

WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR

Gerald W. Schlabach, *WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR* (Scottsdale: Herald Press, 1990),

POVERTY

DEFINITION

Governments, banks, and development agencies have official definition of poverty. They define according to what they can measure – usually money and food. If we describe poverty only in terms of money and food, we are likely think of the solution solely in terms of money and food. Obviously both are extremely important. But a prisoner on death row can have money tucked away and an ample diet; yet he has no future, no freedom, little dignity, no options. The same holds true for those whom poverty imprisons Schlabach p. 26).

Peter Townsend defines poverty as “the lack of resources necessary to permit participation in activities, customs, and diets commonly approved by society” Schlabach p.26).

Material poverty and spiritual poverty

Mother Theresa said, the most poverty is lack of support system, not loved???????

GAP: The rich get richer, and the poor get poorer. The gap has widened in both directions. People in the third world make up 75 percent of the world’s population but receive only 17 percent of the world’s GNP (gross national product). The wealthy 20 percent of the rich nations receive nearly 70 percent of the world’s income. We are seeing dramatic increases in the rich-poor gap both *within* countries like the United States and Canada and *between* nations of the first and the third worlds (Schlabach p. 151).

RACISM: Neglecting fellow human beings and understanding their suffering come more easily if we see poverty as somehow normal for the people of another race. Public concern for the homeless in North America ahs been revealing in this respect. Not until news media began to tell the stories of once-middle white people suddenly out of work and out-of-doors did most North Americans take note (Schlabach p. 188).

APARTHEID: Segregation in North America is illegal, but the white majority has quickly tired of correcting the damage the damage segregationist policies have caused. Racial minorities are still *the last to be hired and the first to be fired*. Racism, then,. does not need caste systems, apartheid, or segregationist laws to make and keep people poor (Schlabach p. 188).

Discrimination Against Women: Women and children bear the brunt of poverty throughout the world. Pay is universally lower for women, and work that women do outside the money economy often does not count as work at all. Destructive trends of breakdown of traditional family life are present in all sectors of society but the poor they tend to be more visible. Alimony payments provide one example.

Although men of all classes are sometimes delinquent in supporting their children after divorce, the effects marital breakup get worse as one moves farther down the income scale. Once-middle-class women are the fastest growing segment of the “new Poor” in America. 40 percent of white female-headed households are poor: 60 percent of black female-headed households are poor. Alone in child care and stuck in service sector jobs, they work at low pay, part-time or not all (Schlabach p. 189). Women and children are the fastest growing segment of homeless population also.

THEN WHAT IS WEALTH?

IMPACT OF POVERTY:

F, Kefa Sempangi, director of the Africa foundation, a Christian relief-and-development organization, is more blunt. Poverty “is not a lack of things; it is not having, only one television or one car. Our poverty is a demonic force which enters human life and threatens to destroy it completely. It causes men and women, boys and girls, to be so ground into the dirt that their spirit are destroyed. It breaks all social norms, down to the smallest rule of hygiene. Human life itself becomes the cheapest commodity” (Schlabach p. 27).

Poverty is anti-life, death. All that makes people human, all that expresses the image of God, begins dying long before the body dies. A poverty steals hope itself, poor people may accept destitution as their fate. “You can’t change it,” they say. “It’s God’s will” (Schlabach p. 27).

“Hunger means humiliation. A hungry person experiences an overwhelming shame. All desires, aspirations, and dreams lose their lofty qualities and relate to food alone. Diminished by hunger, one’s spirit is diminished as well.

THE RICH AND POOR BOTH ARE DYING

Schlabach uses a phrase “meaningless lives in the first world and meaningless deaths in the third world (Schlabach p. 32). Once I saw a cartoon; in boat rich fat man and poor skinny man were riding. The boat was sinking from the side of fat rich man. The insight of the cartoon was that eventually both will die together. So what Schlabach says is that meaningless lives of the rich and meaningless death of the poor both are dying eventually.

