

# Helping the Needy



4G Mentoring: Growing, Guiding, and  
Guarding the Global Bride of Christ

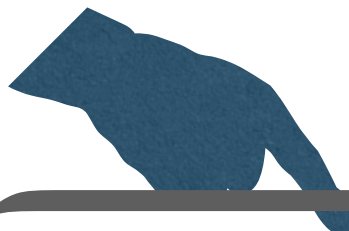
Copyright 2019 © by 4G Mentoring  
[www.4GMentoring.com](http://www.4GMentoring.com)  
[4GMentoring@gmail.com](mailto:4GMentoring@gmail.com)

# Foreword

**This document has been designed for use with small groups using cell-phones, tablets, computers, TV connections, or projectors. This document is not designed as a printed book (though it may be printed) or large group presentation but rather an electronic discussion guide for small or medium sized multi-language groups. The graphics on each page are designed to ease cross-cultural communication issues when using a translator or with group members using a second language. We hope that this document helps facilitate discussions about the Gospel of Jesus Christ in both formal and informal discussion groups in homes, churches, and coffee shops around the world. The copyright on this document allows you to freely distribute and even modify the content (except modifying the King's Witness symbols) to meet your needs.**

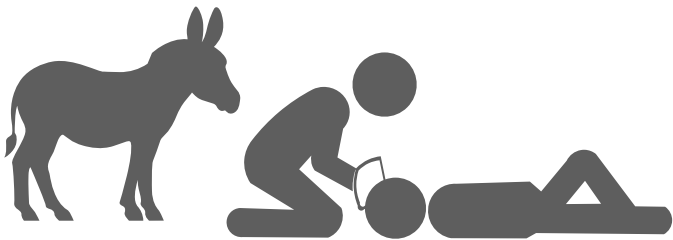
# Table of Contents

## (Quick Access Menu)

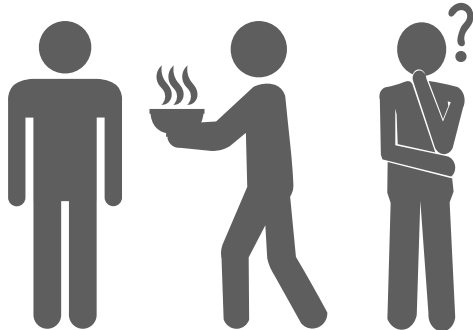


Introduction:

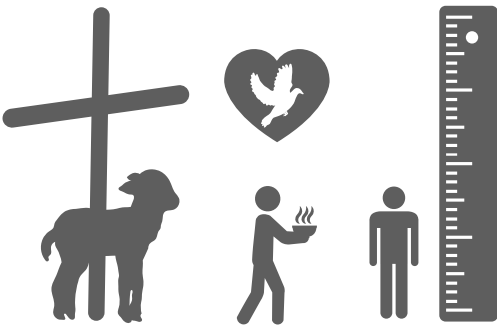
Loving God Should Result  
In Loving our Neighbor



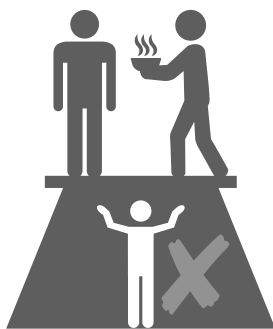
Helping the Needy  
Is Not Optional



We Don't Help Because  
People Are Worthy



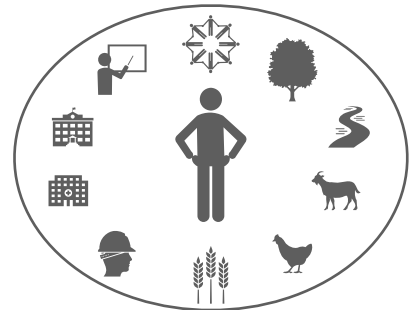
Avoid Idolizing the Poor



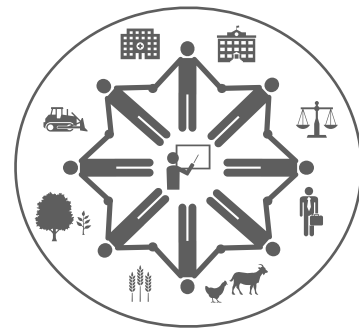
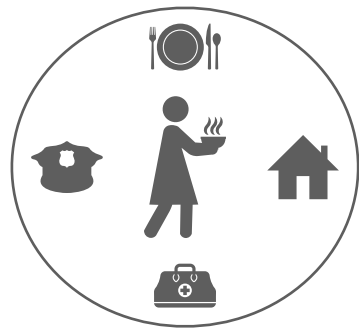
We Cannot Eradicate Poverty



Poverty Is the Inability to  
Use Available Resources

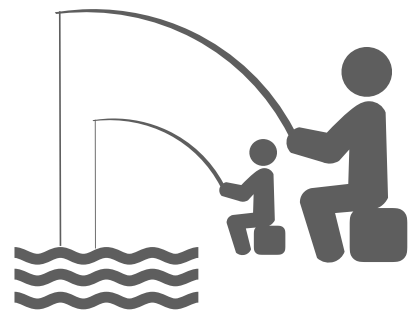


Relief vs. Development



Practical Principles for  
Helping the Poor

Teach People How to Fish



The Christian Community  
Is a Priority



Don't Become God to the Needy



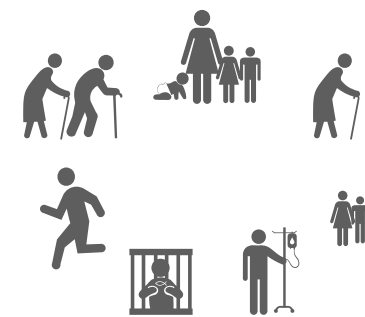
Choose Wise Boundaries



Don't Promise Open-Ended  
Support



Prioritize the Most Vulnerable



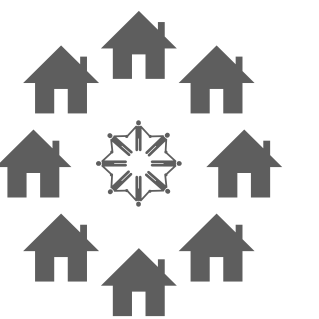
Avoid Being the Most Generous  
Donor in Town



Families Should Help  
Family Members



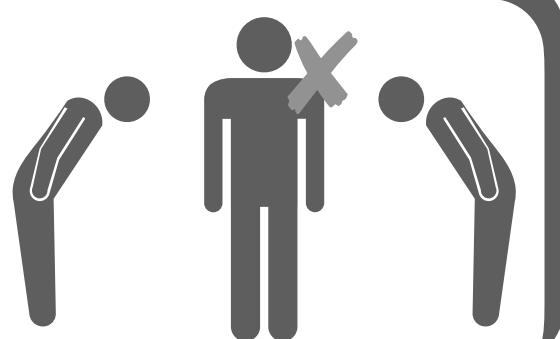
Consult the Community  
Before Giving Out Aid



