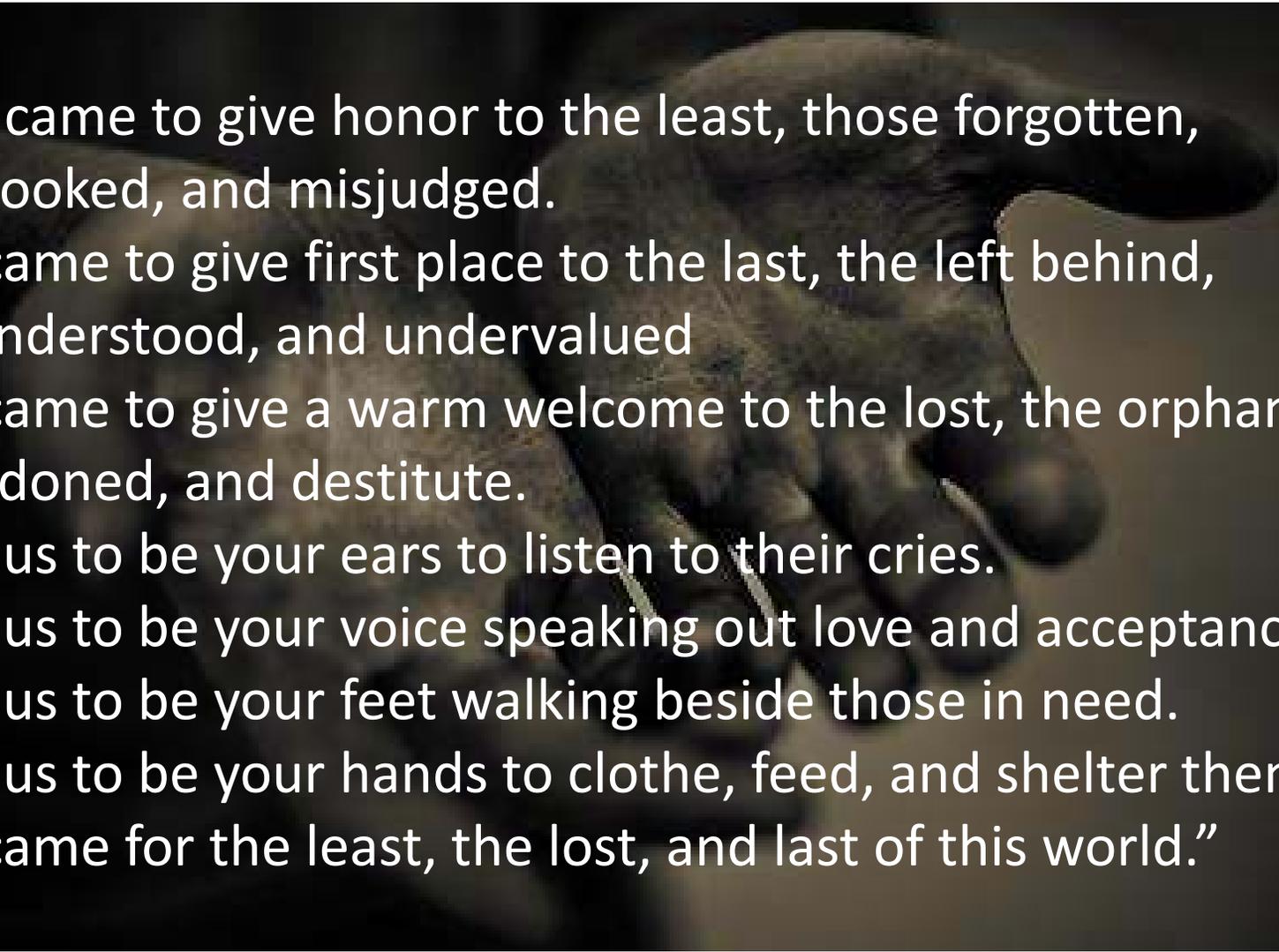




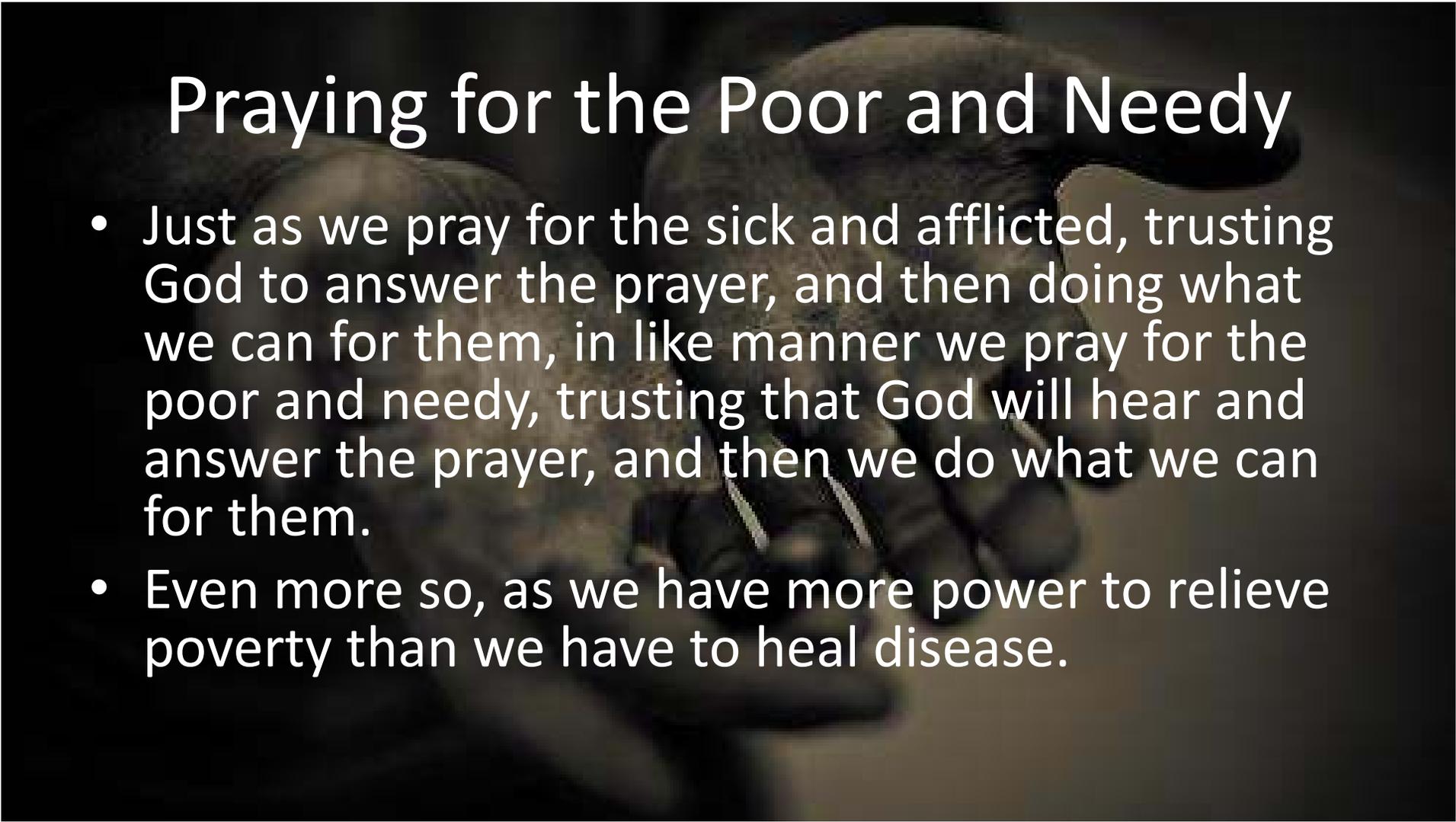
Praying for the Poor and Needy

# Praying for the Poor and Needy

- The phrase “poor and needy” occurs 17 times in scripture, from the ancient days of Job, to the Law of Moses in Deuteronomy, through the early exilic prophet Ezekiel; most often mentioned in the prayer Psalms
- The poor are in the first sentence of the first sermon of Jesus at the beginning of His ministry - Matt. 5:3
- Obviously, God cares about them, and expects His children to care for them as well
- There will always be poor persons in our communities
  - John 12:8 - “For the poor you have with you always...”



“You came to give honor to the least, those forgotten,  
overlooked, and misjudged.  
You came to give first place to the last, the left behind,  
misunderstood, and undervalued  
You came to give a warm welcome to the lost, the orphaned,  
abandoned, and destitute.  
Help us to be your ears to listen to their cries.  
Help us to be your voice speaking out love and acceptance.  
Help us to be your feet walking beside those in need.  
