

# Meeting the welfare 'need'

A Proactive Disciple-making  
Mission Approach to Welfare  
(Discussion primer)

Mr. Shane Varcoe

*Helping up and out, not just  
assuaging in.*

*A discussion primer for churches  
transitioning welfare distribution  
to a more intentional missional and  
community empowering mode.*

*"So we preach Christ to everyone. With all possible wisdom we warn and teach them in order to bring each one into God's presence as a mature individual in union with Christ. To get this done I toil and struggle, using the mighty strength which Christ supplies and which is at work in me."*

(Colossians 1:28-29 GNBDC)



**Disciplesplanet**

**"The Resurrection Changes Everything!"** Nik Ripkin

W. [www.disciplesplanet.net](http://www.disciplesplanet.net) E. [team@disciplesplanet.net](mailto:team@disciplesplanet.net) P. 61 0403 100 099

# A potential policy platform for managing the Welfare Victim.

---

The ensuing propositions are purposed to generate discussion for the formation of a Godly and Biblical processes by which God's Church (You and I) could more effectively minister in a Kingdom manner to the disadvantaged in our Australian Urban Culture, and within the disciple-making mandate of The Christ. This primer is what it declares itself to be, a 'discussion starter', and it is to be thrashed through, challenged, robustly debated, edited and then, hopefully, become part of the foundation for your Church community mission policy on serving, equipping and empowering the disadvantaged and impoverished in your sphere of influence to ultimately find the discipleship journey out of disempowering and victim entrenching modes.

Different people, with various perspectives and gift sets will view the data setout below through that subjective lens, which is quite normal. However, it is important that we all try and work toward the best kingdom practice that enables, equips and empowers – redeems and transforms – people to discover the highest priorities and ultimate experience of Divine Grace, as outlined by Jesus in Matthew 6:33 and Paul in Ephesians 4:13. These priorities must always be your foundational doctrine for service, care and ministry. And ultimately must be a key lens through which we view all texts.

*“Share each other’s troubles and problems, and in this way obey the law of Christ.”*

Galatians 6:2

For example Galatians 6 and verse 2 exhorts everyone who calls themselves a Christian to share each others burdens and in so doing we are being obedient to the law of Christ. This, of course, sounds axiomatically true, but what does that burden sharing look like, and particularly in the context of our two previously mentioned core intents of the Kingdom?

Yet, often, this verse has been interpreted (as the final parable of Jesus on the Sheep and the Goats can be – more on that later) in its isolated context as simply kind deeds. Consequently it can lend itself to be misused by many, particularly when applied to the poor or disadvantaged among us, as you can see in the following commentary insert, the context has more to do with the ‘metaphysical’ than the physical.

Why, because physical needs are not important? Of course, they are and must be met by Jehovah Jireh, and His Body in accordance with His best Kingdom practice, and its core priorities as a purposely sought outcome.

*A serving christian lends a helping hand with heavy loads (bareô). Though the principle would apply to all burdens the context has special reference to the heavy and oppressive weight of temptation and spiritual failure. While the “spiritual” do the work of restoring, all believers are to become involved by prayer and encouragement. This, wrote Paul, will fulfill (anapleôroôsete) the law of Christ, that is, the principle of love (cf. 5:14; John 13:34)*

Bible Knowledge Commentary (Navpress)

*The image of bearing another's "burden" or "weight" (the term was also applied metaphorically to griefs) might remind readers of slaves or of impressment (roman soldiers could require local people to carry something for them). In either case, it is an image of subservience that demands more than convenience. "Bear burdens" in this context must include helping a fellow christian deal with sins (Galatians 6:1). Many take "law of Christ" as referring to a saying of Jesus, but in the context of Galatians it more likely refers to his example and the character of Jesus imparted by the Spirit (Galatians 2:20; Galatians 5:14)*

Bible Knowledge Commentary (Navpress)

Therefore, it is also as important to investigate what is behind those burdens becoming so heavy and thus preventing an individual from handling them.