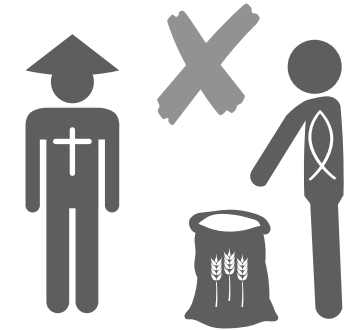
Do Not Provide for  
Those Who Can Work



Avoid Patron-Client  
Relationships



Avoid Making Rice Christians



Practice Holistic Ministry



Partner With Others  
To Expand Effectiveness



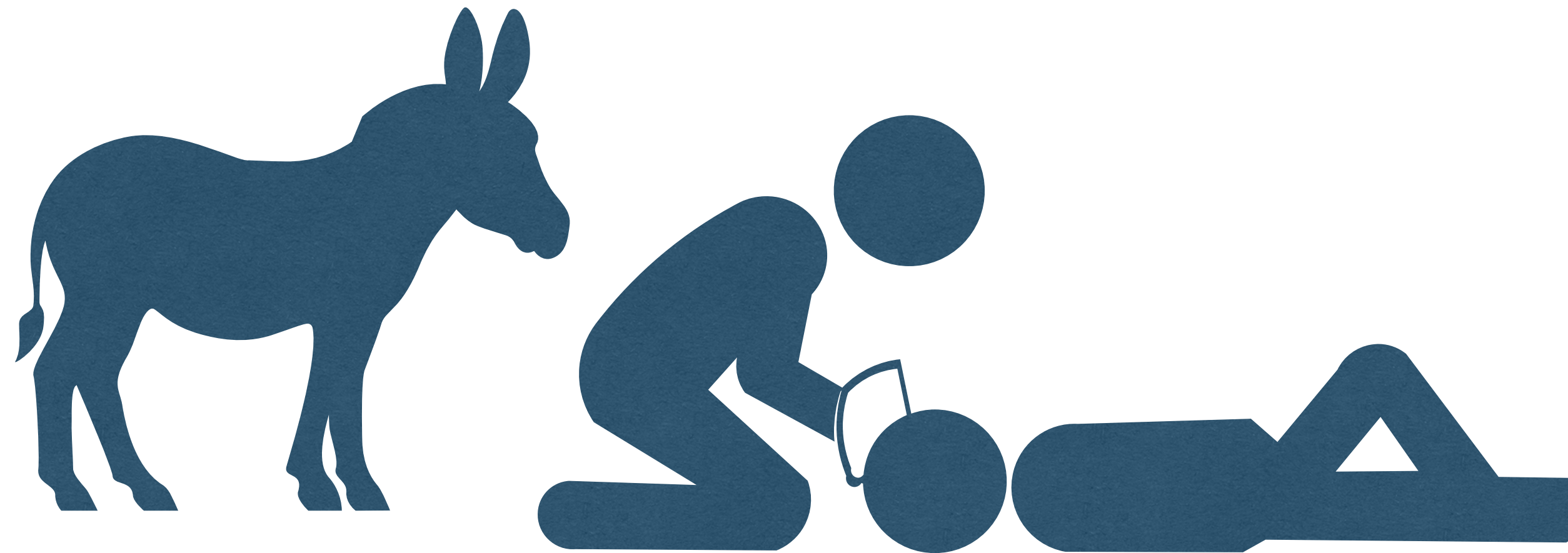
Case Studies:

Case Studies



# Introduction

# Loving God Should Result in Loving our Neighbor



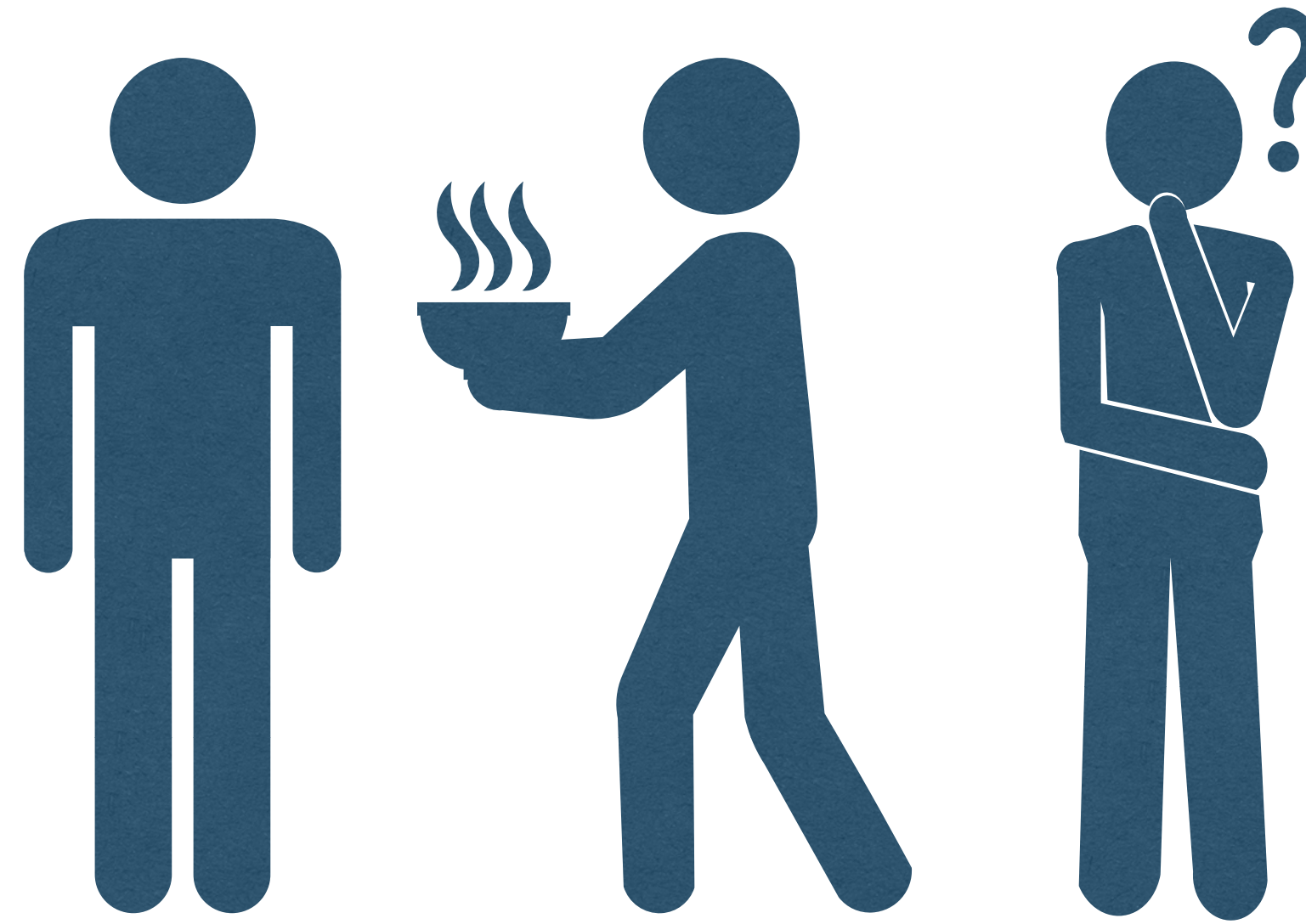
*“And behold, a lawyer stood up to put him to the test, saying, ‘Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?’ He said to him, ‘What is written in the Law? How do you read it?’ And he answered, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.’ And he said to him, ‘You have answered correctly; do this, and you will live.’”*  
*(Luke 10:25-28)*

*“But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, ‘And who is my neighbor?’ Jesus replied, ‘A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road, and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion. He went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him. And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, “Take care of him, and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.” Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?’ He said, ‘The one who showed him mercy.’ And Jesus said to him, ‘You go, and do likewise.’” (Luke 10:29-37)*

*“If anyone says, ‘I love God,’ and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.” (1 Peter 4:20-21)*