Help us to be your hands to clothe, feed, and shelter them.  
You came for the least, the lost, and last of this world.”



# Praying for the Poor and Needy

- Just as we pray for the sick and afflicted, trusting God to answer the prayer, and then doing what we can for them, in like manner we pray for the poor and needy, trusting that God will hear and answer the prayer, and then we do what we can for them.
- Even more so, as we have more power to relieve poverty than we have to heal disease.

# Praying for the Poor and Needy

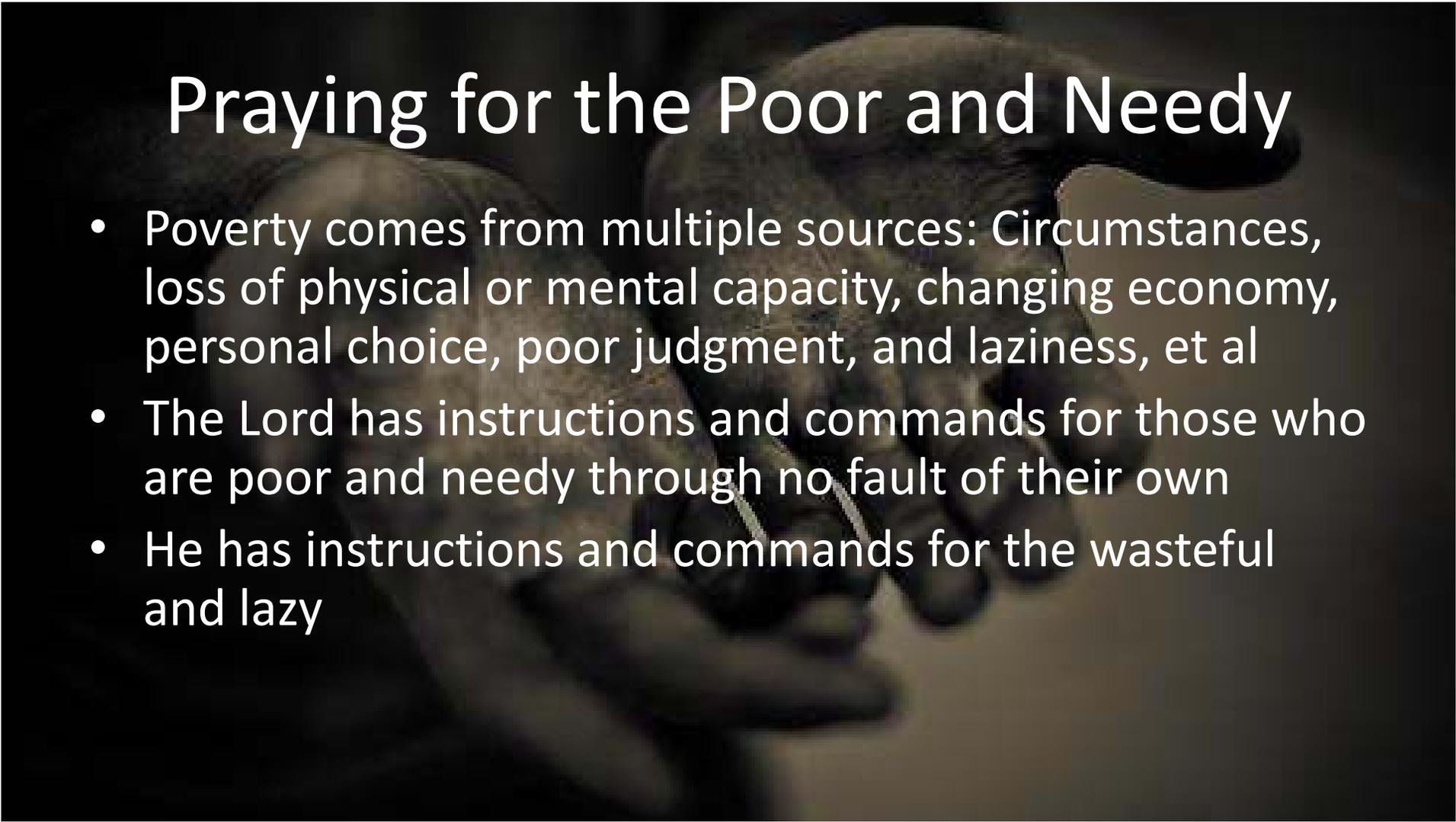
- Psalm 34:6 - “This poor man cried out, and the LORD heard him, And saved him out of all his troubles.”
- Prov. 22:9 - “He who has a generous eye will be blessed, For he gives of his bread to the poor.”
- Prov. 31:20 - “She extends her hand to the poor, Yes, she reaches out her hands to the needy.”
- Dan. 4:27 - “Therefore, O king, let my advice be acceptable to you; break off your sins by being righteous, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor. Perhaps there may be a lengthening of your prosperity.”