- *Is it beyond an individual's capacity or more beyond a dysfunctional agency?*
- *Do we help carry or rather help equip and enable to carry?*

When it comes to the obvious things like grief (death in the family) loss (heavy financial etc) then helping them go *through* is a 'no brainer', but it is a seasonal thing; "...going through the valley of the shadow of death" (not taking up residence in it) is tough and we should, we must, help with that. **We are called to help others cope, carry, and complete.**

However it is not about taking over for them, rather enabling them, certainly to cope, carry or complete, but also to go beyond – to become all that God purposed them to be or at least point them toward and assist them in that direction. Helping others discover, rectify and/or change

‘issues’ behind this is what the *law of Christ* is meant to accomplish. This process turns people from casualties and even consumers into, if not conquerors, then at least contributors. It is in fulfilling the *law of Christ* to others that we all find our greatest blessing and prosperity. That is why the ‘principle’ and the ‘law’ focuses on the ‘because’, not merely the outcome – “and so must we”.

## Bookend Number One – Jesus Christ’s First Fully Developed Parable.

---

Right here I want to encourage you and your team to visit again, the *Parable of the Sower* in Matthew Chapter 13. It is also important to emphasize here that Jesus *never* taught publicly outside the framework of this Parable ([Matthew 13 :34-35](#)) – His messaging was with what we would call *metaphorical* theology. But always behind it was what we may allege is *conceptual* theology, *all* launching from the foundational practice of Kingdom jurisdiction and Conformity to Christ.

Rev Terry Johnson in his text book, [The Parables of Jesus](#), stated, “The particular genius of parables is their capacity to reveal and hide truth at the same time.” This is why the Parable of the Sower is not only the first, but arguably, the ‘Rosetta stone’ as it were, for understanding all other parables. The Gospel of Mark’s writer recorded Jesus Words of exhortation in Mark 4 :13 when the disciples asked Jesus to explain the parable to them... ***“Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables?”***

So, why is this parable so important?

This parable is all about uncovering the *heart* of the audience, the hearer. Jesus Christ, as God incarnate, already knows the hearts of all humanity, but the key is to reveal it to the hearer, so they can see their state, and

then look to and embrace (or not) what is needed, to change. The Creator is the only **One** who can offer best-practice for that ‘salvation’, but we, as free-will agents, must still choose to accept and embrace that best-practice if it is going to ‘save’ us.

Commentators agree with the obvious, that the Author of Salvation – the provider of seed – is perfect; the *Good News* is perfect and seed viable; it is the soil of the heart that will determine not only germination, but maturation of that Divine resource. As you’ve read in the parable of the four different soils, only one germinated to a fruit bearing stage.

Now, this is where we must move from the ‘fiat accompli’ pre-determinist perspective. The notion that God created that heart and predetermined its response. No, God created the perfect soil, but it is what we have done with that soil that determines how ‘receptive’ it is to a harvest potential.

I have worked in agriculture, silviculture, and some horticulture, and I can tell you that no credible and equipped farmer misuses viable seed. They sow for *harvest*, not for fun! They want to see *good* resources, put to the most *effective* use, to bring about the very *best* result. For example, no sower looks at a paddock full of rocks and then sows straight into it. For the uninitiated, there are so many problems with that potential action, not least of all the shallowness of the soil creating little and short-lived germination, but also, one cannot easily harvest amongst rocks. What the good farmer does, is work to clear the field of those rocks, and in many places build walls from them (turning liabilities into a usable asset) and then turns the limited soil before he sows’. Of course, there will be less fruit from this field cluttered and labor intensive field, but clearly a much greater yield will be realized because of this preparatory and remedial work – This is partly what Christ’s Kingdom does. Just briefly, you can see this analogy with the soil full of weeds, the weeds can be dealt with in a big part if herbicides are applied and cultivation done, all enhancing this ‘soil’ (the human heart) to receive effectively the message of transformation – salvation!

I will not take this further, but you understand the parallels here.

The thing with **our** heart, is that there is a cosmic battle raging for it. Satan, the Adversary, the enemy of God and His offspring, will use many and all tactics to corrupt the soil of our hearts. He uses the second most

influential enemy, the world, to corrupt the field, but he works tirelessly with our *ever present* enemy, our unredeemed ‘flesh’, to try and keep the soil of our hearts either unreceptive or unproductive to the Kingdom Message.

