

# Vision AGF (Our responsibility to the poor)

Proverbs 29:18.

Where there is no vision, the people perish.



# Vision.

## Quote.

- The renown blind lady **Helen Keller** when asked what is worse than being blind replied:
- “To be able to see and have no vision”



# Vision.

## **Our Brakpan AGF vision**

- To reach the lost with the Gospel of Christ and to disciple them.
- To have real genuine fellowship with each other through commitment to smaller groups.
- To take care of the poor & needy in our own congregation & as the Lord leads outside our own church.
- To support & encourage the persecuted church in prayer, financially and in person if God opens a door.
- The Youth & Sunday School - Proper mentorship and adult role models

# **Our responsibility to the poor.**



## Mother Teresa showed great care for the poor

“If you judge people, you have no time to love them.”

- “People are often unreasonable and self-centered. Forgive them anyway. If you are kind, people may accuse you of ulterior motives. Be kind anyway. If you are honest, people may cheat you. Be honest anyway. If you find happiness, people may be jealous. Be happy anyway. The good you do today may be forgotten tomorrow. Do good anyway. Give the world the best you have and it may never be enough. Give your best anyway. For you see, in the end, it is between you and God. It was never between you and them anyway.”

— **Mother Teresa**



## Mother Teresa quotes.

“I am not sure exactly what heaven will be like, but I know that when we die and it comes time for God to judge us, he will not ask, 'How many good things have you done in your life?' rather he will ask, 'How much love did you put into what you did?’”

“I have found the paradox, that if you love until it hurts, there can be no more hurt, only more love.”

“Not all of us can do great things.  
But we can do small things with great love.”

“I know God won't give me anything I can't handle. I just wish he didn't trust me so much.”

“God doesn't require us to succeed,  
he only requires that you try.”

Prayer is not asking. Prayer is putting oneself in the hands of God, at His disposition, and listening to His voice in the depth of our hearts.

**“Live simply so others may simply live.”**

**Mother Teresa**



## The poor.

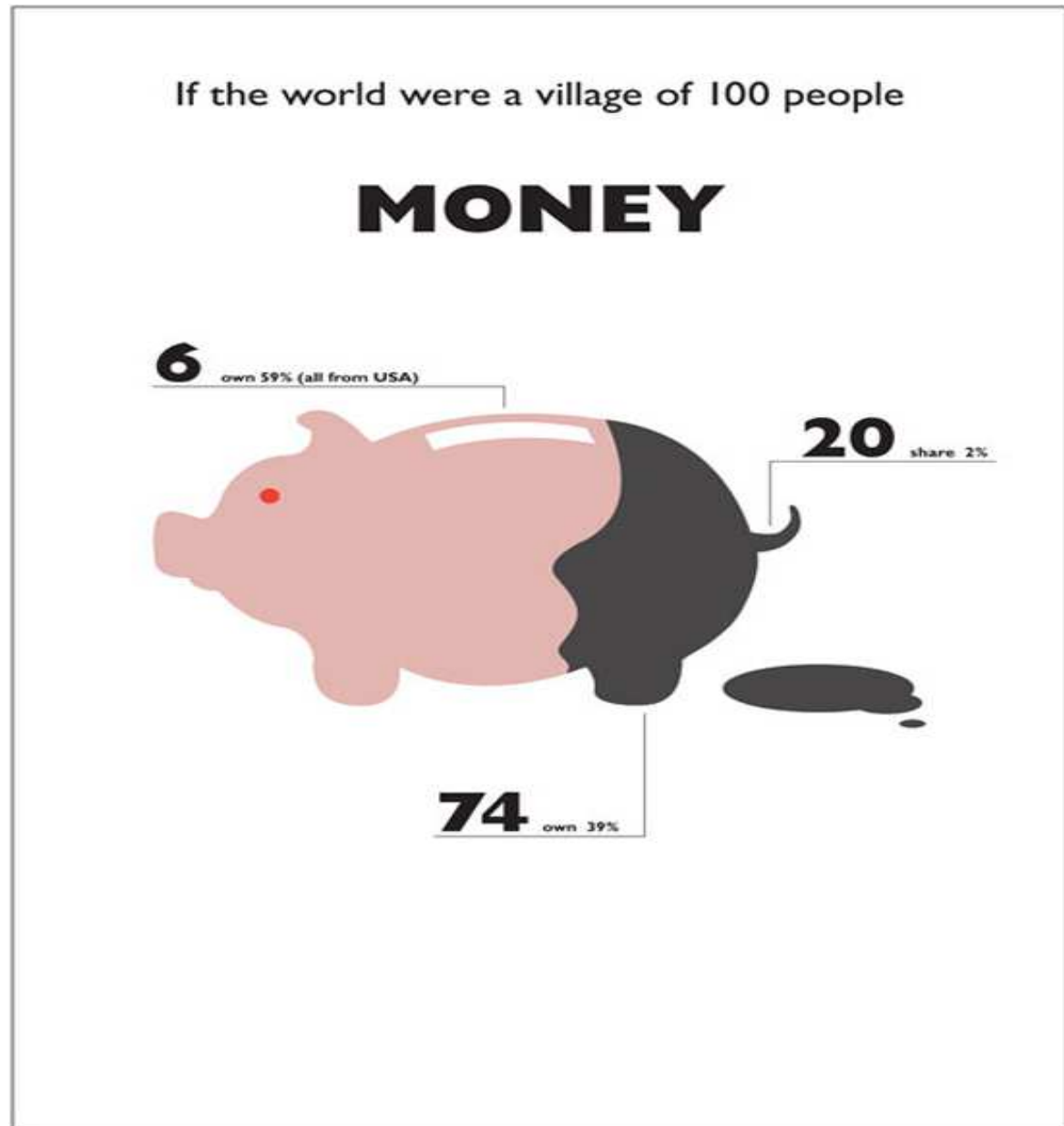
- **In the world today, more than 6 billion people live. If this world were shrunk to the size of a village of 100 people, what would it look like?**
  - Of the 100 people in this village:
    - 20 are undernourished
    - 1 is dying of starvation, while 15 are overweight.
  - Of the wealth in this village, 6 people own 59%
  - 74 people own 39%, and 20 people share the remaining 2%.
  - Of the energy of this village, 20 people consume 80%, and 80 people share the remaining 20%.
  - 20 have no clean, safe water to drink.
  - 56 have access to sanitation
  - 15 adults are illiterate.
  - 1 has an university degree.
  - 7 have computers.

