concerns Team

Genesis 1:26a

Then God said, "Let us make humans in our image, according to our likeness...."



Genesis 12:1,3 (NRSV, most of the passages are from this translation)

Now the LORD said to Abram, ".... I will bless youin you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

Exodus 22:21-27

"You shall not wrong or oppress a resident alien, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt. ²² You shall not abuse any widow or orphan. ²³ If you do abuse them, when they cry out to me, I will surely heed their cry...."

²⁵ "If you lend money to my people, to the poor among you, you shall not deal with them as a creditor; you shall not exact interest from them.... And when your neighbor cries out to me, I will listen, for I am compassionate."

Leviticus 19:18b, 33-34 ^{18b} "...you shall love your neighbor as yourself..."

³³ "When an alien resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the alien. ³⁴ The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the native-born among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God."

Leviticus 25:35-37

"If any of your kin fall into difficulty and become dependent on you,^[b] you shall support them; they shall live with you as though resident aliens. ³⁶ Do not take interest in advance or otherwise make a profit from them, but fear your God; let them live with you. ³⁷ You shall not lend them your money at interest taken in advance or provide them food at a profit."

Deuteronomy 15:7-8, 10-11

"If there is among you anyone in need, a member of your community in any of your towns within the land that the LORD your God is giving you, do not be hard-hearted or tight-fisted toward your needy neighbor. ⁸ You should rather open your hand, willingly lending enough to meet the need, whatever it may be."

¹⁰ Give liberally and be ungrudging when you do so, for on this account the LORD your God will bless you in all your work and in all that you undertake. ¹¹ Since there will never cease to be some in need on the earth, I therefore command you, 'Open your hand to the poor and needy neighbor in your land.' [See Mt 26:11; Mk 14:7 and John 12:8. *Comment: if the church is truly being the church, we will always have the poor with us.*]

Deuteronomy 24:14, 17

You shall not withhold the wages of poor and needy laborers, whether other Israelites or aliens who reside in your land in one of your towns.... You shall not deprive a resident alien or an orphan of justice....

Deuteronomy 27:19

" 'Cursed be anyone who deprives an alien, an orphan, or a widow of justice.' All the people shall say, 'Amen!'

Psalm 41:1

Happy are those who consider the poor;
the LORD delivers them in the day of trouble.

Psalm 72:1-4

Give the king your justice, O God,
and your righteousness to a king's son.
² May he judge your people with righteousness
and your poor with justice.
³ May the mountains yield prosperity for the people,
and the hills, in righteousness.
⁴ May he defend the cause of the poor of the people,
give deliverance to the needy,
and crush the oppressor.

Psalm 72:12-13

For he delivers the needy when they call,
the poor and those who have no helper.
¹³ He has pity on the weak and the needy
and saves the lives of the needy.

Psalm 82:3-4

Give justice to the weak and the orphan;
maintain the right of the lowly and the destitute.
⁴ Rescue the weak and the needy;
deliver them from the hand of the wicked."

Psalm 113:5-7

Who is like the LORD our God,
who is seated on high,
⁶ who looks far down
on the heavens and the earth?
⁷ He raises the poor from the dust
and lifts the needy from the ash heap,

Psalm 140:12

I know that the LORD maintains the cause of the needy
and executes justice for the poor.

Job 30:24-25

"Surely one does not turn against the
needy, when in disaster they cry for help.
²⁵ Did I not weep for those whose day
was hard? Was not my soul grieved for
the poor?

First Samuel 2:8

He [God] raises up the poor from the
dust; he lifts the needy from the ash
heap to make them sit with princes
and inherit a seat of honor.