# Praying for the Poor and Needy

- Matt. 19:21 - “Jesus said to him, If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.”
- Gal. 2:10 - “They desired only that we should remember the poor, the very thing which I also was eager to do.”
- James 2:5 - “Listen, my beloved brethren: Has God not chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him?”

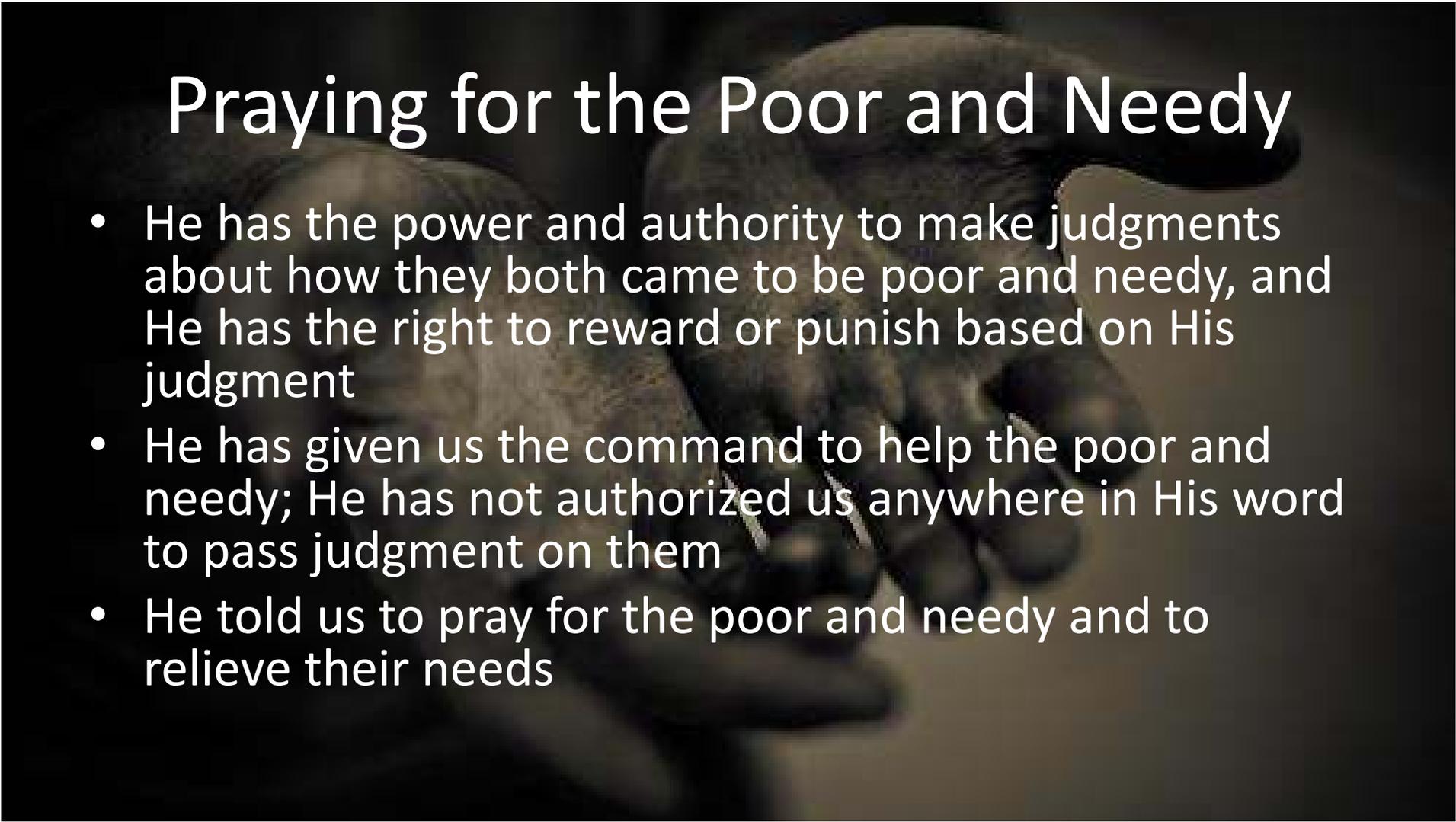
# Praying for the Poor and Needy

- James 2:15-16 - “If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, Depart in peace, be warmed and filled, but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit?”
- 1John 3:17-18 - “But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? 18 My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth.”