But.... We still are the final decision makers of what we allow the soil of our hearts to be subject to. Yet our Father God knows that our ignorance, bad experiences, and lack of best-practice options in our lives can prevent our hearts from being open to the best. This is why the Church, the Body of Christ, is all about bringing best-practice into all environments and to whom all we meet, thus adding to the ‘fields’ we are called to.

*“The Cross of The Christ is, and represents many things; it is a bridge; it is shield; it is a sign, even a weapon of profound spiritual nature. However, it is also a plow - it is the tool of heaven to break the sod of the hard, rebellious and recalcitrant heart. It prepares the heart for grace and truth to be sown, that salvation may germinate in that place.”*

[Kairos Blog 2014](#)

## The Narrow Way.

I want to state it clearly here again. It is important to remember that our overarching mandate and mission in all our Kingdom family activities is to make disciples, and all other actions, programs, processes and priorities are subject to and directed by that call. If we disconnect any action or activity from this longing of our Creator to reach, adopt, grow and have ever deepening communion with lost humanity – that is disciple making, then what eternal and Divine familial fruit will be harvested?

Just one more digression to frame this treatise. Jesus' teaching on the few who find and properly walk the *Narrow way*.

When time permits, I'd encourage you to read *'Lowering the Bar? I don't think so!'* Excerpt from the Book *Second Chance Solution*, which is a more thorough unpacking of the following brief questions.

- Is God incarnate, the Saviour of the 'whole world', setting a deliberately difficult path back to relationship with Father God – almost as tough as following the law?
- Is this narrow way a measure to cull humanity to fit a pre-determined number of 'saved' people?
- Is it a cosmic treasure hunt in which only certain pre-disposed people will discover the way in?

Of course, even a cursory glance at the Incarnation, will tell you that the Creator of the Universe and its most prized treasure – Humanity, isn't going to put Himself where we all should be, so that only a predetermined few will enter back into eternal communion with Him. No! God did not change the seminal design that was in play from the beginning. However, He works tirelessly to enable, empower, and equip His created children, to re-enter that collaborative communion around best Kingdom practice and relationship. It is our **'hearts'** that He wants fully invested into this divine and eternal process. Jesus reiterates this emphasis in His famous disclosure in John 14:6, that HE is The **Way**, The **Truth** and The **Life**, and that no one can (not merely enter heaven, but much more vitally) come back to the Father, but through Jesus.

Now let's frame this all again in our meta-call – *Make Disciples*. It is about all who claim to be *Christians* taking up the mandate of Disciple-making that;

1. Leads (or seeks to) all we meet to the narrow way.
2. Demonstrates how to walk the narrow way.
3. Walks with them on the narrow way.

I will contend that 'few find it', simply because few have been shown. And the question then emerges from all this; on whose lap does this poor outcome land?

I believe it is time the Disciple-making church aligns all its activities, strategies, intents and plans with this Divine relationship restoring mandate, so that every person we meet – all the world – will have the best opportunity to prepare the *soil that is their heart*, to receive the salvation seed, and all that this entails, to an eternally wonderful and fruit-filled end.

## Crisis, Capacity, Compassion and Coaching.

The remarkable author and brilliant thinker, Clive Staples Lewis puts one of the best perspectives on the issue of compassion and kindness in the following extract from his work, *The problem of pain...*

*“I might, indeed, have learned, even from the poets, that Love is something more stern and splendid than mere kindness; that even the love between the sexes is, as in Dante, “a lord of terrible aspect”. There is kindness in Love: but Love and kindness are not coterminous, and when kindness... is separated from the other elements of Love, it involves a certain fundamental indifference to its object, and even something like contempt of it. Kindness consents very readily to the removal of its object – we have all met people whose kindness to animals is constantly leading them to kill animals lest they should suffer. Kindness, merely as such, cares not whether its object becomes good or bad, provided only that it escapes suffering. As Scripture points out, it is bastards who are*