INEQUALITY:

Those with power have always said inequality and exploitation were part of the natural order. Those with secular power call this “survival of the fittest.” Those with religious power call it “God-ordained.” Eventually poor people come to agree. “The dynamics of being poor are such that the oppressed poor finally accept the inhumanity and humiliations of their situation; they accept status quo as the normal course of life. Thus to be poor becomes both a state of things and attitude to life, an outlook, even a worldview (Schlabach p. 28).

Same with the homeless. They are thrown into deep ditch of poverty and homelessness and all things described above happens to them and they never can get out.

Homelessness is called “death” (Jean Kim. Jubilee Manual p.). But society and churches blame them for not getting out, get up and walk on their own.

GOD AND POVERTY: Poverty is hardly God’s will. Poverty is anti-life. It is demeaning. It is death Yet, God works in a special way *among* poor people, *for* poor people, and *through* poor people (Schlabach p. 28).

GOD IS GOD OF JUSTICE (PS. 37: 25-29)

GOD LIBERATE THE POOR (EX. 2:23-24; 3: 7-8).

Egypt was the place of slavery, oppression, harsh demeaning labor, and powerless vulnerability for Hebrews. Out of the slavery their cry for help rose up to God. God heard their groaning and said “I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey (Ex. 2:23-24; 3: 7-8).

HELP THE VULNERABLE: You shall not wrong or oppress a resident alien, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt. You shall not abuse any widow or orphan. If you do abuse them, when they cry out to me, I will surely heed their cry; my wrath will burn, and I will kill you with the sword, and your wives shall become widows and your children orphans (Ex. 22:21-22) (NRSV). This is a very strong statement from God.

GOD SAID “HELP THE POOR” (DEU. 15: 11)

DO NOT EXPLOIT THE POOR (PS. 10: 1-12)

GOD HATES OFFERING ULNESS PEOPLE SEEK JUSTICE AND HELP THE POOR : IS. 1: 11-17

BABYLONIAN EXILE (JER. 29:7): God said “seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.”

Babylonian social circumstances in those days:

The circumstances of Jews were in:

JESUS AND THE POOR:

Jesus himself associated with the poor, sinners and outcasts of his society.

LUKE 4:16-21: JESUS CAME TO GIVE GOOD NEWS TO THE POOR

This passage is known as Jesus' first sermon. He announces this text as his inauguration speech which carries his main purpose of his mission on earth.

Schlabach argues that even though God loves all –poor and nonpoor- there is one fateful difference. Poor people do not need privileged people to respond to God's love. But when privileged people try to respond to God yet continue to ignore people who are poor, they deceive themselves and only deepen their spiritual poverty “(Schlabach p. 31).

JESUS' APPROACH IN HELPING THE POOR WAS preaching good news to the poor. When he put this gospel into practice by giving sight to the blind, mobility to the lame, cleansing to the lepers, hearing to the deaf, and new life to the dead. In the texts like Matthew 11:4-5, the gospel writers present such actions as signs that the kingdom of God is breaking in on human affairs. They are signs that Jesus is the Messiah, through whom the kingdom is coming. Just as Isaiah predicted, the kingdom and the new Servant-King made a special place for society's poorest and neediest. In Luke 4:18-19, Jesus took that vision as his own mandate when he quoted from Isaiah 61 to inaugurate his ministry (Schlabach p. 90). Schlabach also claims that good news to the poor is good news for the poor only as it is good news with the participation of poor. Christ empowers them to become active participants in the kingdom, active builders of the justice that is its way (Schlabach p. 91).

Schlabach 는 학자는 말합니다.