Additional verses from the Psalms

Psalm 9:9, 12, 18

Psalm 10: 2, 8-9, 12, 14, 17-18

Psalm 12:5

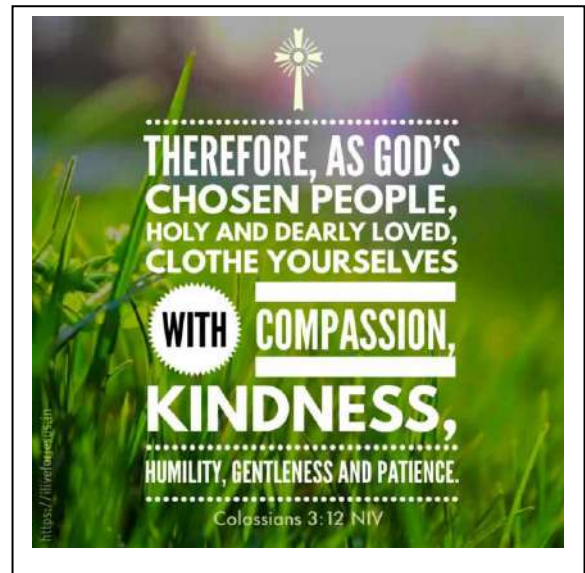
Psalm 22:24-26

Psalm 34:6; 35:10; 68:5-6; 94:1-7

Psalm 109:21-22; 112:9; 145:9, 14

Psalm 146:5-9

Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob,
 whose hope is in the LORD their God,
⁶ who made heaven and earth,
 the sea, and all that is in them;
 who keeps faith forever;
⁷ who executes justice for the oppressed;
 who gives food to the hungry.
 The LORD sets the prisoners free;
⁸ the LORD opens the eyes of the blind.
 The LORD lifts up those who are bowed down;
 the LORD loves the righteous.
⁹ The LORD watches over the strangers;
 he upholds the orphan and the widow,
 but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin.

**Proverbs 14:21**

Those who despise their neighbors are sinners,
 but happy are those who are kind to the poor.

Proverbs 14:31

Those who oppress the poor insult their Maker,
 but those who are kind to the needy honor him.

Proverbs 19:17

Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the LORD
 and will be repaid in full.

Proverbs 21:13

If you close your ear to the cry of the poor,
 you will cry out and not be heard.

Proverbs 22:9

Those who are generous are blessed,
 for they share their bread with the poor.

Proverbs 29:4 (NIV)

By justice a king gives a country stability,
 but those who are greedy for bribes tear it down.

Proverbs 29:4 (NIVr)***Additional verses from Proverbs***

Proverbs 3:7; 13:23; 17:25; 22:22-23

Proverbs 28:3; 28:27; 29:14

Proverbs 31:20

By doing what is fair, a king makes a country secure.
But those who only want money tear it down.

Proverbs 29:7

The righteous know the rights of the poor;
the wicked have no such understanding.

Proverbs 31:8-9

Speak out for those who cannot speak,
for the rights of all the destitute.
⁹ Speak out; judge righteously;
defend the rights of the poor and needy.

Ecclesiastes 4:1

Again I saw all the oppressions that are practiced under the sun. Look, the tears of the oppressed—with no one to comfort them! On the side of their oppressors there was power—with no one to comfort them.

Isaiah 1:16-17

Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean;
remove your evil deeds
from before my eyes;
cease to do evil;
¹⁷ learn to do good;
seek justice;
rescue the oppressed;
defend the orphan;
plead for the widow.

Isaiah 58:6-8a

Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of injustice,
to undo the straps of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?
⁷ Is it not to share your bread with the hungry
and bring the homeless poor into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover them
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?
⁸ Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,
and your healing shall spring up quickly.



Isaiah 61:1-2a

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me
because the LORD has anointed me;
he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,
to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives
and release to the prisoners,
² to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor

Additional verses from Jeremiah

Jeremiah 5:28-29

Jeremiah 7:5-7

Jeremiah 8:19-22

Jeremiah 20:13; 22:3, 15-16**Ezekiel 16:49**

This was the guilt of your sister Sodom: she and her daughters had pride, excess of food, and prosperous ease but did not aid the poor and needy.

Ezekiel 22:29

The people of the land have practiced extortion and committed robbery; they have oppressed the poor and needy and have extorted from the alien without justice.

Amos 5:11-12

Therefore because you trample on the poor
and take from them levies of grain,
you have built houses of hewn stone,
but you shall not live in them;
you have planted pleasant vineyards,
but you shall not drink their wine.
¹² For I know how many are your transgressions
and how great are your sins—
you who afflict the righteous, who take a bribe
and push aside the needy in the gate.

Amos 8:4-7

Hear this, you who trample on the needy,
and bring to ruin the poor of the land,
⁵ saying, "When will the new moon be over
so that we may sell grain,
and the Sabbath,
so that we may offer wheat for sale?
We will make the ephah smaller and the shekel heavier
and practice deceit with false balances,
⁶ buying the poor for silver
and the needy for a pair of sandals
and selling the sweepings of the wheat."