*spoiled: the legitimate sons, who are to carry on the family tradition, are disciplined. It is for people whom we care nothing about that we demand happiness on any terms; with our friends, our lovers, our children, we are exacting and would rather see them suffer much than be happy in contemptible and estranging modes. If God is Love, He is, by definitions, something more than mere kindness. And it appears, from all the records, that though He has often rebuked us and condemned us, He has never regarded us with contempt. He has paid us the intolerable compliment of loving us, in the deepest, most tragic, most inexorable sense.”*

Renowned Psychotherapist Sigmund Freud made a number of interesting assertions in his writings, the one that perhaps most accurately reflects reality was his observation that most of human behaviour can be reduced to two elements, *the maximising of pleasure and the minimising of pain*. For most of us, caught in a world obsessed with ease and comfort, this can quickly become our mode. However, if we are more than this, and the evidence strongly indicates we are much more complex than our base urges and instincts, then we need more than permission to pursue pleasure, or simple kindness in pain to be complete.

**It is my contention that whilst we may be preoccupied with comfort, God – our Creator – is preoccupied with wholeness as our opening Scriptural priorities prescribe.**

*“Kindness gives in and cuts us some slack while love holds our feet to the fire until it accomplishes what is best for our ultimate well-being. Kindness removes obstacles to our contentment while love remakes us into what we are intended to be. This remaking is far from comfortable. It often requires*

*tearing out walls and scraping away mold and rot before rebuilding. But this is what God does. He loves us so much that he will cut out the cancer or pull the tooth in spite of our pain. He wants so much for us to share eternal life with him that he is determined to burn out of our souls everything that is not eternal, even if we are painfully scorched in the process.”*

Thomas Williams

What we call *Social Responsibility* and *Social Justice* I believe are mandated for not only all followers of Jesus Christ, but consequently anyone who wants to be a ‘decent’ human being living with others. (Of course, who now, in our purported post-truth culture, determines what is the basis for ‘justice and responsibility’ is a long discussion for another paper.) It is also imperative, that for the *Ambassador* of another Kingdom, it is what we should be ‘living out’, not merely performing in, when convenient. However, it is important to note the key words here – *responsibility* and *justice*. All of us must credibly (Biblically) define and then observe these two elements.

If any of us (regardless of socio-economic status) refuse to acknowledge our need to embrace these qualities, then we will be hard pressed to claim the title of ‘Disciple’. However, we are to own every aspect of this, not merely the *bits that suit us*. For example, the financially “well off” may prize justice and philanthropy and advocate for better conditions for the disadvantaged and give copious amounts of money toward such ends, but refuse, if called, to actually *incarnate* at any level with the poor, they claim to ‘champion’ is a problem. Alternatively, living and serving with the poor, and refusing to prioritise sound fiscal practices, growth of personal agency and resource development, according to Godly principles, is also not pursuing Biblical best-practice.

# Our First World Poverty Context.

---

Poverty can be viewed through a variety of lenses, and all with some legitimacy. However, when we evaluate poverty status in a First World context, we need to get perspective by understanding it in a global context. The terms, marginalised, disadvantaged and disempowered, are part of that evaluation. However, when you add the unemployed, homeless and without any resources at all, you have terms that go beyond the status of 'under-class', but now considered genuinely impoverished. Certainly, the latter of these categories' edges very close to a more third world state of poverty, but we in Australia have many resources that shield us from such dire conditions.

There are some who are marginalised and in some areas disadvantaged and even rate in the under-class, but are there really any *impoverished* in its most pure sense in Australia, and if so, what criterion do we use to determine this?

*I can even feel the heckles on your neck rising even as I write this but bear with me a little longer, please?*

I would like to posit the following based on a number of factors, not least having decades of experience in engaging, befriending and opening my home and life at different stages to some of the least and the last in our urban settings.

## **Identify, assess, and meet the real need.**

I have, for the sake of brevity, *not pejorative labelling*, identified three Categories:

1. **Circumstantially Poor** – Life has brought about events that have knocked them over, down, or out. These are the **‘Bleeding’** – triage is urgent and stabilisation to interrupt the serious harm is your required priority.