하나님은 부자나 가난한자나 똑같이 사랑하시는데 그런데 거기에는 운명적인 차이가 있다. 가난한 사람이 하나님의 사랑에 응답할때 부자를 필요로 하지 않지만 부자가 하나님의 사랑에 응답하고자 할때 계속해서 가난한사람을 외면한다면 그들은 자신을 속이는것이요 그리고 오직 영적으로 점점 깊이 궁핍해져 갈 것이다. 다시 말하면 부자가 가난한사람들을 외면하면서 하나님 사랑에 응답 한다는 것은 거짓말이고, 할 수도 없고, 해도 하나님은 대답도 아니하실 것이라는 말입니다“(Schlabach p. 31).

Ken Sehested writes “feasting on the bounty of the earth is not our sin.” The pitfall comes as we eat in isolation from the needs of the poor. It is simply not possible to love God while we neglect the suffering of our neighbors” (Schlabach p. 31)

Ken Sehested 라는 학자는 말하기를 우주의 풍요함을 즐기는 일은 죄가아니다. 그러나 함정은 가난한사람들을 외면하고 혼자 먹을때 온다. 고통하는 이웃을 외면하면서 하나님을 사랑한다는 것은 불가능한 일이다.” 라고했습니다 (Schlabach p. 31).

JESUS CAME TO GIVE US PEACE (SHALOM) (JOHN 10: 10)

Jesus said, I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.

Schlabach associate the abundant life with peace, shalom. He writes, "prosperity, well-being, abundant life, eternal – the biblical term sums these up is *shalom*. Often translated *peace*, shalom is really all the 'things which make for peace' ... However society whispers its own idea of 'peace and prosperity.' Whenever we seek to live well apart from others, especially those who are poor, something else tends to happen. In our hands, biblical shalom turns into prosperity doctrine. This doctrine calls affluence the seal of God's approval and poverty the sign of God's disfavor. Then to take care the untidy fact that many righteous Christians are poor nonetheless, we turn the coming of God's new heaven and new earth into lulling reassurance of a better life 'in the sweet by and by'" (Schlabach p. 69).

JESUS LEFT HIS PEACE WITH US (JOHN 14: 27)

JESUS COMMANDED US TO LOVE GOD AND LOVE NEIGHBOR)MARK 12:30-31):

Mark 12:30-31: "*Jesus said, you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is this, you shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these*".

BEATITUDE (MATTHEW 5:3-6):

There are two versions of beatitude, one in Matthew and one in Luke.

Matt 5:3-6 has it this way:

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

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

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

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

The beatitude in Matthew is often interpreted spiritually. But Schlabach interprets *the poor in spirit* is brokenhearted and humble in spirit (Is. 61:1), aware of the poverty of human resources, and looking for God for care. They are in bodily misery – a basic meaning often overlooked by readers of Matthew – yet are blessed and possess the kingdom because they 'know their need of God' " (Schlabach p. 29).

BEATITUDE (Luke 6:20-26) is more concrete.

Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.

Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you will be filled.

Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh.

Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man.

Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven; for that is what their ancestors did to the prophets.

But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation.

Woe to you who are full now, for you will be hungry.
Woe to you who are laughing now, for you will mourn and weep.

Schlabach said “what kind of poverty Jesus is talking about? If you have a lot of money, you’ll probably say spiritual poverty. If you have little or no money, you’ll probably say physical poverty. The rich will thank God for Matthew, the poor will thank God for Luke” (Schlabach p. 29).

Ana de Garcia writes: “God is passionately involved precisely where need is greatest. Therefore, God chooses to be a God of and for the poor. .. God’s love reaches out to all with the good news of the kingdom. The world’s downtrodden challenge us that the only way to enter this kingdom is through Jesus’ call to follow him through repentance, justice, and love” (Schlabach p. 30).

Ana de Garcia 라는 학자는 말합니다.

하나님은 need 가 가장 큰 곳에 깊이 개입 하실 수밖에 없으시다. 하나님은 가난 한 자의, 가난한 자를 위한 하나님이 되시기를 원하신다. 하나님의 사랑이 세상 모든 사람에게 천국의 기쁜 소식을 전하신다. 천국에 들어가는 유일한 길은 회개하고 정의를 행하고 사랑하라는 예수그리스도의 부름을 통해서만이라고 세상에서 가장 짓밟힌 이들이 우리들에게 도전장을 보내고 있다 (Schlabach p. 30).