**Key Idea:** Loving God should result in loving our neighbor in word and actions.

# Helping the Needy Is Not Optional

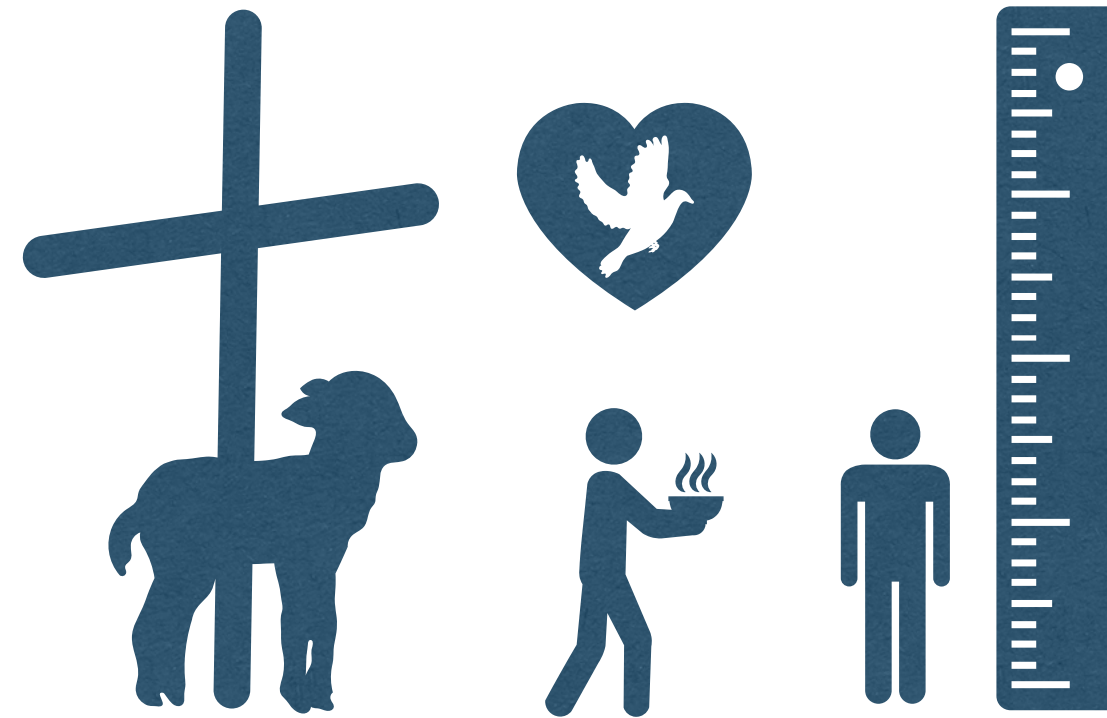


*“He said therefore to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, ‘You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruits in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, “We have Abraham as our father.” For I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.’ And the crowds asked him, ‘What then shall we do?’ And he answered them, ‘**Whoever has two tunics is to share with him who has none, and whoever has food is to do likewise.**’” (Luke 3:7-12)*

*“What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? **If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace, be warmed and filled,’ without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that?** So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.” (James 2:14-17)*

**Key Idea:** Helping the needy is not optional and is something God expects of all believers.

# We Don't Help Because People Are Worthy (but out of Gratefulness to God)



*“Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, **a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution.** And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, ‘It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. Therefore, brothers, **pick out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty.** But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.’ And what they said pleased the whole gathering, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them.” (Acts 6:1-6)*

*“Therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants. When he began to settle, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. And since he could not pay, his master ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made. So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ And **out of pity for him, the master of that servant released him and forgave him the debt. But when that same servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him, he began to choke him, saying, ‘Pay what you owe.’** So his fellow servant fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ He refused and went and **put him in prison until he should pay the debt.** When his fellow servants saw what had taken place, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their master all that had taken place. Then his master summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?’ And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers, until he should pay all his debt.” (Matthew 18:23-34)*

*“On the way to Jerusalem he was passing along between Samaria and Galilee. And as he entered a village, he was met by ten lepers, who stood at a distance and lifted up their voices, saying, ‘Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.’ When he saw them he said to them, ‘Go and show yourselves to the priests.’ And as they went they were cleansed. Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice; and he fell on his face at Jesus’ feet, giving him thanks. Now he was a Samaritan. Then Jesus answered, **‘Were not ten cleansed? Where are the nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?’** And he said to him, “Rise and go your way; your faith has made you well.”” (Luke 17:11-19)*

Note: Although some people in need will respond in gratefulness and turn and help their fellow man, others will respond by being rude, selfish, demanding, and ungrateful. If we are helping people only out of a sense of self-gratification or a desire to be praised then we will feel demotivated when we receive negative feedback from those we help. But when we remember that Christ died for us when we were still enemies of God then it will help us to continue helping those in need even when they respond in inappropriate ways.

**Key Idea:** We don’t help the poor because they are worthy or grateful but out of gratefulness to God for what he has done through Jesus.

# Avoid Idolizing the Poor (Or Those Who Work With Them)



**Key Idea:** Avoid idolizing or romanticizing the poor or those who help them as this creates an unrealistic view of human nature that will eventually result in disillusionment with helping the needy.

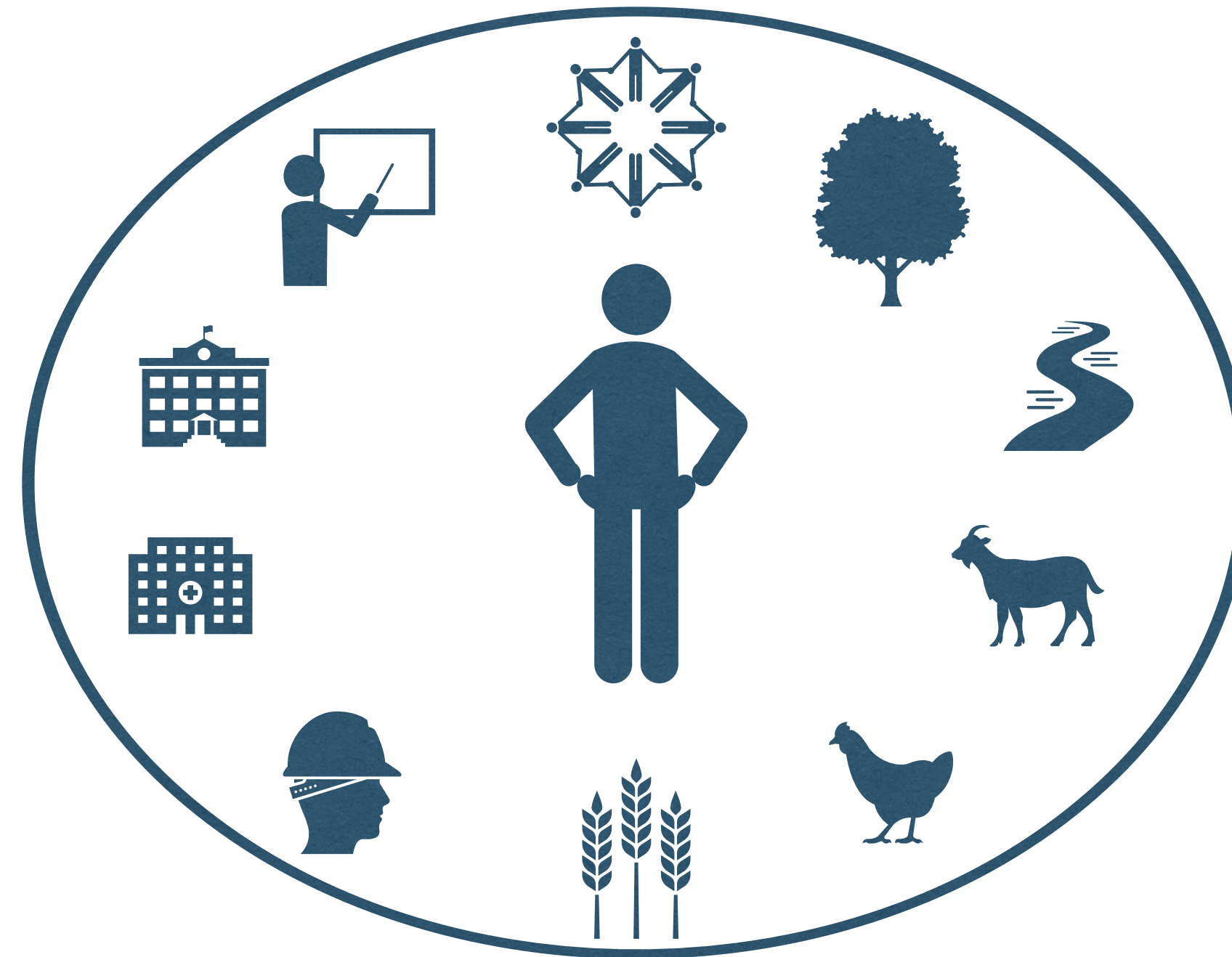
# We Cannot Eradicate Poverty (But We Can Transform Lives)