If the world were a village of 100 people.

**6 own 59%**

**74 own 39%**

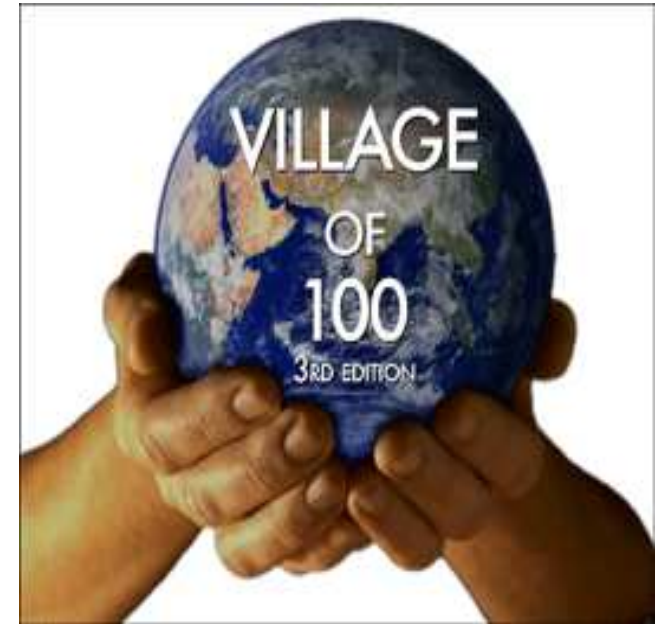
**20 own 2%**





## The poor.

- If you do not live in fear of death by bombardment, armed attack, landmines, or of rape or kidnapping by armed groups, then you are more fortunate than 20, who do.



If you can speak and act according to your faith and your conscience without harassment, imprisonment, torture or death, then you are more fortunate than 48, who can not.

If you have money in the bank, money in your wallet and spare change somewhere around the house, then you are among the richest 8.