What will be foremost is living in relationship with God and with all those to whom God draws especially near – the poor, the poor in spirit, the brokenhearted, the hungry, those who weep, the meek of the earth, those who hunger and thirst for justice, the merciful, those with hearts of integrity, the peacemakers, the persecuted, and the oppressed. These are the people Jesus called blessed (Matt. 5:3-12; Luke 6:20-22). And they are the ones to whom he drew especially near throughout his ministry, as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God (Schlabach p. 73).

GOD LOVES ALL: “for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet only your brothers and sisters, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect (Matt. 5: 46-48).

HELP THE POOR FEED THE HUNGRY, CLOTHE THE NAKED
(MATT. 25: 37-39, 44)

The faithful sheep are winning approval for something they didn’t know they had done. Meanwhile, the goats seem to be learning of missed opportunities for the first time. There is real drama here. The king had been present among the poor and needy. Some had served him; others not (Schlabach p. 64). But neither group had noticed him. The sheep helped the poor in everyday ways, never thinking that king Jesus himself was there. But they let themselves get close to the poor (Schlabach p. 65). What they offered, food, water, clothes, cared for the sick (medical care), visit incarcerated (included the excluded) and welcomed the homeless (housing) meant meeting very basic human needs

for survival. Sheep might have done these as their usual daily activities but goats didn't do the basic thing.

LUKE 10:25-37: WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR? STORY OF A GOOD SAMARITAN

The lawyer came to Jesus to test him with a question about eternal life. When Jesus tested him instead, the lawyer posed a second question to shield himself and limit his obligations. But rather than protecting himself, he opened himself up to further scrutiny. The lawyer's question, "And who is my neighbor" was more significant that he realized. Another way to ask it is, "Where do I live" or "Where do I find life?" or Where is my heart? or "Where is my treasure? (Schlabach p. 54).

Schlabach suggest we recall the situation of poverty in our own life, friends, family and now recall the poverty of the two billion –stripped of resources and often of dignity, beaten down by both animosity and indifference, and left alone to die alone. When we read facts, or encounter similar ones on the news, how do we feel: angry, despairing, numbed, apathetic, defensive, something else? Do we want to blame God, the system, ourselves, the source of information? (Schlabach p.32).

The Levites were the ones who cleaned the temple and all its vessels, the ones who led the singing and counted the money. They were indispensable. In fact, the Levites were a lot like many conscientious, harried, and overworked lay people who hold many congregations together today (Schlabach p. 43).

As Schlabach understands the text, the whole point was that the prestigious, the religious, those who supposed to be close to God, showed that their hearts were far from the heart of God. The one despised by the people of God, the one alienated from the people of God, demonstrated that he and his values were close to the heart of God (Schlabach p. 77).

It cost the Samaritan something to love. It will also cost us to love others; materials things, time, and perhaps we must give up some of our privileges.

Martin Luther King, Jr., wrote: "We are called to play the good Samaritan on life's roadside; but that will only be an initial act. One day we must see that the whole Jericho road must be transformed so that men and women will not be constantly beaten and robbed as they make their journey on life's highway" (Schlabach p. 108)

LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR: Yet I am writing you a new commandment that is true in him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining. Whoever says, I am in the light, while hating a brother or sister, is still in the darkness. Whoever loves a brother or sister and lives in the light, and in such a person there is no cause for stumbling. But whoever hates another believer is in the darkness, walks in the darkness, and does not know the way to go, because the darkness has brought on blindness (1 JOHN 2:7-11, NRSV).

Love one another: Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us (1 JOHN 4:7-12, NRSV).

Love one another: We love because he first loved us. Those who say, love God, and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also (1 JOHN 4:19-21, NRSV).