*“If among you, one of your brothers should become poor, in any of your towns within your land that the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart or shut your hand against your poor brother, but you shall open your hand to him and lend him sufficient for his need, whatever it may be. Take care lest there be an unworthy thought in your heart and you say, ‘The seventh year, the year of release is near,’ and your eye look grudgingly on your poor brother, and you give him nothing, and he cry to the LORD against you, and you be guilty of sin. You shall give to him freely, and your heart shall not be grudging when you give to him, because for this the LORD your God will bless you in all your work and in all that you undertake. **For there will never cease to be poor in the land. Therefore I command you, ‘You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor, in your land.’”** (Deuteronomy 15:7-11)*

**Key Idea:** We cannot eradicate all poverty but we can help improve the lives of many needy people.

# Poverty Is (Often) the Inability To Use Available Resources

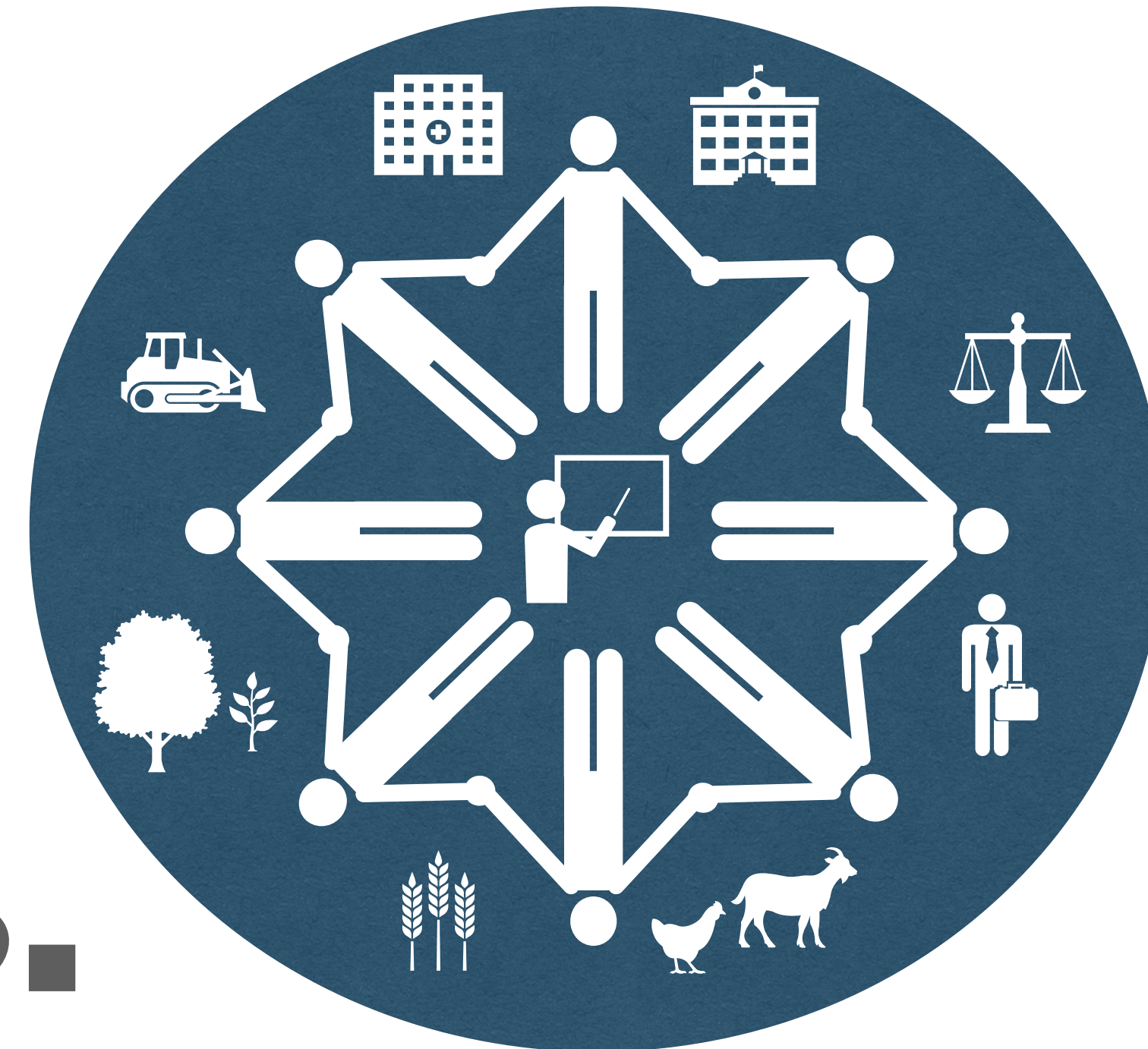


**Key Idea:** Poverty is often not a lack of resources but the inability to utilize available resources. We need to help people identify and utilize these available resources.

# Relief vs. Development



**VS.**



## **Relief:**

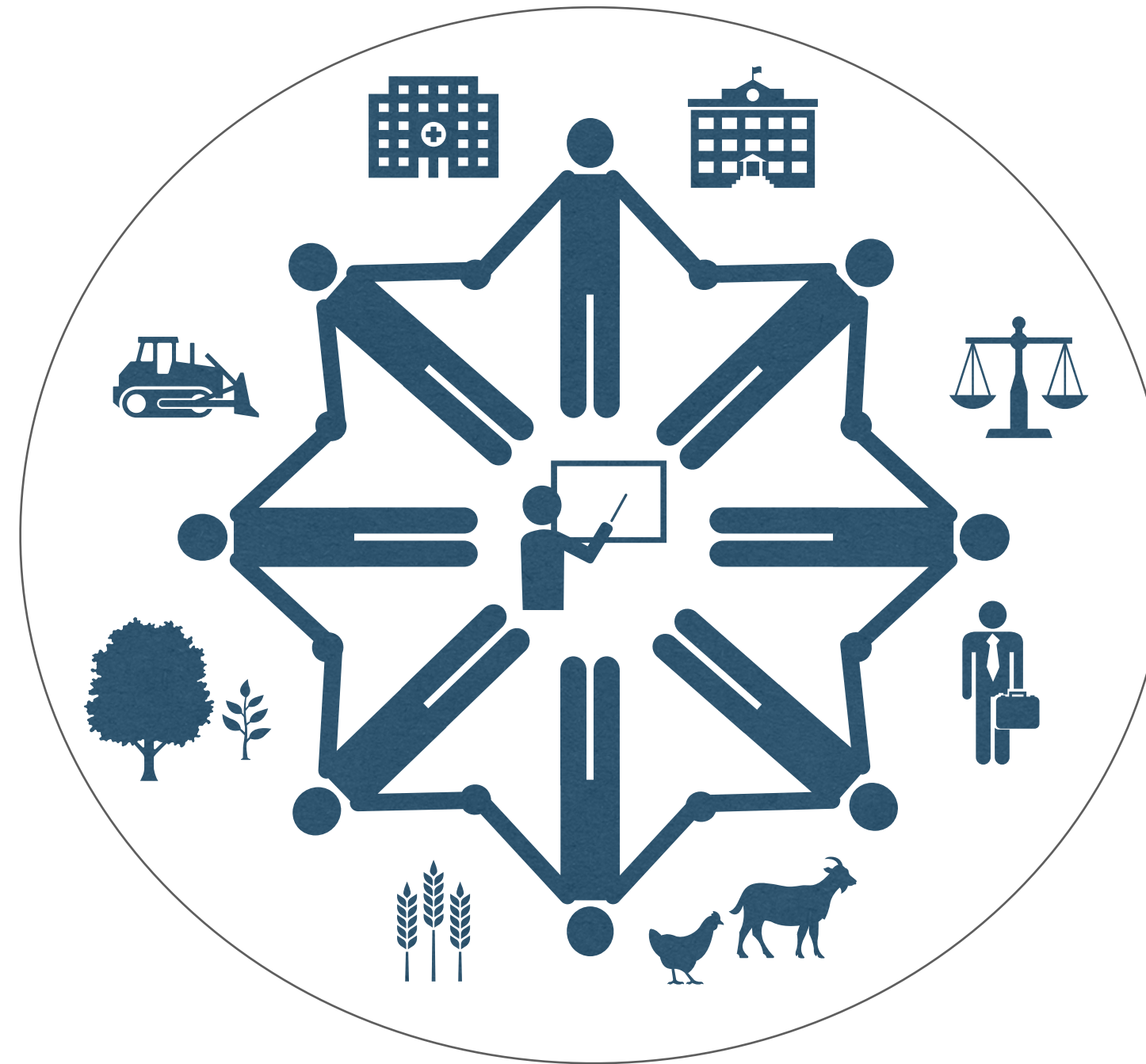
- **Food**
- **Housing**
- **Medical**
- **Security**



