

POVERTY SIMULATION

Dear Participant,

We, the Staff & Volunteers of **Mission Waco, Mission World** have dedicated our lives to **Our Mission:**

- 1) Provide Christian-based holistic, relationship-based programs that empower the poor and marginalized
- 2) Mobilize middle-class Americans to become more compassionately involved among the poor
- 3) Seek ways to overcome the systemic issues of social injustice which oppress the poor and marginalized

Part of #2 is the Poverty Simulation! We KNOW that together we can eradicate extreme poverty in our lifetime. Now, this is where you enter. We are honored that you have chosen to come to Mission Waco*World. Since 1986, we have offered this same training to thousands of others living with the “Compassion of Christ that compels them to serve among the least of these”. Together all of us educate and build up our church families and friends to do the same.

Thank you for choosing to expose yourself to a weekend experiencing a bit about poverty and learning about the poor throughout the globe. Your 43 hours of time, cannot ever compare to lifetimes of hopelessness suffered by women, children and men here on earth and yet we can all *do something* to fight back and that is what this weekend is about!

This weekend is safer than going to the local shopping Mall –so let’s just get that out of the way. Nothing dangerous about this – and yet to follow Christ requires everything. You will never be alone. You will arrive at 8 p.m. on Friday evening with a host of others and finish on Sunday afternoon close to 2:30 p.m. The experience takes the whole time. We strongly discourage you to cut it “short” - it just doesn’t work that way. If you are doing this for University or College credit, you must finish the whole weekend.

Because we have been so loved by the King of Kings, He has asked us to live and walk as He did:

- To look for lost sheep, a messy task,
- To love my neighbor, very tricky and takes my time -Oh, my time was bought -not my own!
- To seek first His Kingdom and His Justice –quite confronting
- To speak as the voice for those who have no voice -no shyness here
- To bear the burden as the advocate for those who have no access –champions wanted
- To stand up for justice, and not to forget the poor –bold strong hearts

This weekend will be worth the time and \$65 that you give for life – learning and newly forged relationships. Bring an open heart and an attitude of gratefulness, for this weekend you have the ability to focus on seeking **first** the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness/Justice.

Janet Dorrell, Poverty Simulation Servant Leader

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever does” –Margaret Mea

Listed below are a few Scripture that will prepare you or your group for the weekend.

True Fasting

Isaiah 58

“Shout it aloud, do not hold back. Raise your voice like a trumpet. Declare to my people their rebellion and to the descendants of Jacob their sins.

2

For day after day they seek me out; they seem eager to know my ways, as if they were a nation that does what is right and has not forsaken the commands of its God. They ask me for just decisions and seem eager for God to come near them.

3

‘Why have we fasted,’ they say, ‘and you have not seen it? Why have we humbled ourselves, and you have not noticed?’ “Yet on the day of your fasting, you do as you please and exploit all your workers.

4

Your fasting ends in quarreling and strife, and in striking each other with wicked fists. You cannot fast as you do today and expect your voice to be heard on high.

5

Is this the kind of fast I have chosen, only a day for people to humble themselves? Is it only for bowing one’s head like a reed and for lying in sackcloth and ashes? Is that what you call a fast, a day acceptable to the Lord?

6

“Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke?

7

Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter —when you see the naked, to clothe them, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?

8

Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness [a] will go before you, and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard.

9

Then you will call, and the Lord will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I.

“If you do away with the yoke of oppression, with the pointing finger and malicious talk,

10

and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday.

11

The Lord will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail.

12

Your people will rebuild the ancient ruins and will raise up the age-old foundations; you will be called Repairer of Broken Walls, Restorer of Streets with Dwellings.

13

“If you keep your feet from breaking the Sabbath and from doing as you please on my holy day, if you call the Sabbath a delight and the Lord’s holy day honorable, and if you honor it by not going your own way and not doing as you please or speaking idle words,

14

then you will find your joy in the Lord, and I will cause you to ride in triumph on the heights of the land and to feast on the inheritance of your father Jacob.” For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.

ISAIAH 58– Isaiah compares Israel to Sodom and Gomorrah, and interestingly enough, not because of sexual sin, but rather, it’s failure to care for the poor and needy. Israel’s worship has not only ceased to be effective, but God actually hates it. The central reason is that their worship is without the necessary accompanying acts of justice. The worship God desires is commanded in chapter 58, called the true fast. This is a fast, which involves concern for the poor. And this concern for the poor is to be both individual (v7- sharing food, shelter and clothing) and institutional (v6- loosing the chains of injustice, untying the cords of the yoke, and breaking every yoke).

Questions: Does our worship celebrate our acts of justice?

Why does worship seem so distant from what we do?

Are there widows and orphans in our community that we can defend or plead their case?

Matthew 5 New International Version (NIV)

Introduction to the Sermon on the Mount

Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them.

The Beatitudes

He said:

3

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

5

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

6

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

7

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

8

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

9

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

10

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11

“Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. 12 Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Salt and Light

13

“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.

14

“You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

MATTHEW 19:16-30 – So many times the parable of the **Rich Young Ruler** is about the ruler giving up things, but Jesus does not ask him to give up possessions alone. Jesus says that to follow Him the ruler must sell his many possessions and then give to the poor. Initiating relationship with the poor is a prerequisite to Jesus for following Him. Our righteousness must also be accompanied with justice.

Questions: Do you think Jesus was serious in telling the ruler to sell his possessions and give to the poor?

Do you think Jesus is still serious about the wealthy being in relationship with Himself and the poor?

What is Jesus saying about the fulfillment of possessions?

James 2 New International Version (NIV)

Favoritism Forbidden

2 My brothers and sisters, believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favoritism. Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in filthy old clothes also comes in. 3 If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, “Here’s a good seat for you,” but say to the poor man, “You stand there” or “Sit on the floor by my feet,” 4 have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? 5 Listen, my dear brothers and sisters: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him? 6 But you have dishonored the poor. Is it not the rich who are exploiting you? Are they not the ones who are dragging you into court? 7 Are they not the ones who are blaspheming the noble name of him to whom you belong?

8 If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, “Love your neighbor as yourself,” [a] you are doing right. 9 But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers. 10

For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it. 11

For he who said, “You shall not commit adultery,” [b] also said, “You shall not murder.” [c] If you do not commit adultery but do commit murder, you have become a lawbreaker.

12 Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom, 13 because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

Faith and Deeds

14 What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? 15 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.

18 But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds."

Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds. 19 You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that — and shudder.

20 You foolish person, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless [d]? 21 Was not our father Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? 22

You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. 23 And the scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness," [e] and he was called God's friend. 24

You see that a person is considered righteous by what they do and not by faith alone.

25 In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction? 26 As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.

If you have any questions, or would like further help in this area, please do not hesitate to contact me, Janet@MissionWaco.Org

Thanks