Fasting is freeing the most vulnerable neighbor:

Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? 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? Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up quickly; your vindicator shall go before you, the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard. Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer; you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am (Is. 58: 6-9, NRSV).

SELL WHAT YOU HAVE AND GIVE IT TO THE POOR

Jesus said to his disciples, *do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions, and give alms. Make purses for yourselves that do not wear out, an unfailling treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also* (Luke 12:32-33) (NRSV).

SALVATION AND WORK

As in Luke 10: 25-37 also in Matthew 19: 16, 21, someone (was a lawyer in Lukan text), came to him and said, Teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal life? sell your possessions, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me." According to Schlabach, since Martin Luther took his unyielding stand for salvation "by faith alone," many Christians have felt that to stand anywhere but with Luther would risk sliding down a sandy bank. Taking a stand on social issues, or even talking too much about them, would lead into the salvation-by-good-works trap. Yet Jesus told us long ago that to endlessly debate this matter is to miss the whole point! (Schlabach p. 110).

Justification is by God's grace. Conversion to our others is by God's grace. Christlike letting go of self is only possible in and through Christ.

Schlabach would assert that our vision for the future and the wealth we seek are always tied together. The future we envision shapes our values. Our values shape our decision, for we invest in what we value (Schlabach p. 74). So our heart is where our wealth is.

There was the rich young ruler who wanted to inherit eternal life. Jesus confronted him with a blunt choice: “Sell all that you own and distribute the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me” (Luke 18: 22) (NRSV).

STORY OF ZACCHAEUS: For **Zacchaeus**, Jesus had no need for tough words about selling possessions. When Jesus said, Zacchaeus, hurry and come down; for I must stay at your house today. So he hurried down and was happy to welcome him. ...Zacchaeus said to the Lord, half of my possessions I will give to the poor; and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will pay back four times as much. Then Jesus said to him, today salvation has come to this house (Luke 19:1-10; NRSV).

As a tax collector, Zacchaeus’ source of wealth was also the source of his spiritual poverty. He was famished for human relationships. As an agent of Rome, he had isolated himself from his own Jewish community. No doubt he worried that he had cut himself off from God in the process. When Jesus looked up into the sycamore tree, he only had to call Zacchaeus once. He offered relationship, the chance for true wealth (Schlabach p. 74).

ST. PAUL: In all this I have given you an example that by such work we must support the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, for he himself said, it is more blessed to give than to receive (Acts 20:35).

SHARE OUR BEST WITH JESUS (MATT. 26:6-13): ALABASTER JAR (MARK 14: 3-9; JOHN 12:1-8)

Now while Jesus was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper... woman came to him with an alabaster jar of very costly ointment, and she poured it on his head as he sat at the table. But when the disciples saw it, they were angry and said, why this waste? Jesus said ...She has performed a good service for me. for you always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me. By pouring this ointment on my body she has prepared me for burial (Matt. 26: 6-13). (NRSV).

Breaking expensive alabaster jar full of oil: She used the best of her possessions for Jesus.

“You always have the poor with you.” Most people misuse Jesus words as a permission to have poor and therefore we can’t do anything about it. Don’t feel so bad about not doing much for the poor because Jesus said we will always have the poor.

Disciples got their priority wrong.

EARLY CHURCH AND THE POOR

Acts 2:42-47; Acts 4:32-35: CONVERSION TO JESUS

Schlabach said, “conversion to Jesus and freedom from bondage to self means a conversion to a life ‘for others’. The biblical terms for conversion and repentance always imply a turning – a total reorientation. . . . If poor people have become strangers to us, conversion to our ‘others’ involves a returning toward the poor (Schlabach p. 45).

Acts 2:42-47: Those whom the Holy Spirit touched began living a unified, whole gospel – a gospel of proclamation, communion, and service.

Acts 4:32-35: Those whom the Holy Spirit touched began selling their possessions and goods, giving to anyone as he had need. Throughout the ages, a new relationship with poor people has been part of the renewal of the people of God.