Relief generally addresses emergency issues such as food, housing, medical, and security issues. In emergency situations we need to make sure we are giving the right kinds of aid to the people who really need the help. Whether dealing with individuals or larger groups of people, we need to involve the local community and make sure that our emergency aid is helping rather than hurting.

## Development:

- Education
- Social Justice
- Economic (personal finance and job skills)
- Animal husbandry
- Agricultural development
- Reforestation and environmental concerns
- Infrastructure (personal or community)
- Health education
- Etc.

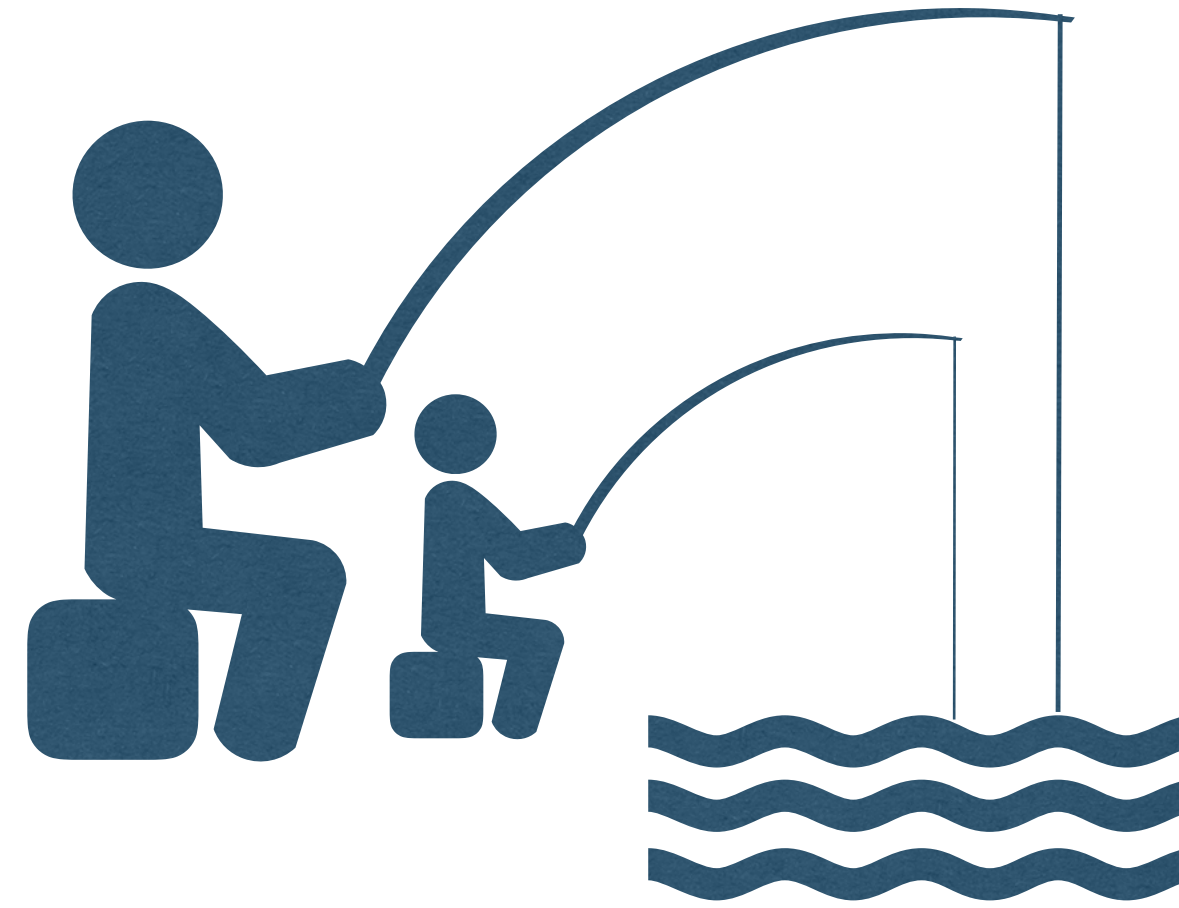


Development does not deal with short-term emergency situations but addresses long-term chronic poverty issues. Relief aid is necessary but tends to be reactive and does very little to alleviate chronic poverty. Development tends to be more preventative or corrective in nature and helps break the cycle of poverty. We want to focus a large part of our efforts, both for individuals and the larger community, on development rather than relief.

**Key Idea:** Be aware of the differences between relief and development and strive to make development a major focus of your ministry efforts.

# Practical Principles for Helping the Poor

# Teach People How To Fish (Rather Than Giving Them Fish)



An old proverb says, *“Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day. Teach a man how to fish and you feed him for a lifetime.”* Giving things to people may make us feel good but it does not necessarily meet the real need in another person’s life. We want to focus our efforts on teaching people how to responsibly provide for themselves rather than encouraging them to rely on us to handle their financial problems in the future. This means we need to get involved in people’s lives rather than just taking the easier road of handing out cash to the needy.

**Key Idea:** Teach people how to responsibly provide for themselves rather than building unhealthy dependance on others through charity.