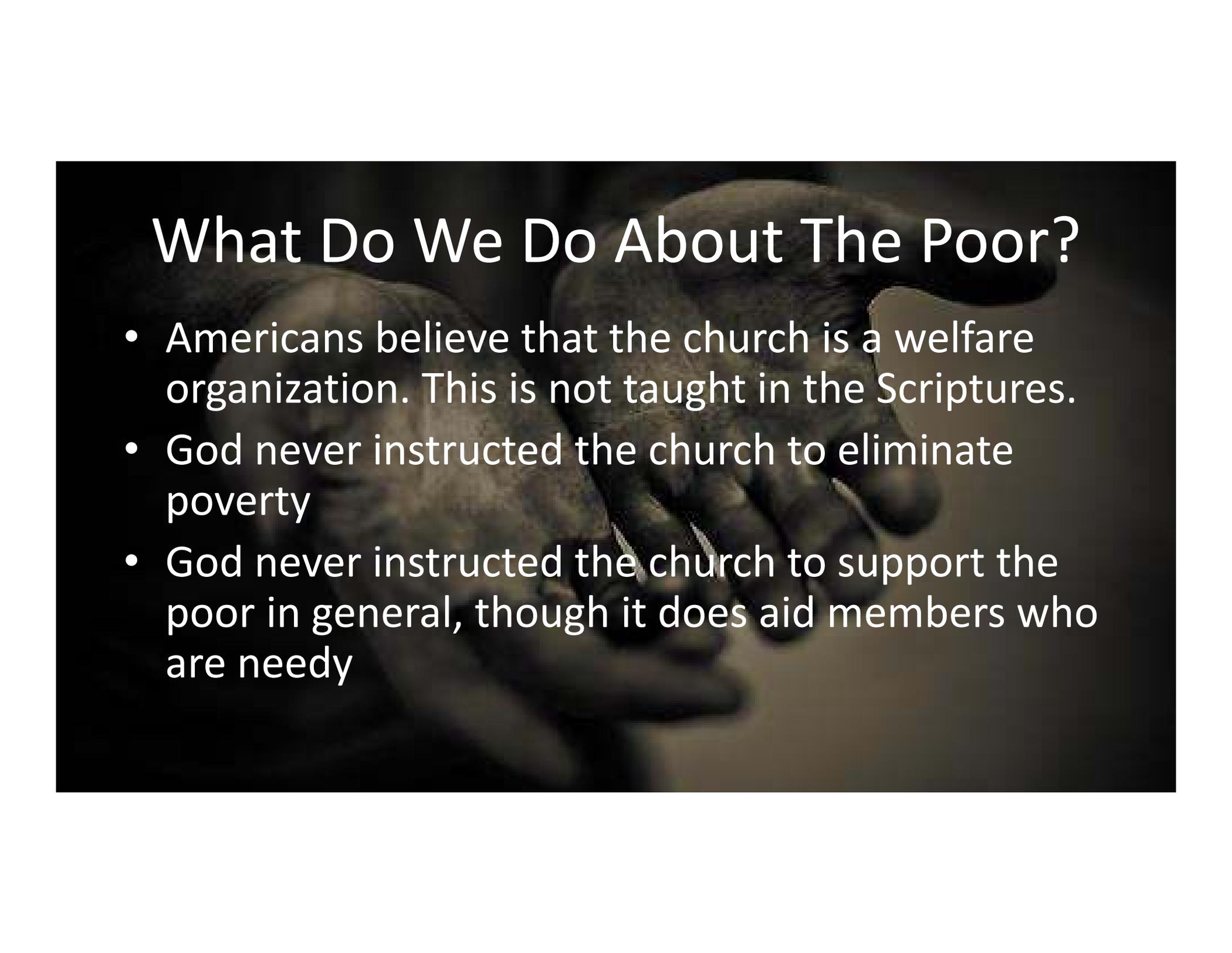
# Praying for the Poor and Needy

- Poverty comes from multiple sources: Circumstances, loss of physical or mental capacity, changing economy, personal choice, poor judgment, and laziness, et al
- The Lord has instructions and commands for those who are poor and needy through no fault of their own
- He has instructions and commands for the wasteful and lazy



# Praying for the Poor and Needy

- He has the power and authority to make judgments about how they both came to be poor and needy, and He has the right to reward or punish based on His judgment
- He has given us the command to help the poor and needy; He has not authorized us anywhere in His word to pass judgment on them
- He told us to pray for the poor and needy and to relieve their needs



# What Do We Do About The Poor?

- Americans believe that the church is a welfare organization. This is not taught in the Scriptures.
- God never instructed the church to eliminate poverty
- God never instructed the church to support the poor in general, though it does aid members who are needy

# The Care Of The Poor Is Every Christian's Responsibility

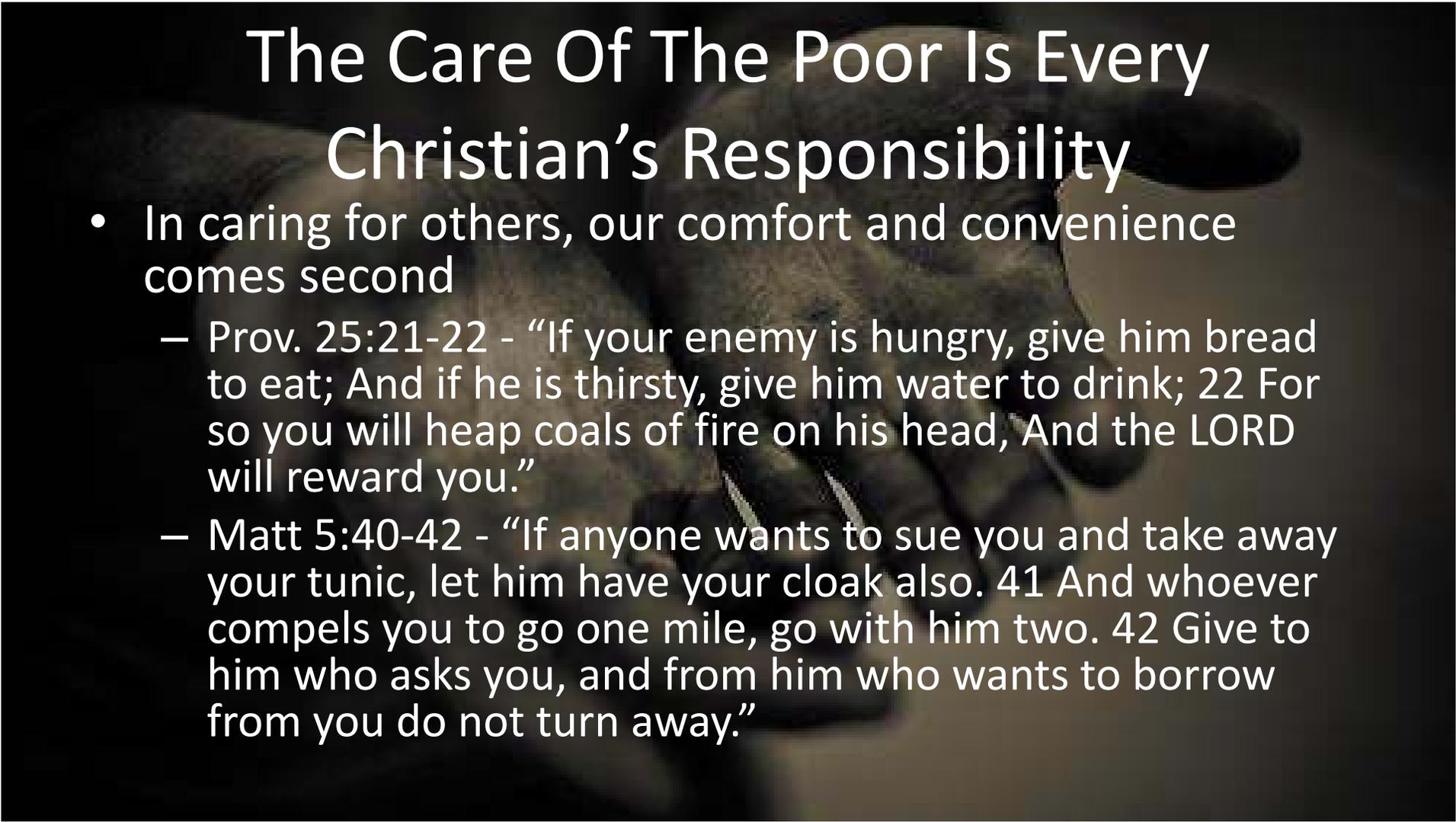
- James 1:27 - "Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world."
- Gal. 6:9-10 - "And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. 10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith."
- Luke 10:25-37



