

How Do We Begin?

Scripture Reading — 1 Timothy 5:1-8

If anyone does not provide for his relatives ... he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.
1 Timothy 5:8

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Yesterday we said there was no excuse for inaction when it comes to assisting the needy. But where shall we begin? The needs are so overwhelming and the injustices so appalling. You may have heard horror stories about food rotting in warehouses in certain countries while people not far away were starving to death.

The task of providing bread to the hungry is daunting. The authority of sovereign states must be recognized, the obstacles to delivery and distribution must be dealt with, and the barriers that stem from sheer human wickedness must be overcome. No wonder the apostle Paul tells us that thrones, powers, rulers, and authorities all need to be reconciled to God (see Colossians 1:16, 20).

So how shall we begin? We must think globally but act locally. Paul suggests we begin at home. The personal must precede the impersonal; the immediate must precede the remote. We cannot tackle global issues and the failings of corporate systems unless we come to grips with those near us who need our generosity. This calls for extreme humility.

But we cannot stop there. While fighting hunger on a global scale is a huge mission, God will hold us accountable not for the victory but for how faithfully we have fought. To do less is to deny our faith in the Lord, who is indeed reconciling all things to himself.

Prayer

Lord, we pray for all who grapple with issues that cause and prolong poverty and hunger. May we serve faithfully wherever we see the opportunity. Help us, Jesus. Amen.

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