## Our responsibility to the poor.

### **Proverbs 19:17.**

*He who is kind to the poor lends to the Lord and he will reward him for what he has done.*

### **Proverbs 21:13.**

*If a man shuts his ears to the cry of the poor, he too will cry out and not be answered.*

### **Proverbs 31:8-9.**

*Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy.*

### **Ezekiel 16:49.**

*Now this was the sin of your sister Sodom: She and her daughters were arrogant, overfed and unconcerned; they did not help the poor and needy.*

### **Proverbs 14:31.**

*He who oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honours God.*



# The treatment of the poor in the Old Testament.

## Deuteronomy 6:12. (Tithe)

*When you have finished setting aside a tenth of all your produce in the third year, the year of the tithe, you shall give it to the Levite, the foreigner, the fatherless and the widow, so that they may eat in your towns and be satisfied.*

*Then say to the Lord your God:*

*I have removed from my house the sacred portion and have given it to the Levite, the foreigner, the fatherless and the widow, according to all you commanded. I have not turned aside from your commands nor have I forgotten any of them.*



## The treatment of the poor in the Old Testament.

**The corners of the field not to be harvested and any of the crop that fell was to be left for the poor.**

### **Leviticus 19:9-10.**

*When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Do not go over your vineyard a second time or pick up the grapes that have fallen. Leave them for the poor and the foreigner.  
I am the Lord your God.*



# The treatment of the poor in the Old Testament.

## The Year for Cancelling Debts

### **Deuteronomy 15:1-11.**

- *At the end of every seven years you must cancel debts. This is how it is to be done:*

*Every creditor shall cancel any loan they have made to a fellow Israelite. They shall not require payment from anyone among their own people, because the Lord's time for cancelling debts has been proclaimed. You may require payment from a foreigner, but you must cancel any debt your fellow Israelite owes you.*

*However, there need be no poor people among you, for in the land the Lord your God is giving you to possess as your inheritance, he will richly bless you, if only you fully obey the Lord your God and are careful to follow all these commands I am giving you today.*

# The treatment of the poor in the Old Testament.

## The Year for Cancelling Debts

*For the Lord your God will bless you as he has promised, and you will lend to many nations but will borrow from none. You will rule over many nations but none will rule over you. If anyone is poor among your fellow Israelites in any of the towns of the land the Lord your God is giving you, do not be hardhearted or tight-fisted toward them. Rather, be open-handed and freely lend them whatever they need. Be careful not to harbour this wicked thought: “The seventh year, the year for cancelling debts, is near,” so that you do not show ill will toward the needy among your fellow Israelites and give them nothing.*

# **The treatment of the poor in the Old Testament.**

## **The Year for Cancelling Debts**

*They may then appeal to the Lord against you, and you will be found guilty of sin. Give generously to them and do so without a grudging heart; then because of this the Lord your God will bless you in all your work and in everything you put your hand to.*

***There will always be poor people in the land.***

*Therefore I command you to be open-handed toward your fellow Israelites who are poor and needy in your land.*

## The treatment of the poor in the Old Testament.

### **Leviticus 25:23-28. (Year of Jubilee)**

*The land must not be sold permanently, because the land is mine and you reside in my land as foreigners and strangers. Throughout the land that you hold as a possession, you must provide for the redemption of the land.*

*If one of your fellow Israelites becomes poor and sells some of their property, their nearest relative is to come and redeem what they have sold.*

*If, however, there is no one to redeem it for them but later on they prosper and acquire sufficient means to redeem it themselves, they are to determine the value for the years since they sold it and refund the balance to the one to whom they sold it; they can then go back to their own property. But if they do not acquire the means to repay, what was sold will remain in the possession of the buyer until the Year of Jubilee. It will be returned in the Jubilee, and they can then go back to their property*



# The treatment of the poor in the Old Testament.

## Freeing Slaves.

### Deuteronomy 15:12-18.

*If any of your people, Hebrew men or women sell themselves to you and serve you six years, in the seventh year you must let them go free. And when you release them, do not send them away empty-handed. Supply them liberally from your flock, your threshing floor and your winepress. Give to them as the Lord your God has blessed you. Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and the Lord your God redeemed you. That is why I give you this command today. But if your servant says to you, I do not want to leave you, because he loves you and your family and is well off with you, then take an awl and push it through his earlobe into the door, and he will become your servant for life. Do the same for your female servant. Do not consider it a hardship to set your servant free, because their service to you these six years has been worth twice as much as that of a hired hand. And the Lord your God will bless you in everything you do.*

## Prosperity and poverty.

**God made provision for his covenant people that they should not have to endure continual poverty.**

**Coming to the New Testament we find that Luke 16 mentions 2 rich men.**

- ❑ Abraham in paradise.
- ❑ The rich man in hell.