# The Care Of The Poor Is Every Christian's Responsibility

- Compassion means action, not just sympathy
  - James 2:15-17
- Compassion is what separates the sheep from the goats
  - Matt 25:31-46
- God wants a sacrifice of doing good
  - Heb. 13:16 - “But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.”
- To love God we must show love for our fellow men
  - 1John 3:17

- By compassionate works, we help undo the works of sinful men
  - Isa. 58:6-12 - “Is this not the fast that I have chosen: To loose the bonds of wickedness, To undo the heavy burdens, To let the oppressed go free, And that you break every yoke? 7 Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, And that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out; When you see the naked, that you cover him, And not hide yourself from your own flesh? 8 Then your light shall break forth like the morning, Your healing shall spring forth speedily, And your righteousness shall go before you; The glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard. 9 Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer; You shall cry, and He will say, 'Here I am.' If you take away the yoke from your midst, The pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness, 10 If you extend your soul to the hungry And satisfy the afflicted soul, Then your light shall dawn in the darkness, And your darkness shall be as the noonday. 11 The LORD will guide you continually, And satisfy your soul in drought, And strengthen your bones; You shall be like a watered garden, And like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail. 12 Those from among you Shall build the old waste places; You shall raise up the foundations of many generations; And you shall be called the Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Streets to Dwell In.”

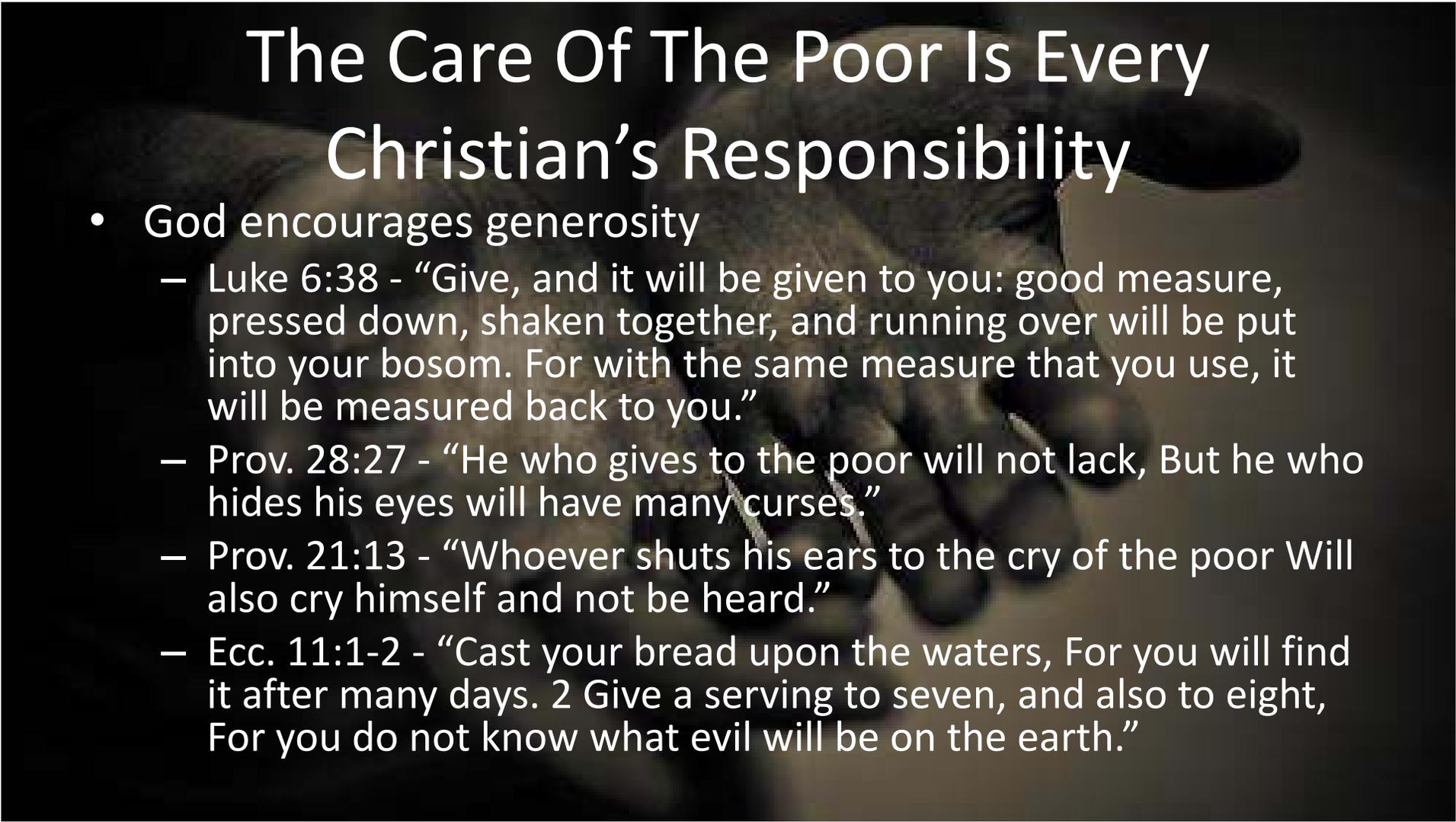


# The Care Of The Poor Is Every Christian's Responsibility

- In caring for others, our comfort and convenience comes second
  - Prov. 25:21-22 - “If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat; And if he is thirsty, give him water to drink; 22 For so you will heap coals of fire on his head, And the LORD will reward you.”
  - Matt 5:40-42 - “If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also. 41 And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two. 42 Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away.”