*“We may be preoccupied with comfort, God – our creator – is preoccupied with wholeness.”*

2. **Willingly Poor** – They have given up, embraced ‘welfare’ as a viable option and then invest in processes to obtain and sustain welfare. These are the **‘Begging’** – this is your discretion. A more intentional examination is needed to better determine the best way forward in helping this demographic.

3. **Rebelliously Poor** – They see welfare as a means of gain. They *play* tactical games and often elaborate cons, feign poverty, scam and rip off people/organizations, sometimes systematically. These are what I call the **‘Bailing’** – this group is your challenge. The need for thorough scrutiny and warm, but wise and guarded response is vital, not only for the prevention of the misuse of Kingdom resources, but more so to avoid contributing to the further development of this toxic posture.

I want to focus on the last two categories here, and particularly on the notable reality that these candidates have entered a phase of *resolve* - a determined purposefulness which requires addressing. As such they have, to varying degrees, engaged a set of *beliefs, ideas, and processes* to manage their perspective of the situation *they are not just in, but are actively contributing to*. The following are just some of the processes they have engaged in (be it deliberate or tacit) - they have

- Estimated and evaluated
- Deliberated
- Decided
- Acted upon.

Granted, most of these processes are exercised, (at least initially) within an often-limited set of options and perspectives which can very much include, social environmental elements, as well as cultural factors such as, lack of education, language issues, migrant enclaves etc. (To parallel with

previous preparation to sow, these challenges, not unlike the rocks and debris in a field, can be cleared with assistance) However, it is important to note that in these latter two modes of *decision and action*, there are thoughts, motives, tactics, and skills in play, which can all indicate clear evidence of a level of ‘ownership’ of their current circumstance or status. When Agency is engaged to both sustain or defend a victim status, then the very real risk of entitlement commences its leverage. *In this space, we have a state that does not require alleviation, rather transformation.*

*The key to any discipleship process is to assist an individual to redirect and reengage whatever agency activated ‘skillsets’ to help them own a better (preferably Godly) process for managing the poverty predicament they find themselves in. This is the tiling of the ‘soil’, the removal of stones, the breaking of hardened sod and removing weeds.*

## The Core Mission is the Great Commission.

**Y**es, once again!

Our Lord and King, Jesus Christ’s, valedictory discourse had recorded what we now know as the *Great Commission*. We are to go into all the world – *and as we go* – we are to actively be making disciples, and not just of individuals, but nations. The mandate is not merely about personal selling ‘fire insurance’ for eternity, or promising ‘life keys’ for success, rather a complete recalibration – a remaking of people and the culture they find themselves a part of.

This is a profoundly *penetrative* process and one that entails every part of the life and culture of that person/group. As I have written elsewhere, discipleship does not commence when a person repents and believes, it transitions from a pre-conversion discipleship to a post-conversion discipleship. I want you to keep this premise in mind as you read on.

You will recall at the opening of this paper, we looked at the first *book end* Parable of Jesus Christ. We are now going to look at the other book end to His ministry.

At this point I want you to take a look at the following reflection on the second last Parable – the Parable of the Talents – that Jesus taught before charging all who would follow Him to ‘go and make disciples of all nations’. It’s telling is chronologically between the last Parable of the ‘sheep and the goats’ – strong emphasis on caring for the genuinely disenfranchised, distressed, depleted and/or deprived – and the Parable of the 10 Virgins, a lesson in *alertness and readiness for duty, the fulfilling of ones privileged and Holy Spirit enabled responsibilities*.

## Jesus’ Last Three Parables.

---

**T**he very last recorded Parable of Jesus was the parable of the ‘sheep and the goats.’ Its message is clear, and warnings are, for all intents and purposes, aimed at those who call themselves Christians and how they conduct themselves toward the least and the last. However, it is not a stand-alone commission; it is wedged between the previous two parables as we have read, and the final commission of going to make disciples of nations. I will contend here that these ‘bookends’ (if you like) help us frame the intent and agency of this instruction.

### **The Parable of the Talents ([Matthew 25: 14-30](#))**

For sake of brevity and to assist you to engage in a more informed discussion, I will simply list some salient elements of this important lesson.

