

Sept 9th 2007: SAO Day: Fulfilling our responsibility: Luke 12:35-49

As I was researching my sermon for last.....I came across a list of things a Christian father should do

- It was pretty normal stuff.....Except it had a section...
on being a father for the fatherless

The implication was clear: It was presented as an expectation...not a choice

Christian fathers have a responsibility before God.....to care for and look after their own
But also.....to do what they can for those who

- **This shouldn't surprise....when.....consider the description of God.....**
Found in Ps 68:4—5...

*“Sing to God, sing praises to His name, extol Him who rides on the clouds—His name is the Lord—and rejoice before Him.
A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in His holy dwelling.”*

It wasno doubt.....with thoughts like that in mind.....that James wrote this in

James 1:29

*“Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this:
to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself
from being polluted by the world.”*

Suddenly James opens this up..... to become a responsibility before God
Not just for fathers.....or fathers and mothers.....**but** for every believer
..who desires to please God

And it hangs there....right next to “*Keeping ourselves from being polluted by...*”

Now most of us.....are probably doing pretty well....at keeping ourselves

But what are we doing.....to look after orphans and.....

Because:

I've got this funny feeling....that this is one of the things.....God keeps tabs on

(Remember Cornelius.....ACTS 10:2 tells us that even b4 he became....

“he gave generously to those in need and prayer to God regularly.”

And when God's angel appeared to him in a vision.....The angel said

“Your prayers and gifts to the poor have come up as a memorial offering before God.”

GOD NOTICED

And surely He must notice when we don't....as well as when we do

- **Today we are remembering...work....of SAO**
- And with it.....we see one very effective way.....that we can help.....

**Over the years.....the growth in the organizations that offer this-→Compassion...
have made this an easy way to fulfil**

And of course.....support is not just to be financial

It's interesting to note the very next verse in Ps 68(v6) says:

“God sets the lonely in families,”

There's Yet another way....can fulfil this resp.....

IS a lot harder.....lot nearer to home

Instead of just money....it takes time....it takes love

It relates to the fatherless in our church...in our community

- What are we doing.....What am I doing.....What are you doing ??

when we look at this responsibility Biblical.....we find two strong reasons.....
For us accepting it

• **The first is STEWARDSHIP**

Luke 12 :48 says

“From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.”

This whole section of Scripture.....from way back in v13.....where someone in crowd .says to Jesus → tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me..

IS about being good stewards of all that God has given us

The story that leads into this verse....Is about people left in charge Masters resources

And told to use those.....to help the other servants.....who have little

When the Master returns....he expects to find.....those who have much have been.....

When the Lord returns.....He will have the same expectation of us !!!

I have often wondered.....why.....some believers.....have so much.....

In terms of material.....spiritual resources.....**While some have so little**

(Talking to Fay about her visit to a church group in Zimbabwe.....)

It may well link up with this parable

We have ...so that we can experience the joy of giving.....and they.....exp joy of receiving

But what if we don’t give.....THEN we have no joy

There is a joy in costly giving.....A joy in living on the edge.....where....
because of your giving.....you then have to rely upon God.....to provide

• **The Second Biblical Reason**.....for accepting this responsibility.....
is **GRACE**

Grace.....which is showing kindness to those in need

To those you know.....and to the stranger

To the friend and the enemy.....The deserving and the undeserving

Grace which has been shown to each of us.....in an Amazing way.....in Christ

And now we.....have the privilege.....of showing Grace.....smaller way to.....

In Matt 10.....we find Jesus sending out His disciples....to perform acts of..villages

He tells them.....that if their offer of grace is refused.....then they are free to move on

But the offer is still to be made.....For in Matt 10:8 he says

“Freely you have received, freely give.”

(This morning Terry is preaching.....His sermon is about Grace

Made up a word.....**UNGRACE**.....

Ungrace is not just about doing the bad.....

.....it’s also about not doing the good: **Holding** back from forgiving...giving..loving)

And His challenge.....**Should** we dare persist in ungrace.....

Whether...do...or don’t do

In the light of the amazing Grace.....that God the Father.....has bestowed on us ?????

Our challenge this morning is a little more positive

In light of our responsibility to care for those who have so little

In recognition of the joy that comes through giving

And in an awareness of the Grace of God freely given

What one thing can we do....or begin to do this week

That will pour grace into the life of another person ?????