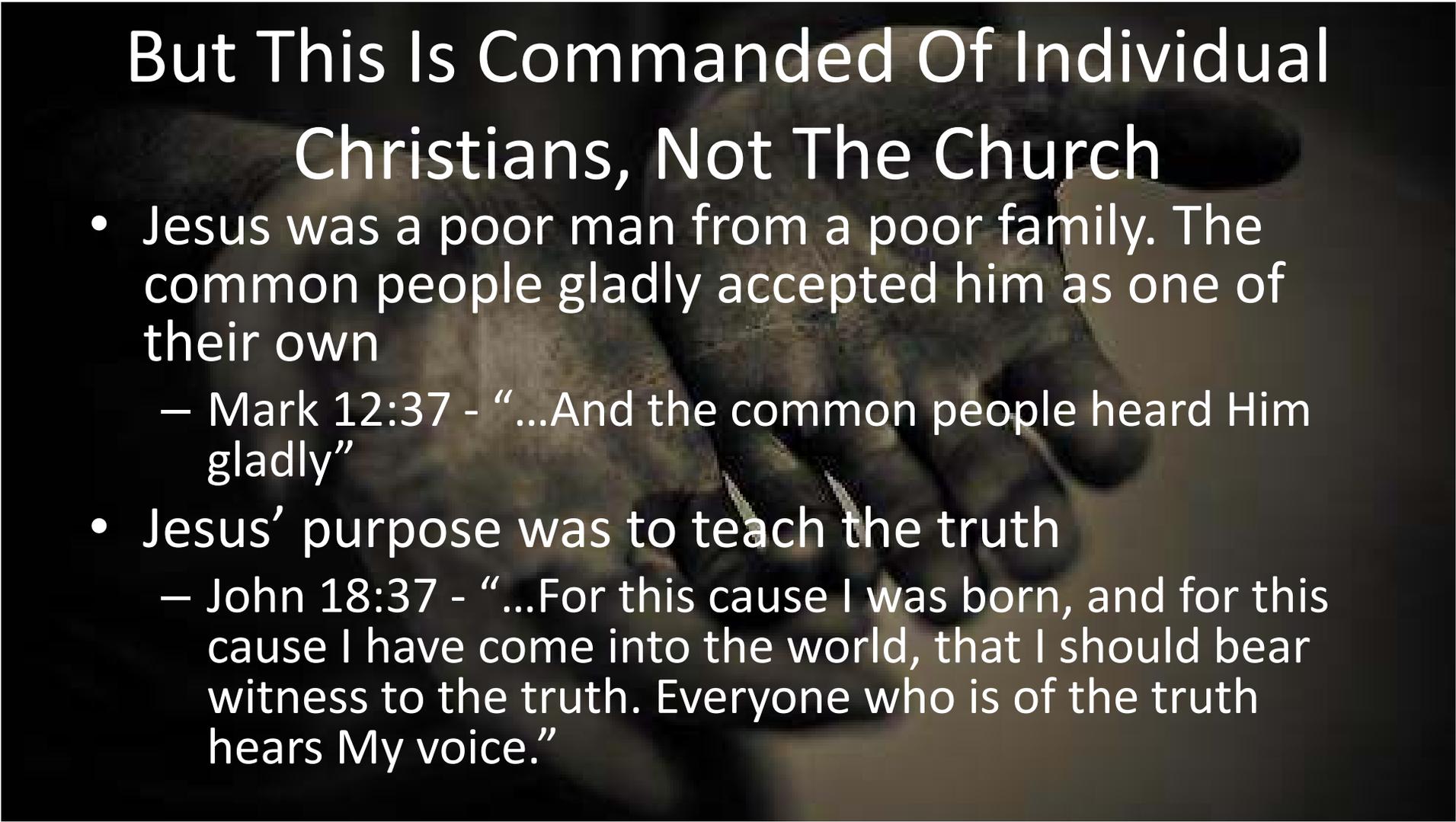
# The Care Of The Poor Is Every Christian's Responsibility

- We must be willing to share God's blessings
  - Luke 12:33-34 - "Sell what you have and give alms; provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor moth destroys. 34 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."
  - Luke 3:11 - "He answered and said to them, He who has two tunics, let him give to him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise."
  - 1Tim. 6:18 - "Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share"



# The Care Of The Poor Is Every Christian's Responsibility

- God encourages generosity
  - Luke 6:38 - “Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.”
  - Prov. 28:27 - “He who gives to the poor will not lack, But he who hides his eyes will have many curses.”
  - Prov. 21:13 - “Whoever shuts his ears to the cry of the poor Will also cry himself and not be heard.”
  - Ecc. 11:1-2 - “Cast your bread upon the waters, For you will find it after many days. 2 Give a serving to seven, and also to eight, For you do not know what evil will be on the earth.”



## But This Is Commanded Of Individual Christians, Not The Church

- Jesus was a poor man from a poor family. The common people gladly accepted him as one of their own
  - Mark 12:37 - “...And the common people heard Him gladly”
- Jesus’ purpose was to teach the truth
  - John 18:37 - “...For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.”