- It ‘bounces out’ of the *Parable of the wise and foolish virgins*, which saw a privileged group of trusted friends take on a noble and prestigious duty – only to see half of them take the honor lightly and consequently, underprepare. The result was that the Bridegroom said, and to put it in the vernacular; “I thought I knew you! I had no idea you thought so little of me and the needs of this day, boy was I wrong about our relationship.” (Note both privilege and responsibility were in the context of a close relationship.) (Matthew 7:21f)
- In the *Parable of the Talents* it is important to note that it is the *servants* (those entrusted with and have full knowledge of the running of the house and business) who are **given**, a significant resource each – it was not earned, it was entrusted.
- It was not a ‘gift’, as that would imply no obligation or requirement, no it was a *talent* with responsibility and accountability attached.
- All that we have – humanity in total included – is granted by our Creator God, and whilst some are ‘gifts’, most are resources that He wants us to collaborate with – to be co-stewards of – His creation, as was the design in Eden. We steward under His governance and our labour is not onerous, but liberating, fulfilling, satisfying and prosperously successful to boot! Work is sacred, toil is the result of the curse. When we stopped being stewards and started to govern independently of the Kings best practice, this resulted in the blessed and joyful responsibility of work, becoming an arduous task – toil.
- Our wise heavenly Father also knows both our capacity and agency and never requires more of us than is expected from His resourcing – ***‘His yoke is easy and light’*** ([Matthew 11:28-30](#)) if we work in tandem with Him (not separate to or against) as He is the ‘wise and experienced governing ‘Ox’. The *Talents* granted the servants ([about 20 years wages per Talent](#)) are within the equipped servants *current capacity* to manage, and he expects them to *trade* in that capacity. The Master wants them to use *their agency* to work that existing capacity to bring the best fruit it can with the resources already given. In the context of this parable, those who do so, are enabled to double their production. Growth is *always* a real outcome of genuine divine collaboration, surrender, trust and obedience to the gift Giver.

- It is down to the *posture and practice* of the individual that will determine the outcome. They were all servants by title, no one had a different status, but as with the virgins in the previous parable it was as if the posture of readiness, preparedness and diligence in the task before them determined their productivity.

It is this final ‘identifier’ that determines both results and evaluation. It is important to note that capacity and agency are dynamic. We are created in Gods image, but as we have seen in the yoking context above, we also need to learn best-practice from His model and training. The posture of the servant is the ‘free will’ use of our agency to implement *or not*, and for best practice of the *Expert* – the choice is *always* ours; personal relationship insists on it.

But whatever choice that is, we will be held accountable for it. The rewards for implementing best practices are remarkable and delightful. It is not just success and prosperity; it is the discovering of even greater capacity and responsibility in stewarding the Kingdom and all the utopian reality that this brings. And better still, [we are conforming more and more to the Image of His Son](#) in all dimensions. Servanthood leads to glorious communion and favour – *This is very much part of what all disciple-makers want for those who they meet.*

## What does a Servant Ambassador do?

**I** will contend that it is the responsibility of Ambassadors of Christ’s Kingdom not so much to ‘claim their rights in Christ’ but first, learn and fulfill their Biblical responsibilities and then teach others to do so – *ownership of the privileged service in stewarding God’s Kingdom!* However, if *ownership* becomes focused on *rights*, especially in a prosperous ‘first world’ culture, then people believe that it is *their* right to a share of, or at least an easier shot at, prosperity, *whether by fair means or foul.*

It is interesting to note too, in the previous Parable, that the Master, had an “*at least*” clause within the responsibility brief. ‘Trade’ was the commission but doing nothing was not the only other option. *‘At least you could have deposited the money with the bankers...and get interest’*. This would not have seen appreciation given to the now labelled “lazy” servant (important evaluation) but he would not have been relegated to the status of “wicked” and subsequently worthless.

Once we understand all the parameters of this Parable, we do not see the Master as a tyrant – and only the lazy and wicked view him as ‘austere’ (NOTE that). All perception and/or prosperity are found in the posture adopted, not simply the potential, and it is this reality that must be *conveyed to all who want to engage* with or be part of the Omni-benevolent God’s Kingdom. Preparing the ‘soil’ of the heart to receive and enable growth of the ‘good’ seed.