Micah 6:8

He has told you, O mortal, what is good,
and what does the LORD require of you
but to do justice and to love kindness and
to walk humbly with your God?

⁷ The LORD has sworn by the pride of Jacob:
Surely I will never forget any of their deeds.

Zechariah 7:8-10

The word of the LORD came to Zechariah, saying: ⁹ "Thus says the LORD of hosts: Render true judgments, show kindness and mercy to one another; ¹⁰ do not oppress the widow, the orphan, the alien, or the poor; and do not devise evil in your hearts against one another.

Malachi 3:5

⁵ Then I will draw near to you for judgment; I will be swift to bear witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired workers in their wages, the widow, and the orphan, against those who thrust aside the alien and do not fear me, says the LORD of hosts.

Matthew 25:34-36

Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, ³⁵ for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶ I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.'

Mark 8:1-6

In those days when there was again a great crowd without anything to eat, he called his disciples and said to them, ² "I have compassion for the crowd because they have been with me now for three days and have nothing to eat. ³ If I send them away hungry to their homes, they will faint on the way—and some of them have come from a great distance." ⁴ His disciples replied, "How can one feed these people with bread here in the desert?" ⁵ He asked them, "How many loaves do you have?" They said, "Seven." ⁶ Then he ordered the crowd to sit down on the ground, and he took the seven loaves, and after giving thanks he broke them and gave them to his disciples to distribute, and they distributed them to the crowd.

Luke 1:52-53

He has brought down the powerful from their thrones
and lifted up the lowly;
⁵³ he has filled the hungry with good things
and sent the rich away empty.

Love the Lord your God
*with all your heart and with all your soul
and with all your mind and with all your strength,*
—•••—
Love your neighbour as yourself.
there is no commandment greater than these.
- Mark 12:30-31

Luke 4:16-19

When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, ¹⁷ and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me

to bring good news to the poor.
 He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
 and recovery of sight to the blind,
 to set free those who are oppressed,
¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

Luke 6:20-21

Then he looked up at his disciples and said:

"Blessed are you who are poor,
 for yours is the kingdom of God.
²¹ "Blessed are you who are hungry now,
 for you will be filled.
 "Blessed are you who weep now,
 for you will laugh.

Luke 10:36-37

Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?" ³⁷ He said, "The one who showed him mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

Luke 14:13-14

But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. ¹⁴ And you will be blessed because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."

John 13:14-15

So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. ¹⁵ For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you.

Acts 9:36 (NIV)

In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (in Greek her name is Dorcas); she was always doing good and helping the poor. [See also Acts 20:35 where Jesus said, "it is more blessed to give than to receive."]

Romans 12:13

Contribute to the needs of the saints; pursue hospitality to strangers.

First Corinthians 13:13

And now faith, hope, and love remain, these three, and the greatest of these is love.

Second Corinthians 8:15

All these passages apply to our Global Ministries Team as well, and for this team we would add these verses:

Isaiah 49:6

Matthew 9:37-38; 28:16-20

Mark 16:15

Luke 24:46-48

John 3:16-17; 20:21

Acts 1:8; 22:21; 28:28

Romans 1:16-17; 10:15

Revelation 5:9; 7:9; 10:11; 11:9; 13:7; 14:6; 17:15



Acts 2:44-45

All who believed were together and had all things in common; ⁴⁵ they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. [See also 4:32-37]

As it is written, "The one who had much did not have too much,
and the one who had little did not have too little."

Second Corinthians 9:7-9

Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not regretfully or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸ And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work. ⁹ As it is written,

"He scatters abroad; he gives to the poor;
his righteousness endures forever."

Galatians 2:10

They asked only one thing, that we remember the poor, which was actually what I was eager to do.

Hebrews 13:1-2

Let mutual affection continue. ² Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it.

James 1:27

Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

James 2:5-6

Listen, my beloved brothers and sisters. Has not God chosen the poor in the world to be rich in faith and to be heirs of the kingdom that he has promised to those who love him? ⁶ But you have dishonored the poor person. Is it not the rich who oppress you? Is it not they who drag you into the courts?

James 2:15-17

Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. ¹⁶ If one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? ¹⁷ In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

First John 3:16-18

We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us—and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers and sisters. ¹⁷ How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help? ¹⁸ Little children, let us love not in word or speech but in deed and truth.

First John 4:7-8

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. ⁸ Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love.