

# The True Meaning of Christmas

## THE GRACE AFFECT

Part 3; December 13, 2009

"This is the kind of fast day I'm after: to break the chains of injustice, get rid of exploitation in the workplace, free the oppressed, cancel debts. What I'm interested in seeing you do is: **sharing your food** with the hungry, **inviting the homeless poor into your homes**, **putting clothes** on the shivering ill-clad, **being available to your own families**. Do this and the lights will turn on, and your lives will turn around at once. Your righteousness will pave your way. The God of glory will secure your passage. Then when you pray, God will answer. You'll call out for help and I'll say, 'Here I am...' *Isaiah 58:6-9 MSG*

### 1. The Grace Affect: \_\_\_\_\_ Of Our Heart's Longing & God's

- We ask: Is there \_\_\_\_\_ who cares what we are going through and will be there when we need Him?
- God asks: Is there anyone who cares \_\_\_\_\_?

"All the people who saw it started grumbling, "This man has gone as a guest to the home of a sinner!" Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Listen, sir! **I will give half my belongings to the poor**, and **if I have cheated anyone, I will pay back four times as much.**" *Luke 19:7-8 GNT*

- People who have come to understand how much they have been given / forgiven, tend to \_\_\_\_\_
- **QT #1**: Write out a personal and spiritual inventory on how much God has given to you

### 2. God Challenges Us To Give Beyond What Is Reasonable

*1 Kings 17: 8-16*

- **It is a faith thing**: If I do this, I want to know - 1) is God \_\_\_\_\_ to me when I have a need; 2) Will God be \_\_\_\_\_ to my need?

- **QT #2**: Name a time that that you called out to God and He answered you – who did you move toward in Ministry?

### 3. God Shapes His World Through \_\_\_\_\_

"Sitting across from the offering box, he was observing how the crowd tossed money in for the collection. Many of the rich were making large contributions. One poor widow came up and put in two small coins—a measly two cents. Jesus called his disciples over and said, "The truth is that this poor widow gave more to the collection than all the others put together. All the others gave what they'll never miss; **she gave extravagantly** what she couldn't afford—**she gave her all.**" *Mark 12:41-44 MSG*

- What looks like a curse, is God working through our loss and sacrifice \_\_\_\_\_
- **QT #4**: Remember a time of loss. How did or how would a confident response towards God affect others?

### 4. \_\_\_\_\_: How Will I Choose to Make a Difference in Someone Else's Life This Week?

"I don't have a nickel to my name, but **what I do have, I give you**: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk!" *Acts 3:6 MSG*

- 1) Give Blood
- 2) Give a substantial offering to a missionary or mission effort
- 3) Give up my frivolous spending for the month and give away the money I save
- 4) Multiply my efforts
- 5) Do something small but in a big way
- 6) Encourage a group project
- 7) Share my faith
- 8) Adopt a shut-in or a resident in a Care Facility
- 9) Offer to babysit for a young couple
- 10) Forgive a Debt

- **QT #4**: Pick one or two items on this list and do them