## Capacity – Correction and Completion.

The Barrel analogy – The Staves, both a) size and b) condition

**I** want to juxtapose the barrel imagery with individual capacity; an individual may be granted a large capacity – big barrel, but if it is only 5% full, it is the emptiness that will be examined and adjudicated on. On the other hand, a comparatively small barrel may be overflowing and that one is rewarded not for their volume, but fulfillment of their current granted capacity.

However, sometimes the issue is not about potential volume but more about damage or impediment that is limiting capacity. Sometimes it is a stave problem.

As you may be aware a barrel that is commissioned for liquid has many staves that are bound together to present a waterproof container. All the staves must be at the same length to ensure that the barrel reaches capacity and can hold contents safely. However, if a stave is shortened, or

there is a hole or damage to a stave, then the contents will leak from that lowest level or at the breach. At that point of breach or shortened length, capacity is limited; and no matter how many resources you pour into it, it cannot be filled, *without repair, remediation, or restoration*.

Jesus, as the *First Paraclete* and God Himself understood this, and even though standards are set, and resources granted, things do happen, crisis hits and/or mistakes are made. The establishment of the New Covenant in the profoundly remarkable and overwhelmingly generous construct of **Grace** sees even more resources deployed to help those created in His Image *bear fruit*.

In [Luke 13:6-9](#), we see just such an intervention to restore capacity, and by the one who knows best practice, to those who are missing the mark. This is done to assist them to achieve and become all that His Kingdom potential has purposed them to be. You will note that the [deployment of this empowering, enabling and equipping resource was to assist the fruitless tree to bear fruit](#), not simply receive all the resources and remain fruitless – accountability from the Owner of the Vineyard remains, as we saw in the previously mentioned Parables.

God is incredibly and breath-takingly generous, but also an unfathomably wise investor, who sincerely values all His resources released under stewardship.



It is *in* Christ and His Kingdom that we find the *right side up* principles that challenge the materialistic forces that demand our attention and energy, not by denying desire or even need, but by understanding that it is in trusting our Creator, our Heavenly Father, Jehovah Jireh, that we find, not merely acquisition or provision, but satisfaction and sufficiency, abrogating the need to accumulate or consume.

The following principle is just one such ‘right side up’ idea, that must be inculcated in all of those wanting to ‘take up their cross and follow Jesus’.

*“It is possible to give freely and become wealthier, but those who are stingy will lose everything. The generous prosper and are satisfied; those who refresh others will themselves be refreshed.”*

Proverbs 11:24-25 (NLT)

Because of such an example of Biblical ethos, we should enact and instruct the following,

- i. Yoke to a new ‘master’ and leave the old self-governing and victim embracing one.*
- ii. Stop externalising blame.*
- iii. Learn to delay gratification.*
- iv. Manage and change poor impulse control.*
- v. Be responsible and accountable for our own actions.*
- vi. Collaborate under His ‘yoke’ to bear fruit, then go on to...*
- vii. Model and teach servanthood and generosity to others.*

It is this step-by-step journey in a free-willed relationship that will go a long way to helping *recalibrate* the ‘welfare victim’ mindset that so debilitates and ensnares many souls. This, of course, cannot be done merely ‘at a distance’ or simply through a ‘cognitive course’, but through a process or relationship, modeling, instruction, commitment and Holy Spirit empowered prayer **that both parties are committed to.**

Selah!  
Shane Varcoe

*The following is a suggested basic draft template for an agreement with potential welfare client and the group providing the welfare option i.e. community pantry.*

# **You need some help? We'd love to be able to help you if we can... Let's work together.**

*(Insert an Introduction: Your church mission and specific mandate of the charity/welfare program you have in play – Not too long, but an overview.)*

**God Loves you, and so do we, that's why God's Kingdom Love is more than a 'hand out', it is a 'hand up'.**

*“Share each other's troubles and problems, and in this way obey the law of Christ.”*

Galatians 6:2

This Bible verse epitomizes the essence of Christian community. Yet, for the most part, this verse is misunderstood and therefore usually misused by many people, particularly when applied to the poor or disadvantaged among us. This idea, this 'law of Christ', has more to do with the 'metaphysical' than the physical. Why, because physical needs aren't important? ...of course not! But it is about what is behind those burdens becoming so heavy that we are now unable to handle them. In other words, it's more important to figure out what the real problem is and fix it, than just looking at the symptoms and putting 'band-aids on broken legs', it's useless in the end and often makes it worse.