Only one thing is mentioned about the 2<sup>nd</sup> man's life, and that is that he neglected the poor man at his gate.



## Prosperity and poverty.

### **Luke 16:1-26.**

*There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores and longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores. The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side.*



## Prosperity and poverty.

**(continued)**

*So he called to him, Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.*

*But Abraham replied, Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now*

*he is comforted here and you are in agony. And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been set in place, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.*



## Prosperity and poverty.

The danger of the prosperity message that swept the Church in the 1980's was that Godliness was seen by some as a means to financial gain in spite of the clear warning in Scripture in 1 Timothy 6:5-19.

The poor were despised and looked down on, viewed as been out of God's will, once again not in line with what we see in James 2:5-7.



## Prosperity and poverty.

### **1 Timothy 6:5-19.**

*people of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain.*

*But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many grief's.*

## Prosperity and poverty.

### **Final Charge to Timothy**

- *But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses. In the sight of God, who gives life to everything, and of Christ Jesus..... I charge you to keep this command.....  
Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.*

## Prosperity and poverty.

### James 2:2-13.

*Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in filthy old clothes also comes in. If you show special attention to the man in fine clothes and say, Here's a good seat for you, but say to the poor man, you stand there or sit on the floor by my feet, have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?*





## Prosperity and poverty.

- **(continued)**

*Listen, my dear brothers and sisters:*

*Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him?*

*But you have dishonoured the poor. Is it not the rich who are exploiting you? Are they not the ones who are dragging you into court? Are they not the ones who are blaspheming the noble name of him to whom you belong?*

*If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, Love your neighbour as yourself, you are doing right. But if you show favouritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers.....*

*Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom, because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful.*

## Prosperity and poverty.

**This does not mean that people must be allowed to be lazy and deliberately decide not to work.**

### **2 Thessalonians 3:6-13.**

*In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers and sisters, to keep away from every believer who is idle and disruptive and does not live according to the teaching you received from us.*

*For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. We were not idle when we were with you, nor did we eat anyone's food without paying for it.*

*On the contrary, we worked night and day, labouring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you.*

*We did this, not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to offer ourselves as a model for you to imitate.*

## Prosperity and poverty.

**(continued)**

*For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule:*

*The one who is unwilling to work) shall not eat. We hear that some among you are idle and disruptive. They are not busy; they are busybodies. Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the food they eat.*

*And as for you, brothers and sisters, never tire of doing what is good.*



## Prosperity and poverty.

**But take care that you are not always looking for an excuse to get out of helping someone in need, because you will more than likely find one.**

**Acts 2:42-47.**

*They devoted themselves to the apostles teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles.*

*All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need.*

*Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people.*

*And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.*

## Vision.

### Stewardship

- Our church was saddened to learn this week of the death of one of our most valued members, **Someone Else**.

Someone's passing creates a vacancy that will be difficult to fill.

Someone Else has been with us for many years and for every one of those years, Someone did far more than a normal person's share of the work.

Whenever there was a job to do, a class to teach, or a meeting to attend, one name was on everyone's list, "Let Someone Else do it."

Whenever leadership was mentioned, this wonderful person was looked to for inspiration as well as results;

**"Someone Else can work with that group."**

It was common knowledge that Someone Else was among the most liberal givers in our church. Whenever there was a financial need, everyone just assumed Someone Else would make up the difference.

Someone Else was a wonderful person; sometimes appearing superhuman. Were the truth known, everybody expected too much of Someone Else. Now Someone Else is gone! We wonder what we are going to do. Someone Else left a wonderful example to follow, but who is going to follow it?

Who is going to do the things Someone Else did?

# The Rich Man And The Poor Man.

## **The Rich Man And The Poor Man**

Two men were walking to Heaven  
On the day that both men died...  
At the age of seventy-seven,  
The limit that God supplied...  
The rich man and the poor man,  
Now together, side-by-side,  
Became aware God had a plan  
And it couldn't be denied...

They each told stories good and bad,  
Despite depressing heartaches...  
The poor man gave God what he had,  
From the tithe that each man makes...  
They each had merits all their own,  
Both their triumphs and mistakes  
And times they struggled all alone,  
And their share of lucky breaks...

