Benevolence by the Church & Individuals

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INTRODUCTION

- Consider the thoughts this morning of benevolence. It's helping those who are in need.
- What we need to see is that the church and the individual are separate.
- Just because we as a collective form the church and can do certain things does not mean that the church can do everything that the individual can.

1 A Difference in the Church and the Individual

1 Timothy 5:3–16; 1 Corinthians 12:12–15; Matthew 18:15–17

- If any believing woman has relatives who are widows, let her care for them. Let the church not be burdened, so that it may care for those who are truly widows.
- The concept is that the church is to help those who cannot otherwise be helped by relatives or by family members.
- Just because the individual can do it doesn't mean the church can do it.
- For the body does not consist of one member, but of many. A difference between that which is a part and that which is a whole.
- And so we see three different stages that identify three different groups.

2 The Role of the Individual: How Much Should I Give?

1 John 3:17

- But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him?
- Your ability plus the opportunity is your responsibility.
- We need to open our eyes, brothers and sisters.
- We are stewards of what God has given us. That includes money.

3 Who Should I Give To?

James 1:26–27; Luke 10:25–29; Matthew 25:31–46

- Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father is this to visit orphans and widows in their affliction and to keep oneself unstained from the world.
- If you look around and you see widows and orphans that are in need, it is not the church's fault. It is mine. It is yours.
- It's not about being right, it's about doing what is right to serve God.
- Everyone is our neighbor. It doesn't matter whether they vote like we do, or even go to church where we do.
- As you did it to one of the least of these, my brothers. You did it to me.

- If there is help to be had out there, Christians should be at the front lines supporting it. And that includes as individuals and not cowering behind the church.

4 The Role of the Church

1 Corinthians 16:1–3; 2 Corinthians 9:6–8; Romans 15:25–27

- On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up as he may prosper.
- Individuals have a role, the church has a role with their money towards benevolence.
- Christians must give individually and give as a part of the church.
- Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.
- Needy saints within and needy saints abroad.
- For if the Gentiles have come to share in their spiritual blessings, they ought also to be of service to them in material blessings.

> THE CHALLENGE
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> **If we look out and we say, there are people who need help, where are the churches? I'm going to ask you where are you? Where am I?**

MY NOTES