ROMANS 12: 2: DO NOT BE CONFORMED TO THIS WORLD

ST. PAUL said “We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. For whoever has died is freed from sin (Romans 6:6-7) (NRSV). Schlabach asserts that If we are freed from slavery to sin and self, we are also freed to live for others. These are two sides of one coin. Everyone has many “others”: those of other races, other nations, other cultures, other parts of town, other religious beliefs, other political ideologies, and those who are so other that we call them enemies. But North American middle-class life conspires to keep poor people out of sight and out of mind. Those of us who are not poor so easily accept this distance as natural and safe. Therefore, poor people are our others in a uniquely important way (Schlabach p. 109).

ROMANS 12: 13: EXTEND HOSPITALITY TO THE STRANGERS

JAMES’ WARNING TO RICH OPPRESSORS

When needs are concrete and immediate, faith must be concrete and immediate as well. “Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food”, wrote James. They need more than a God bless you or *Jesus is the answer*. ”In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead” (James 2:14-17).

WE CANNOT WORSHIP GOD AND MAMMON AT THE SAME TIME:

WEALTH: Wealth can lead us to danger. As Matt. 6:21 describes, ‘wherever your treasure is, there your heart will be also. Wealth can lead us to spiritual homelessness, which is cutting off ourselves from God, which is the biggest sin we can commit. So scripture said we cannot worship two gods – Yahweh God and mammon god. Wealth can lead us to danger of worshipping mammon god.

We cannot worship God and Mammon: What we treasure, or value, will determine our life activity as we devote ourselves to one master or another. God or Money, says Jesus, is the usual choice (Matt. 6:24). “Moth and rust” will eventually destroy treasures on

earth, if thieves don't get there first (Matt. 6:19). Jesus' counsel then is to invest in the wealth that is lasting: Seek first God's keeping, God's righteousness, God's justice.

NEW HEAVEN AND NEW EARTH (IS. 65:17-25; REV. 21).

For I am about to create new heavens and a new earth; the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind.

.....

WHAT CAN WE DO AS INDIVIDUALS AND AS A CHURCH ?

SOME EXAMPLES:

FRANCIS OF ASSISI

Convinced that the gospel calls Christians to give freely to the poor, Francis of Assisi took that step himself. Eventually he founded a religious order dedicated to caring for the poor and sick. In the growing cities of Italy, Francis shared the gospel with ordinary people, even as he shared their poverty (Schlabach p. 46). .

Sometimes both conversion to Christ and conversion to poor people have occurred at once. Such was the case among Anabaptists in sixteenth-century Europe. The movement spread fastest among peasants, who for centuries had lived in near slavery, farming other people's lands (Schlabach p. 46).

IN 1539, AN ANABAPTIST WOMAN

named Anna faced burning at the stake in her hometown of Rotterdam. As death approached, she penned a riveting letter to her infant son. "Honor the Lord in the works of your hands, and let the light of the Gospel shine through you,"... "love your neighbor by living honestly, sharing bread with the hungry, and clothing the naked." She urged that he not accumulate material possessions: "Do not have anything two-fold; for there are always some who lack." What the Lord granted him beyond his needs he should share that every day, and God's blessing would be his (Schlabach p. 48).

PERSONAL RENEWAL AND THE POOR

Joining Christ among people who are poor, getting close enough to hear God's voice in their voices, is still a challenge to us today. But conversion to poor people is also an invitation (Schlabach p. 48).

CONGREGATIONAL RENEWAL AND THE POOR

Conversion to the poor can transform entire congregations, as well as individuals. In the economically depressed Canadian steel city of Hamilton, Ontario, a new kind of church is coming together. Poor and nonpoor are sharing a liberating salvation in Jesus Christ. And Christ is converting them to one another. Social change is beginning amid the most ordinary of congregational activities. The church is called Welcome Inn (Schlabach p. 52).

According to John Buchanan, former moderator of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.),