

# STEPPING UP AND STEPPING OUT



## LEARNING A NEW MINDSET ON BENEVOLENCE

### SESSION 6:

### UNDERSTANDING AND LIVING IN THEIR CULTURE IS NOT THE SAME

#### Text Basis: Leviticus 19:33-34

33 “When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them. 34 The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the LORD your God.

#### Discussion Questions:

If we are going on a trip to \_\_\_\_\_ (pick a foreign country) what are some things you would want to know before you went?

Some likely responses are:

1. How long you're staying?
2. How are you going to get there?
3. How will you need to get around?
4. How much will stuff cost?
5. What are their culture and customs?
6. What clothes should you pack?

#### Follow up discussion:

Who traveled somewhere and it wasn't like you thought?

A great follow up might be 'Who has seen the Mona Lisa?'. If you haven't seen it in person, it likely isn't what you think.

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⇒ **Point one: Poverty isn't a location, but it can form a different culture.**

As discussed earlier it:

1. Hard to define
2. Has it's own language
3. Is often passed from parents to children.

***Today we will talk about the difference in learning about poverty and living it. It can be just as different as reading about France, taking a high-school French class, and then being able to actually live there.***

⇒ **Point two: A quiz to understand living in poverty.**

There is a power point provided as well as an answer sheet. Give people a minute or so to write down their answer to each question.

1. Question 1: The median savings of a 30-year-old in the United States is \_\_\_\_\_?
2. Question 2: You wake up and your car won't start, how do you get to work (or church) using only public transportation?
3. Question 3: You have a blowout and need new tires. Can you:
  - a. Get your car to a tire shop?
  - b. Afford to pay for the tires?
4. You only have \$10 to last a week. Do you:
  - a. Buy gas to get to work or groceries for your family?
5. On question number 4, you might have thought or said, "A person in this situation could get food stamps." What 8 documents do you need to get them?
6. We started out by saying we were planning a trip. Does anyone actually plan to be poor?

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#### Answers:

1. Question 1: *The median savings level of a 30-year-old in the United States is about \$3,200.*

- a. This is very misleading because almost 50% of ‘young people’ have no savings
- b. Across all age groups, about 20% have no savings.

2. Question 2: *You wake up and your car won’t start, how do you get to work (or church) using only public transportation?*

- a. Answer: Trick Question. There is no public transportation in Abilene on Sunday.
- b. If you said I would call someone for a ride, that implies you have a working phone.

3. Question 3: *You have a blowout and need new tires. Can you:*

- a. Get your car to a tire shop?
- b. Afford to pay for the tires?
- c. 37% of Americans cannot afford a \$400 emergence expense (1 tire)

4. *You only have \$10 to last a week. Do you:*

- a. Buy gas to get to work or groceries for your family?
- b. Answer: People experiencing poverty often have to make decisions we don’t want to make. By the way—if you were ever in this situation, you were experiencing poverty.

5. *On question number 4, you might have thought or said, “A person in this situation could get food stamps.” What 8 documents do you need to get them?*

- a. Identification
- b. Proof of US citizenship
- c. Proof of residence
- d. Proof of income or unemployment status.
- e. Proof of medical hardship (if applicable)
- f. Proof of household expenses.

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g. Proof of disabilities (if applicable)

h. Proof of school attendance (If applicable)

i. And access to a Fax machine, phone, or mail, as well as access to a copier or printer.

6. *We started out by saying we were planning a trip. Does anyone actually plan to be poor?*

a. Yes.

i. Priests that take vows of poverty. BTW—that isn't Nathan, Zach, Alan, or Jenni.

ii. People in countries that we consider impoverished—and are often quite

satisfied with their culture and lifestyle.

iii. Very rarely—people who choose to live in poverty.

1. Communes

2. People who choose to live in extreme poverty like (IE homeless on

purpose).

b. Often no. It is the result of:

i. An unplanned situation (IE illness, loss of income, etc)

ii. Not knowing there is anything different (think generational).

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#### Final Thought:

**Poverty isn't a disease. There isn't a magic vaccine make it go away.**

But there are ways to:

1. Make it temporary
  - a. None of us would go on vacation not planning to come home.
2. Make sure it isn't fatal. Yes, living in poverty can be deadly. Imagine instead of a tire in question 4 it was heat in the winter or air conditioning when it was 115 in Abilene in August.
  - a. There are a lot of places where you 'Don't drink the water'
3. Welcome foreigners—sojourners in Abilene living in poverty.

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SESSION 6:

## LIFE GROUPS

### Facts about poverty in America

Many people in America face challenges getting the food and resources they need to live healthy, full lives. Here are some facts about poverty in America:

- ⇒ *In the US, a family of four earning under \$30,000 a year is considered low-income.*
- ⇒ *The federal poverty line helps identify families who might need extra help with things like food and housing. The government sets this number each year.*
- ⇒ *In 2022, nearly 38 million people lived in poverty, according to the Census.*
- ⇒ *However, two-thirds of the people facing food insecurity in America reported incomes above the poverty line. Source: Census*
- ⇒ *People of color are more likely to experience poverty.*
- ⇒ *People from all different races and backgrounds can experience poverty. But it is more common for people of color because of racism and discrimination.*
- ⇒ *People with disabilities and chronic conditions are also more likely to experience low incomes and hunger.*
- ⇒ *Living with a disability and chronic conditions is more difficult, and healthcare is expensive. People living with disabilities may be unable to work or face discrimination in employment.*

**After reading these facts about poverty in America, discuss these questions:**

- *What surprised you? What didn't surprise you?*
- *How many people do you know that fit into any of these categories? What does that say?*
- *What have you learned about helping people in poverty from this series?*
- *What can we do as a life group to alleviate poverty around us specifically?*

<https://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/poverty>