# The Christian Community Is a Priority (but We Should Help Everyone)



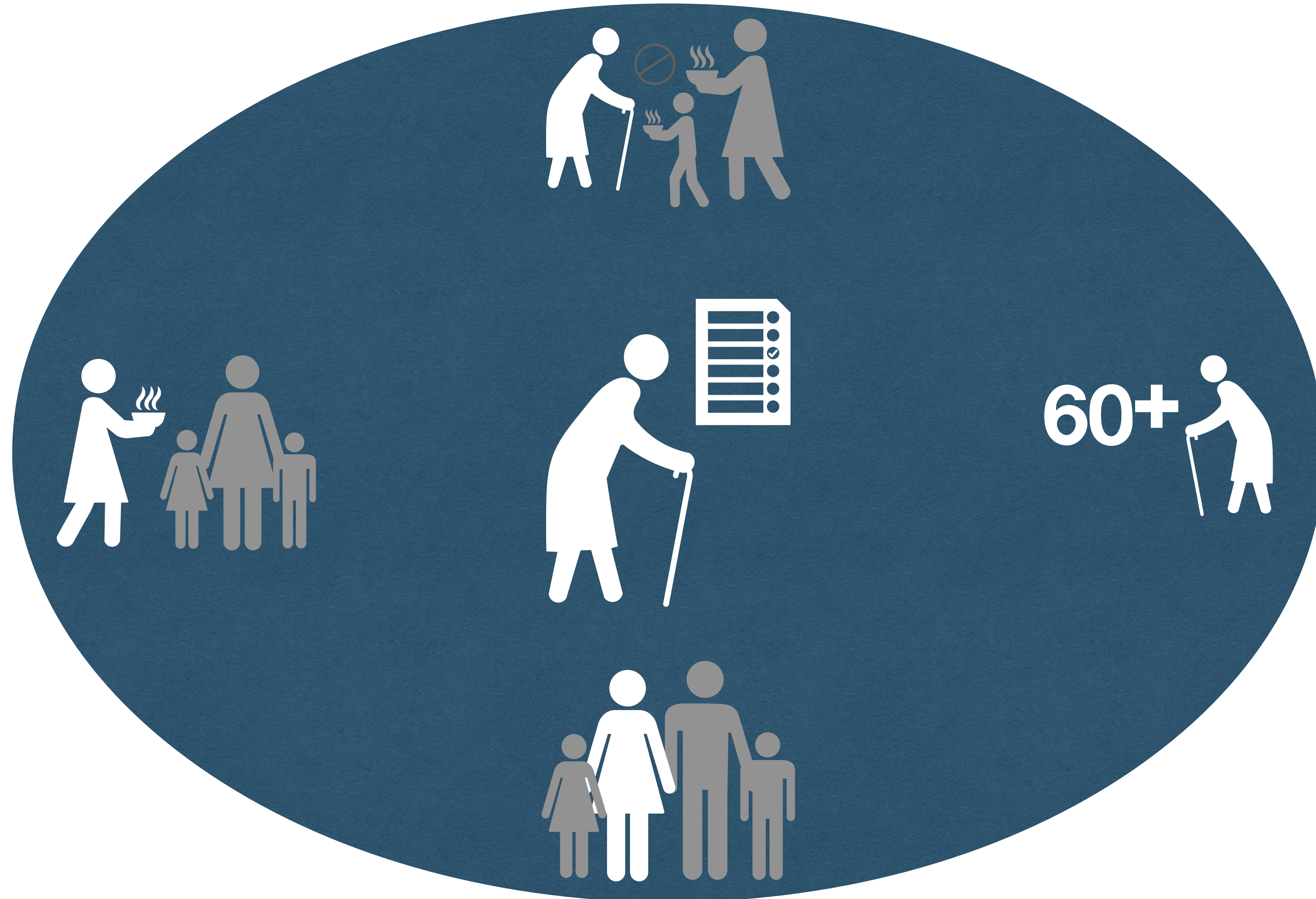
*“So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.” (Galatians 6:10)*

**Key Idea:** The needy among the Christian community are a major priority but we should also help others.

# Choose Wise Boundaries (The Widow's List)

## 1 Timothy 5:3-8

- No family to help her
- 60+ years old
- Faithful wife and mother
- Known for good works



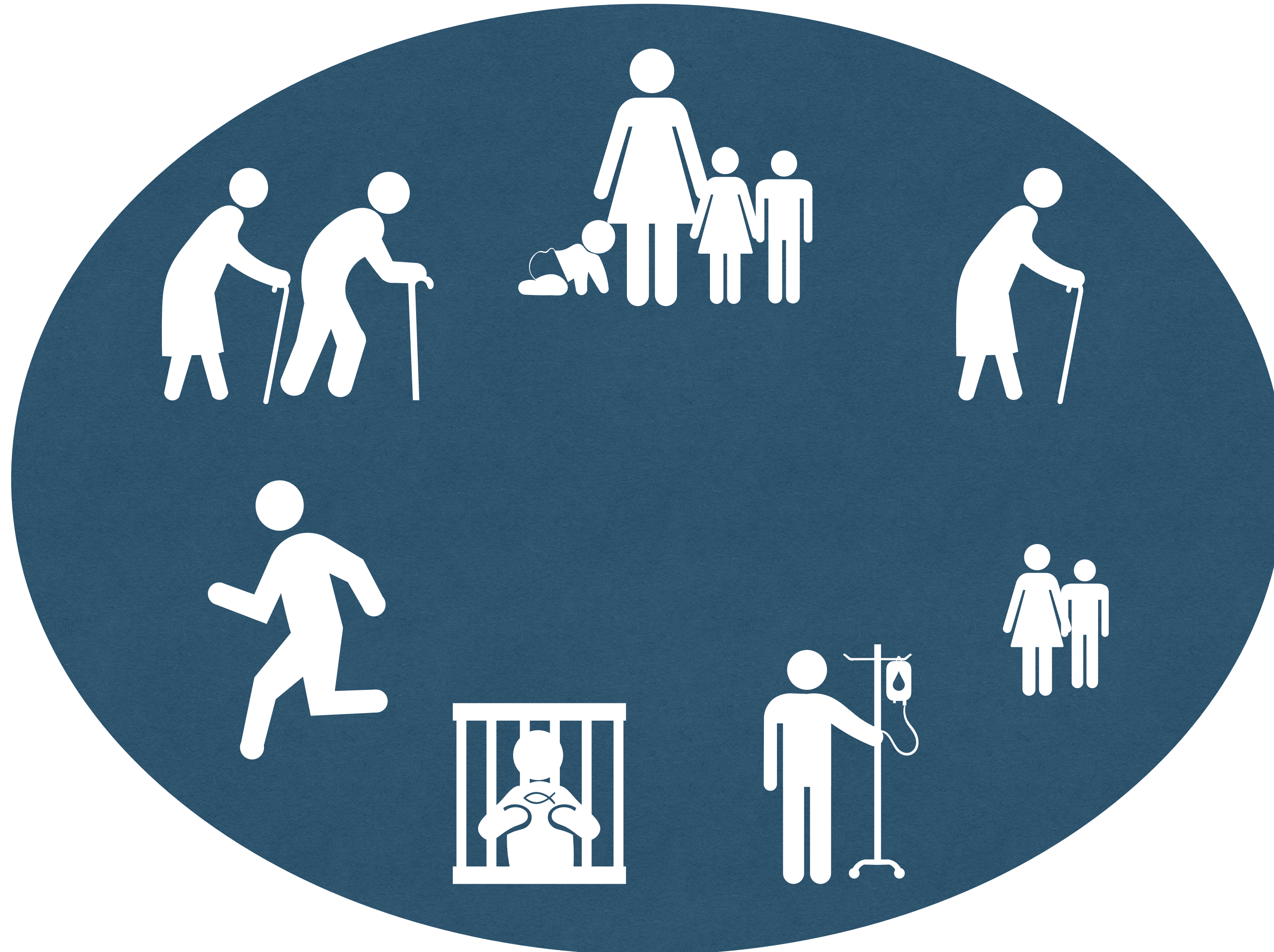
*“Honor widows who are truly widows. **But if a widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show godliness to their own household** and to make some return to their parents, for this is pleasing in the sight of God. She who is truly a widow, left all alone, has set her hope on God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day, but she who is self-indulgent is dead even while she lives. Command these things as well, so that they may be without reproach. But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.” (1 Timothy 5:3-8)*

*“Let a widow be enrolled if she is **not less than sixty years of age**, having been **the wife of one husband, and having a reputation for good works: if she has brought up children, has shown hospitality, has washed the feet of the saints, has cared for the afflicted, and has devoted herself to every good work.** But refuse to enroll younger widows, for when their passions draw them away from Christ, they desire to marry and so incur condemnation for having abandoned their former faith. Besides that, they learn to be idlers, going about from house to house, and not only idlers, but also gossips and busybodies, saying what they should not. So I would have younger widows marry, bear children, manage their households, and give the adversary no occasion for slander. For some have already strayed after Satan. **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.**” (1 Timothy 5:9-16)*

**Key Idea:** The “widows list” is a biblical example of wise boundaries that keep Christian charity from enabling bad behavior.

# Prioritize the Most Vulnerable

- **Women and children**
- **Widows**
- **Orphans**
- **The sick**
- **Those in prison**
- **Aliens (refugees)**
- **The elderly (without family)**



*“For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.’ Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’ And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’” (Matthew 25:35-40)*

***“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.” (James 1:27)***

***“You shall treat the stranger who sojourns with you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.” (James 1:27)***

Because we have limited resources we need to prioritize those who need our help most. That does not mean we never help those not on this priority list, but that generally the people on this list are the people most needing our help.