# But This Is Commanded Of Individual Christians, Not The Church

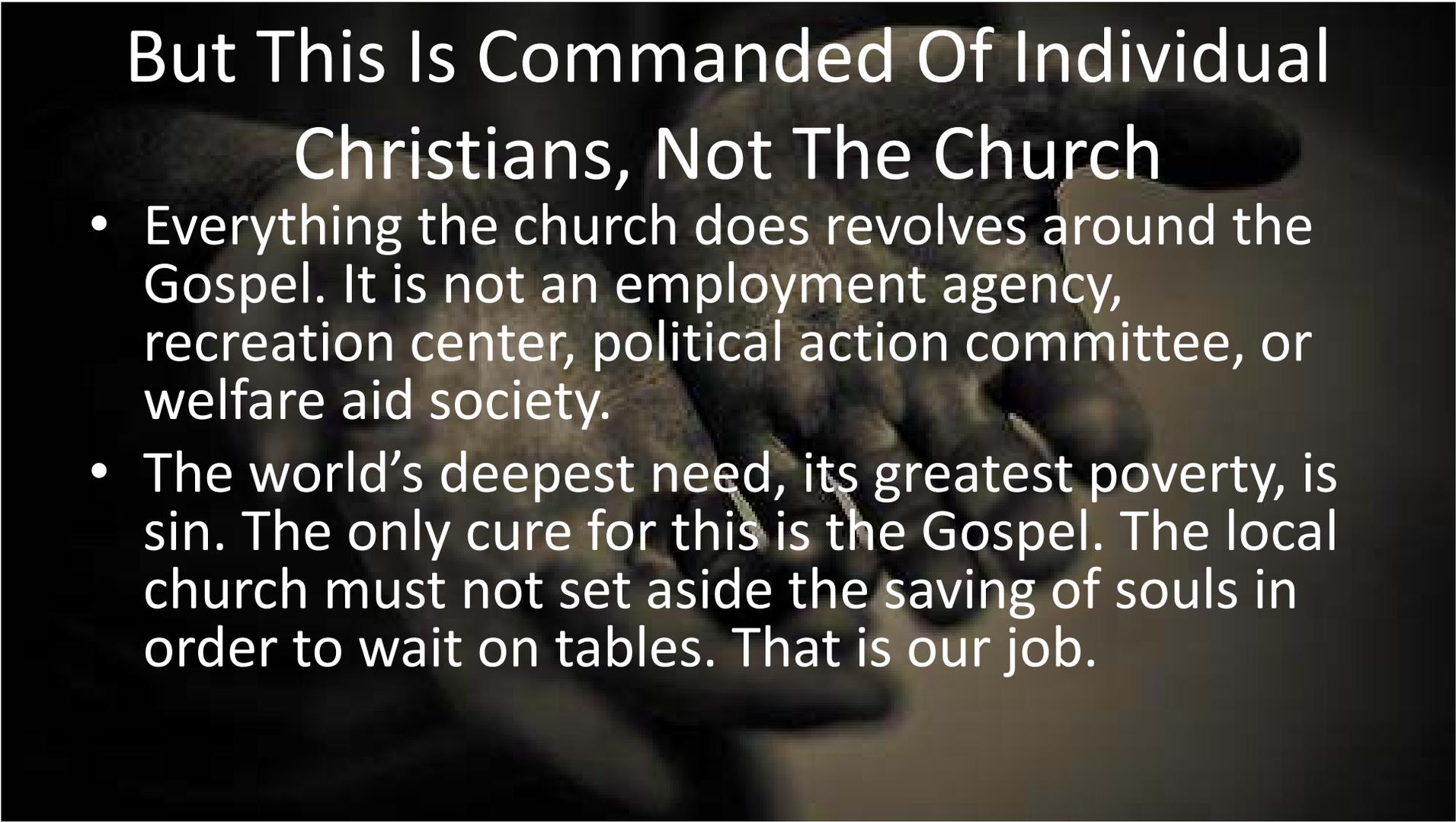
- His service to the poor was to teach the Gospel
  - Luke 4:18 - “The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed”
  - Luke 7:22 - “Jesus answered and said to them, Go and tell John the things you have seen and heard: that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the gospel preached to them”

# But This Is Commanded Of Individual Christians, Not The Church

- When people followed him because he feed the 5,000, Jesus turned them away, because that was not His purpose
  - John 6:26-27 - “Jesus answered them and said, Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled. 27 Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him.”

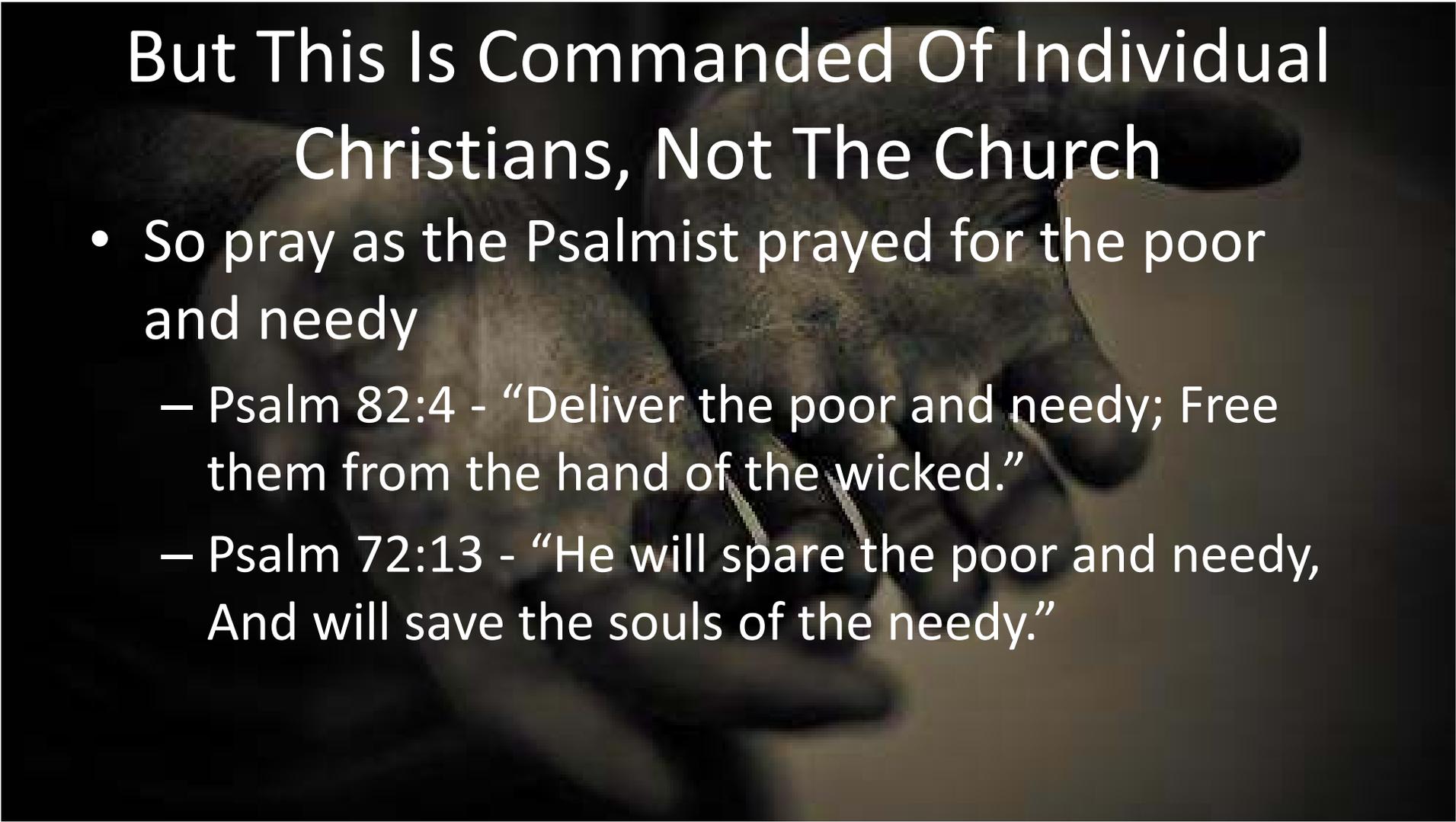
# But This Is Commanded Of Individual Christians, Not The Church