When it comes to obvious things like grief (death in the family) loss (heavy financial etc.) then helping them go through is a 'no brainer', but it's only for a short time. King David wrote the famous 23 Psalm commonly called THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD, and it says “...*even though I go through the valley of the shadow of death or REALLY TOUGH TIMES, I won't worry because God is with me*” (You are not supposed to

‘camp’ in that dark place... keep moving – with help you can) is tough and we should help with that, we are called to help others cope, carry and complete. However, it is about not taking over for them, rather enabling them to, not just cope, carry or complete, but go beyond – become all that God purposed YOU to be. Helping others discover, rectify and/or change ‘issues’ behind this is what the ‘law of Christ’ is meant to accomplish. This process turns people from casualties and even consumers into conquering contributors. It is fulfilling the ‘law of Christ’ to others that we all find our greatest blessing and prosperity. That’s why the principle and the ‘law’ focuses on the ‘because’, not merely the outcome – and so must we.

*The key to any Church process is to assist an individual to redirect and reengage skills, energies and strategies to help them ‘own’ a better process for managing the predicament they have found themselves in.*

It’s really important we all help each other find the very best way forward, so the initial hand out, can grow into a hand up, and see individuals and families flourish.

*“Give a person a fish and you feed them for a day – teach them how to fish and you feed them for a lifetime.”*

Maimonides

What’s really amazing is that it is IN Christ and HIS Kingdom that we find the ‘upside down’ principles that challenge the materialistic forces that demand our attention and energy, not by denying desire or even need, but by understanding that it is in trusting our Creator, our Heavenly Father, Jehovah Jireh, that we find, not merely acquisition or provision, but satisfaction and sufficiency, abrogating the need to ‘have’ or ‘consume’. The following principle is just one such ‘upside down’ idea.

*“It is possible to give freely and become more wealthy, but those who are stingy will lose everything. The generous prosper and are satisfied; those who refresh others will themselves be refreshed.”*

Proverbs 11:24-25 (NLT)...

As a consequence of such an example of Biblical Ethos, we should enact and instruct the following...

- ✓ Yoke to a new 'master' and leave the old self-governing and victim embracing one.
- ✓ Stop externalising blame.
- ✓ Learn to delay gratification.
- ✓ Manage and change poor impulse control.
- ✓ Be responsible and accountable for our own actions.
- ✓ Collaborate under His 'yoke' and collaborate to bear fruit, then go on to...
- ✓ Model and teach servanthood and generosity to others.

It is these keys that will go a long way to helping recalibrate the 'welfare victim' mindset that so debilitates and ensnares many souls. This, of course, cannot be done merely 'at a distance' or simply through a 'cognitive course', but is process or relationship, modeling, instruction, commitment and Holy Spirit empowered prayer and process **that both parties are committed to.**

Some steps to implement...

As relationship develops, and as part of going the next step, you can give the recipient a challenge to do a generous act for someone else they know is poor. Or simply do an act of kindness for a stranger.



Please select one of the following and when you contact us next time, we can take the next step.

I really appreciate your total care and would love to work with you, so I can move forward and not get stuck in the welfare trap... I'd like help with Budget, priorities and finding work. I also want to learn how to get my 'act together' in living – not just for me, but more for my family.

Thank you for your help, but I will not require any further assistance.

Name

Signed

Date

No further assistance can be given without the return of this signed and dated arrangement.

*“Who Jesus sets free, will be truly free.”*

John 8:36

This information will only be used for the purpose of contacting you for further discussions. All your personal information will be protected and not shared with anyone else, according to Dalgrano Institute privacy statement.



“The Resurrection Changes Everything!” Nik Ripkin

W. [www.disciplesplanet.net](http://www.disciplesplanet.net) E. [team@disciplesplanet.net](mailto:team@disciplesplanet.net) P. 61 0403 100 099