**Key Idea: Prioritize help for those who are most vulnerable.**

# Families Should Help Family Members (Rather Than Burden the Church)



*“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.” (1 Timothy 5:16)*

**Key Idea:** Christian families should take care of needy members of their family rather than burden the Church.

# Do Not Provide for Those Who Can Work



*“Now we command you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you **keep away from any brother who is walking in idleness** and not in accord with the tradition that you received from us. For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us, because we were not idle when we were with you, nor did we eat anyone's bread without paying for it, but with toil and labor we worked night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you. It was not because we do not have that right, but to give you in ourselves an example to imitate. For even when we were with you, we would give you this command: **If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat.** For we hear that some among you walk in idleness, not busy at work, but busybodies. Now such persons we command and encourage in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their own living.” (1 Timothy 5:16)*

We must be careful not to help those who can provide for themselves as this takes away the incentive to act responsibly. There are many needy people in the world who actually need our help. Giving money to those who could work but refuse to work creates unhealthy dependencies, harms society at large by encouraging idleness and a sense of entitlement, and simply deprives those who really need help of getting assistance.

**Key Idea:** Do not provide for those who can work as this creates unhealthy dependencies, harms society, and deprives the truly needy of help.

# Don't Become God to the Needy



We can be tempted to give to the needy because of the praise we receive for our help. We can also undermine godly discipline in another person's life by giving them help that negates negative consequences for irresponsible behavior. We do not want to become God in the life of anyone else - either becoming the focus of their praise or taking on full responsibility for the well-being of another individual.

**Key Idea:** Do not seek the praise of the needy nor undermine godly discipline by continually enabling bad behavior.

# Don't Promise Open-Ended Support



Promising open-ended support is very destructive. People begin to feel entitled and will react very negatively if you later try help the person move towards responsible financial independence, attempt to discipline the person for unethical or moral misbehavior, reduce the amount of aid, or cut off aid. It is best to have simple and clear guidelines from the beginning that require some type of community service in return for aid and limit how long support will last. You can always renew the agreement again at a later date if appropriate.

**Key Idea:** Do not make open-ended promises. Specify the type of aid you are giving and how long you are promising support.

# Avoid Being the Most Generous Donor in Town



Becoming identified as the most generous donor in town will draw the attention of unscrupulous people and make you a target. This also undermines the efforts of others as people who are getting aid somewhere else will try to leave that support system and come under your support because you are offering a better aid package.

**Key Idea:** Avoid being the most generous donor in town so that you do not become a target of unscrupulous people and you do not undermine the efforts of others.

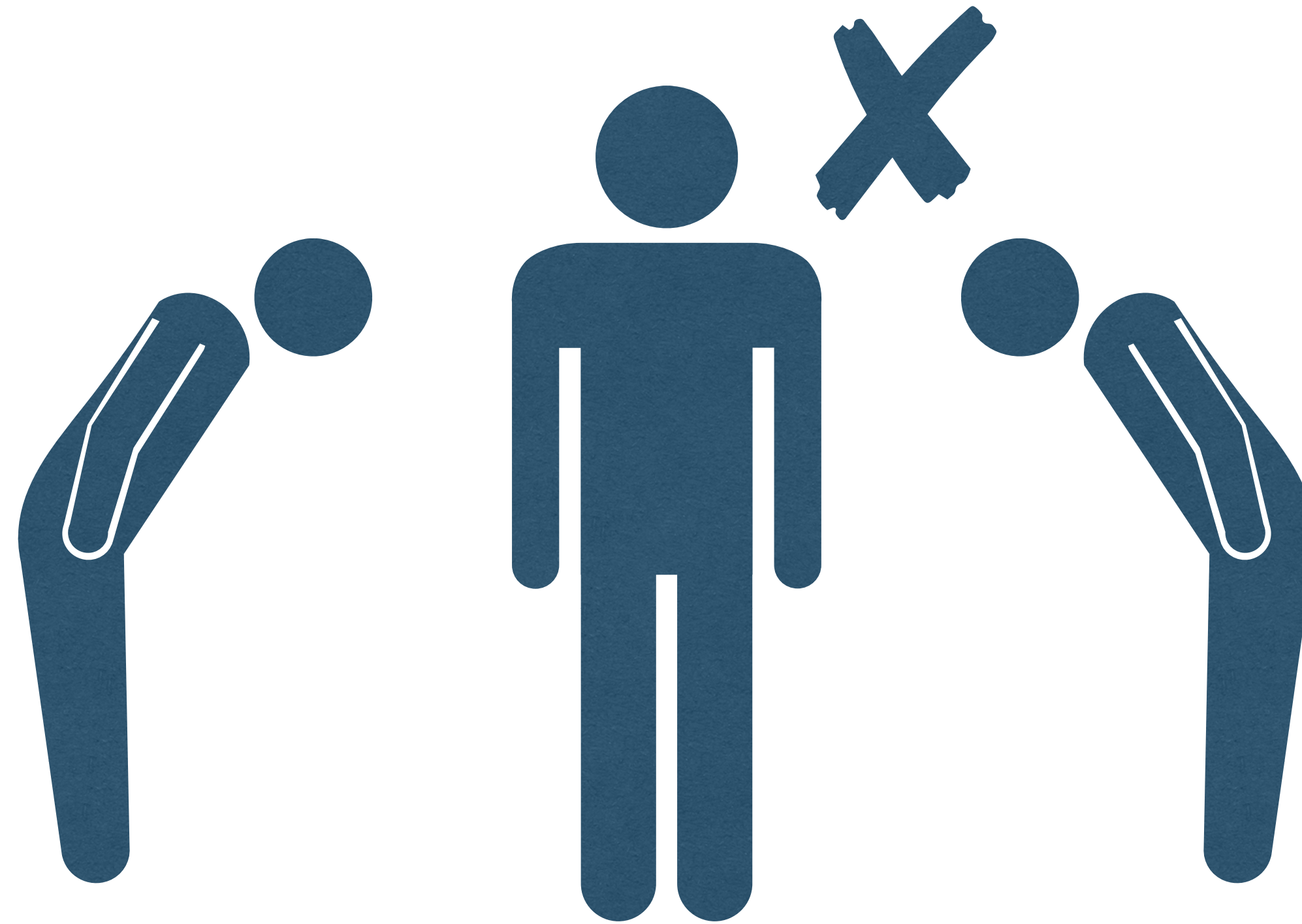
# Consult the Community Before Giving Out Aid



Before giving out any type of help in a community you should seek wise council from community leaders who are familiar with the local situation. Otherwise, your aid might go to support irresponsible behavior, create jealousy between neighbors, or undermine local community initiatives.