- As with the Christ, the church's purpose is in the spread of the gospel
  - 1Tim. 3:15 - "but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."
- The church's focus is teaching God's word
  - Eph. 4:11-16



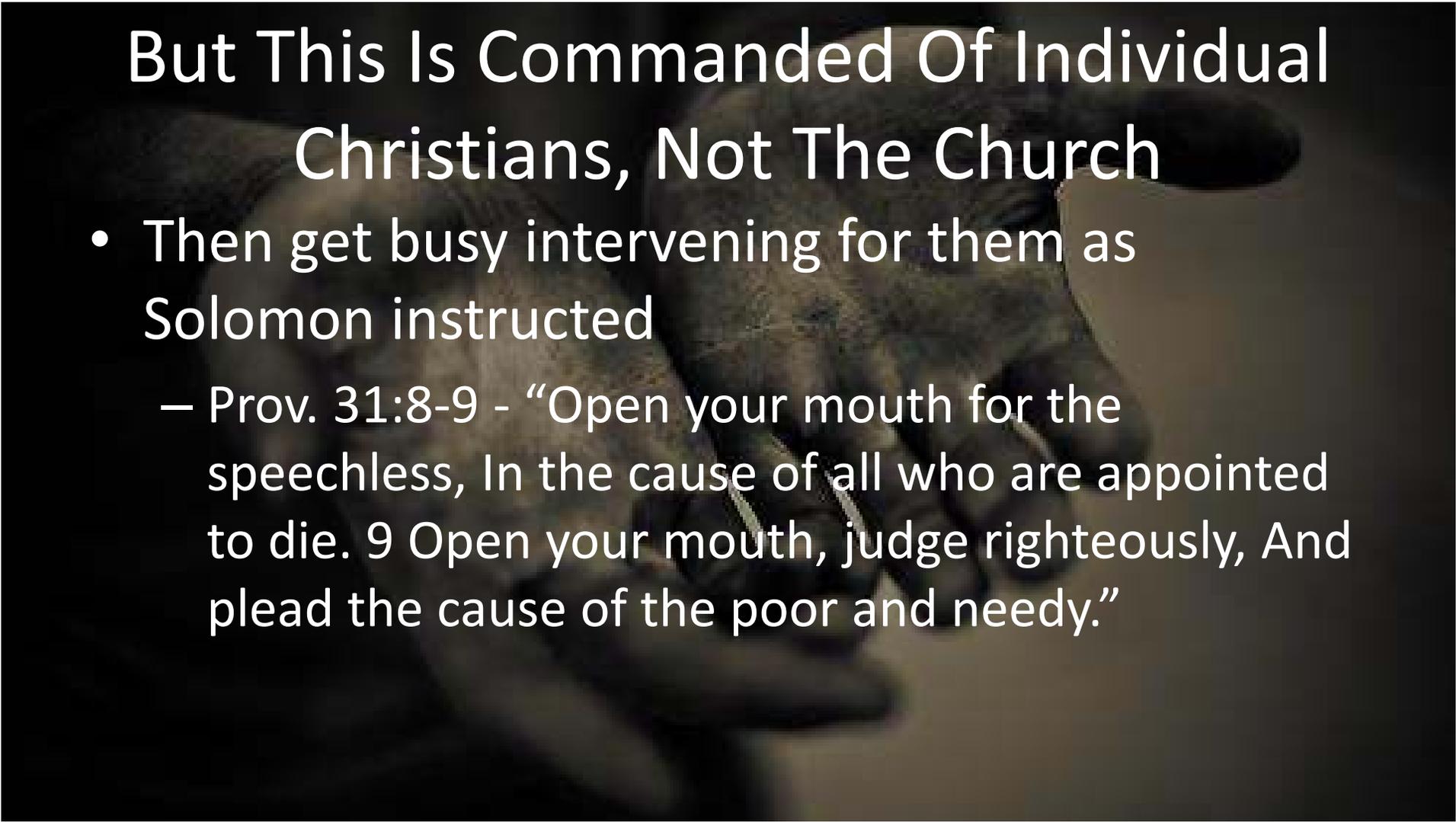
## But This Is Commanded Of Individual Christians, Not The Church

- Everything the church does revolves around the Gospel. It is not an employment agency, recreation center, political action committee, or welfare aid society.
- The world's deepest need, its greatest poverty, is sin. The only cure for this is the Gospel. The local church must not set aside the saving of souls in order to wait on tables. That is our job.



## But This Is Commanded Of Individual Christians, Not The Church

- So pray as the Psalmist prayed for the poor and needy
  - Psalm 82:4 - “Deliver the poor and needy; Free them from the hand of the wicked.”
  - Psalm 72:13 - “He will spare the poor and needy, And will save the souls of the needy.”



## But This Is Commanded Of Individual Christians, Not The Church

- Then get busy intervening for them as Solomon instructed
  - Prov. 31:8-9 - “Open your mouth for the speechless, In the cause of all who are appointed to die. 9 Open your mouth, judge righteously, And plead the cause of the poor and needy.”

# But This Is Commanded Of Individual Christians, Not The Church

- And then help them as Jesus commanded
  - Acts 20:35 - “I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”
  - 2Cor. 8:9 - “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.”
  - 2Cor. 9:9 - “As it is written: "He has dispersed abroad, He has given to the poor; His righteousness endures forever.”