## The Rich Man And The Poor Man.

Then suddenly they heard God's voice,  
'Only one can I let in!  
It's up to you to make that choice,  
Who will lose and who will win! '  
The two men prayed and prayed and prayed,  
As if both kith and kin,  
Until their final choice was made,  
Which caused them much chagrin...

The poor man chose to stand his ground,  
For the new friend that he met,  
Because for him new love had found,  
Like the love you can't forget...  
'Receive him, Lord! And bless him, too...  
And forgive his every debt...  
For in life, he never knew You  
And it's filled him with regret...'

**Denis Martindale**

## Knowing God. A W Towzer

- These notions about God are many and varied, but they who hold them have one thing in common: they do not know God in personal experience. The possibility of intimate acquaintance with Him has not entered their minds. While admitting His existence they do not think of Him as knowable in the sense that we know things or people.
- Christians, to be sure, go further than this, at least in theory. Their creed requires them to believe in the personality of God, and they have been taught to pray, "Our Father, which art in heaven." Now personality and fatherhood carry with them the idea of the possibility of personal acquaintance. This is admitted, I say, in theory, but for millions of Christians, nevertheless, God is no more real than He is to the non-Christian. They go through life trying to love an ideal and be loyal to a mere principle.



## Knowing God. (AW Towzer)

- Over against all this cloudy vagueness stands the clear scriptural doctrine that God can be known in personal experience. A loving Personality dominates the Bible, walking among the trees of the garden and breathing fragrance over every scene. Always a living Person is present, speaking, pleading, loving, working, and manifesting Himself whenever and wherever His people have the receptivity necessary to receive the manifestation.



## Knowing God. (AW Tozzer)

- The Bible assumes as a self-evident fact that men can know God with at least the same degree of immediacy as they know any other person or thing that comes within the field of their experience. The same terms are used to express the knowledge of God as are used to express knowledge of physical things.

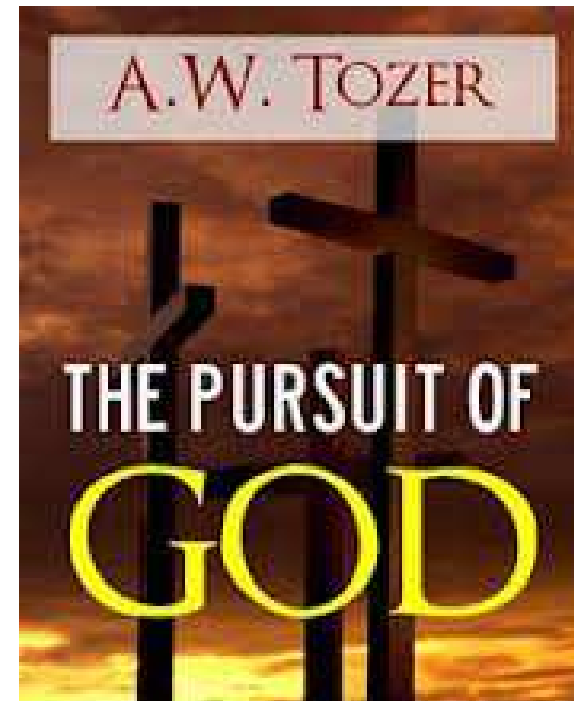
"O taste and see that the Lord is good."

"All thy garments smell Of myrrh,  
and aloes, and cassia, out of the  
ivory palaces."

"My sheep hear my voice."

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they  
shall see God."

These are but four of countless such  
passages from the Word of God.



## Knowing God.

- God can be heard,  
He can be seen,  
He can be touched,  
He can be tasted.

The end effect of this interaction with the Lord is that our lives become a sweet smelling savour to Him.

- It is only when we know the Lord intimately that we will be able to prove His will and know His purposes. Have you experienced The Lord like this.



# Vision.

## ☐ God's pattern or plan for your life.

- *Paul never glamorized the gospel. It is not success, but sacrifice. It's not a glamorous gospel, but a bloody one—a gory gospel, and a sacrificial gospel. Five minutes inside eternity and we will wish that we had sacrificed more, wept more, grieved more, loved and prayed more, and given more.*

~ **Leonard Ravenhill**



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