**Key Idea:** Get wise advice from the community before giving out aid.

# Avoid Patron-Client Relationships

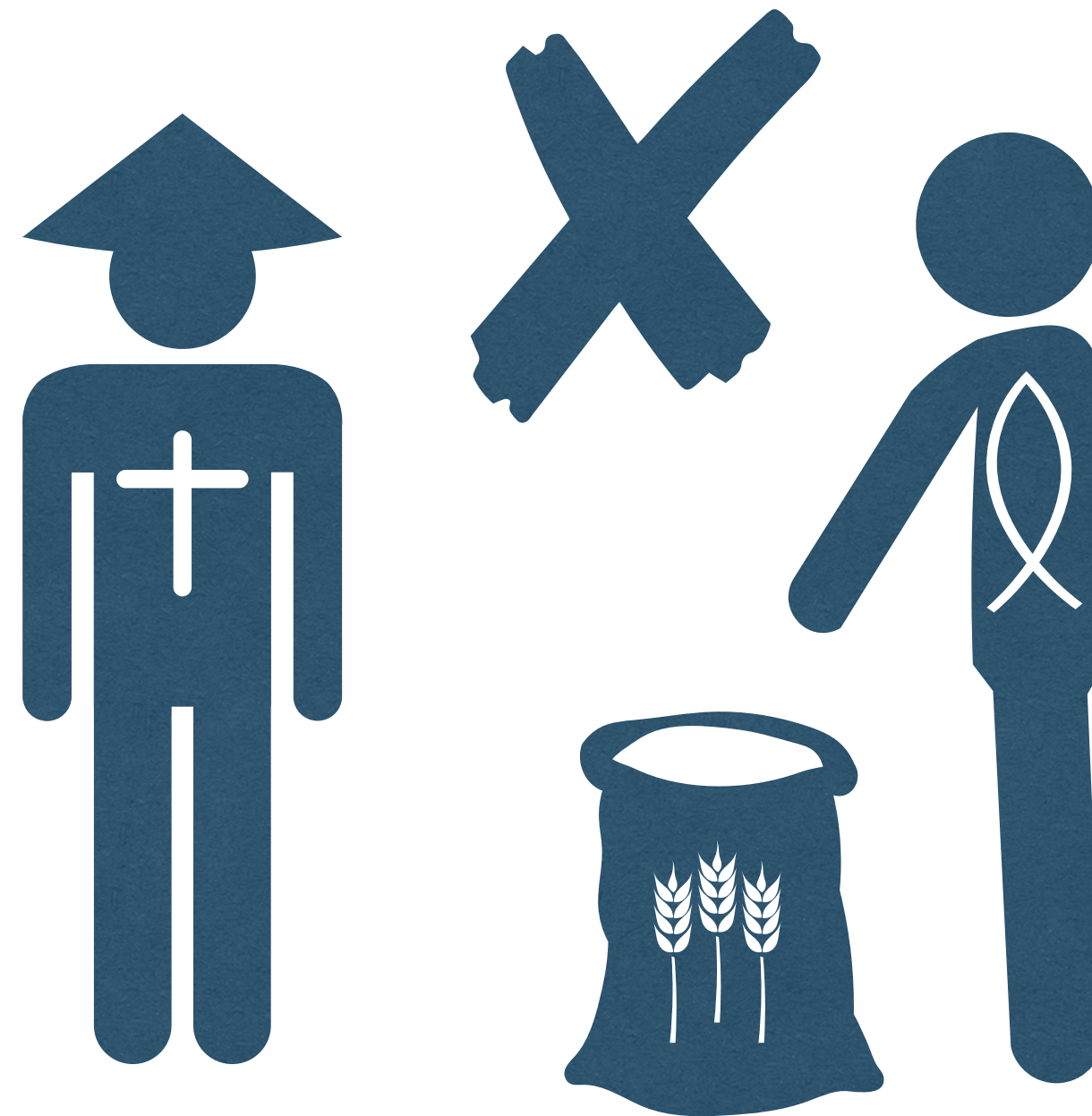


Many cultures have a “Patron-client” relationship built into group structures. In this system, the patron and client have certain obligations. The patron gives gifts and leadership. The client gives obedience, unquestioning loyalty, and helps provide respect in the community towards the patron. If the client questions the patron then the patron feels betrayed and will stop giving gifts (aid) and may publicly shame the client. If the patron stops giving gifts then he has broken his obligations and the client will feel betrayed. The client will then begin to look for a new patron and actively and publicly oppose his former patron.

Avoiding the patron-client relationship can be difficult when trying to help the poor. Many poor people automatically assume that you want something in return for aid. They will assume that you want to be their patron and are promising to take on the long-term responsibilities of a patron. Phrases like, “You are like my father” are warning signs that your aid is being perceived as a patron-client relationship and that you are taking on responsibility for providing for them in the future. If you do not provide for them in the future in culturally expected ways, you will create conflict and a sense of betrayal. You can avoid some of this expectation by providing very targeted and time defined aid.

**Key Idea:** Be aware of and avoid making patron-client relationships that make people dependent in unhealthy ways.

# Avoid Making Rice Christians



In the past some missionaries convinced people to convert to Christianity by promising them rice or other aid. When the rice ran out, the new converts returned to their old religion. You should never offer or promise money or aid in return for attendance to a religious group meeting or conversion to the Christian faith. This is not true salvation, does not help your group grow, and creates many problems for other Christians in the community.

**Key Idea:** Avoid making rice Christians who come to your group only to receive some promise of financial aid.

# Practice Holistic Ministry

## (Address Temporary Physical and Eternal Spiritual Needs)



*“What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? **If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace, be warmed and filled,’ without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.”** (James 2:14-17)*

***“For ‘everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.’ How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!’ But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, ‘Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?’ So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.” (Romans 10:13-17)***

Although we do not want to make Rice Christians we do want to holistically address both physical and spiritual needs. Physical needs are temporary but spiritual needs are eternal. We always want to share that our love for our fellow man flows out of our love for God and what he has done for us through the death of Jesus on the cross. We should demonstrate our love for Christ in both word and deed. We want to share our faith in a respectful way that gives people the opportunity to consider faith in Christ without implying that they are somehow obligated to accept Christ because of the aid we have given them.

**Key Idea:** Share your faith when appropriate while helping the needy as we want to address both physical and spiritual needs in a holistic and respectful way.

# Partner With Others To Expand Effectiveness



Small groups and individuals have limited time and resources. Partner with other home groups, churches, or established secular and Christian community organizations to multiply ongoing efforts rather than trying to start something new. Choose partners that share similar goals and values. Strive to work with groups that do not limit your ability to share your faith as you reach out to the needy.

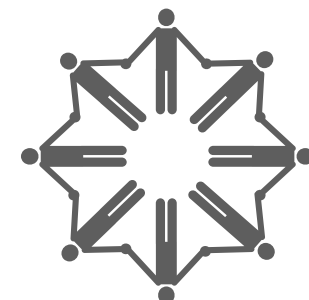
**Key Idea:** Share your faith when appropriate while helping the needy as we want to address both physical and spiritual needs in a holistic and respectful way.

# Case Studies

# Case Study 1



**You see a homeless family on the street and you decide to give them money for a place to stay this month. Several days later you return to discover the family is still on the streets begging. What could be the reasons for the family not using the money as you intended? Are there other ways you could help in the future? What community and government resources could you access to help this family?**

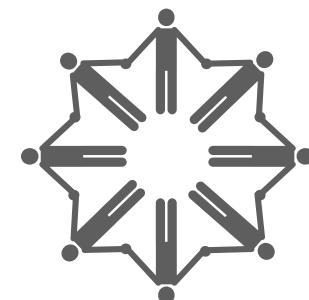


**Break up into groups and discuss.  
(suggested time - 10 minutes)**

# Case Study 2



**You and your home group decide to start a holistic ministry to poor people in a certain community. You decide to give out rice and flour to anyone who will come to a weekly Bible study at one of your homes. What are some of the possible mixed motives for those coming to this Bible study? How does the rice and flour effect the Gospel message that you present in this Bible study? What might happen to this Bible study if the rice and flour were no longer offered?**

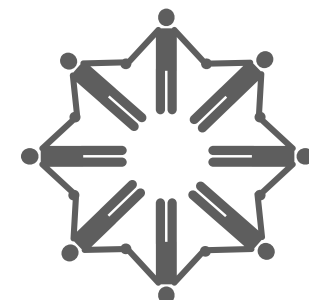


**Break up into groups and discuss.  
(suggested time - 10 minutes)**

# Case Study 3



**A group member has a mother-in-law with large medical bills. This group member asks the other members of the group for help with these medical bills. What are some questions that you should ask before agreeing to this request? What are some things that you might require in return for this help?**



**Break up into groups and discuss.  
(suggested time - 10 minutes)**



**4G Mentoring: Growing, Guiding, and  
Guarding the Global Bride of Christ**

**Copyright 2019 © by 4G Mentoring**  
**[www.4GMentoring.com](http://www.4GMentoring.com)**  
**[4GMentoring@gmail.com](mailto:4GMentoring@gmail.com)**