

MAKING

CHRISTLIKE

DISCIPLES

THROUGH



COMPASSION

Prepared for the Blue Ribbon
Commission on Compassion

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GENERAL BOARD RESOLUTION — 2007

1. **On motion**, *"We the UCME Committee of the General Board of the Church of the Nazarene, believing that expressing the compassion of Jesus in practical ways to the marginalized of our society is central to the Gospel and integral to the making of disciples, do hereby ask UCME to begin discussion with appropriate bodies to help us find ways to encourage all our people and churches in USA/Canada to embark on ministries of practical compassion to the poor, widows, orphans, addicted, imprisoned, immigrants, or otherwise marginalized in their communities as God directs. We believe that taking the fragrance of Jesus through deeds of mercy to persons in need will ease their pain, deepen our discipleship, and bring Glory to our Lord."*

2. **On motion**, we would also encourage the Board of General Superintendents to incorporate the call to compassionate works of mercy as a vital dimension of holiness as a core value of the church.

The UCME Committee of the 2007 General Board crafted the above-mentioned resolution and presented it to the General Board for action. With wide acclaim, the General Board passed the resolution.

The import and implications of the resolution were to be fleshed out through the UCME department in dialogue “with appropriate bodies” in the future months and years. Implicitly, it seemed that the resolution, by its wording, tasked the UCME department to help provide a framework of dialogue and suggestions for action that would spur and maintain a theological discussion within our historical tradition of compassionate ministries.

Perhaps the mandate was best expressed by committee member Jim Couchenour when he stated *“I believe biblical and historical truth teach us that along with evangelism as we know it, practical, biblical compassion extended to the ‘poverty stricken, sick, hungry, orphaned, imprisoned, or otherwise marginalized or disenfranchised’ is integral to, vital to, and indeed indispensable to the making of fully Christ-like disciples.”*

Discussions abound about the implications of the recycled “statement of mission” of our century-old denomination. Ever since the genesis of our movement, we have employed manifold epithets to express the core preference for describ-

ing who we are. Within the past decade we have reminded ourselves that we are “Christian, holiness, and missional.” With the advent of the new statement of mission, this trilogy would hopefully continue to be the foundation for self description. This new statement reads, **“To make Christlike disciples in the nations.”**

As the discussions evolve in the years ahead there would undoubtedly be tributaries of distraction that may threaten to dilute the original intent of those who crafted an intentional distinction. It is my humble proposition that such threats could only be mitigated by continuous assent to open dialogue about the inclusive nature of the statement, as well as a willingness to submit the statement to free inquiry and missional scrutiny, resulting in evangelism and healthy church growth.

Indeed, the hermeneutical interpretation of the declaration would be buoyed by the accent we place on the different words. For example, if one chooses to place prominence on the adjectival posture of the phrase, then being “Christlike” would generate a plethora of discourses and homilies on what it means to be a disciple fashioned after the earthly life of the Messiah. On the other hand, to place emphasis on “the nations” would likewise engage the demographic and ethnic implications of the term. Furthermore, what would be the outcome if the word “disciples” were to be exposed to objective explication, devoid of any pre-textual assumptions?

Time and space would not allow me here to appropriately speak to the implications of “disciples” and “the nations.” Thus, I must be willing to uncover the many possibilities open

to us as we enquire into the meaning of being "Christlike." Surely we can agree that a simple definition might be to concede that being Christlike is to fashion our life after Christ. But in all honesty, I cannot do so unless I am willing to return to my 2007 M7 Conference sermon title, "Which Christ?"

Theologically, we can refer to the Christ who is the atonement for us, forever an authentication of the God who is attendant to the depth of depravity to which humankind had sunken. This trend reminds us to model a sacrificial dedication to live a life worthy of the salvific exercise that Christ demonstrated. A disciple then can be defined as one who is an ardent follower of someone or a movement, or even a philosophy. In this sense, to be a Christlike disciple would imply that disciples model their lives after Christ, as he lived his.

What did Christ understand his mission to be? How did Christ live out his mission in this world? And how did he expect his disciples to continue the mission that he had inaugurated?

1. What did Christ understand his mission to be?

Any approach to an understanding of Christ's mission must of necessity begin with a clear reflection of the image of God. To do so would reveal a God who is essentially a missionary God whose primary nature is to reconcile all creation to God's self. The Hebrew Scriptures depicts a God who is seeking, searching, loving, calling and sending. To know God then is to know God and mission, the *missio dei*, two inseparable concepts.

Jesus, in his inaugural address provides a clue to his under-

standing of purpose and mission in his ministry (Luke 4:18-19):

*The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
because he has anointed me
to preach good news to the
poor.*

*He has sent me to proclaim free-
dom for the prisoners
and recovery of sight for the
blind,*

*to release the oppressed,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.*

**“To proclaim
the acceptable
year of the
Lord.”**

To Jesus, and to his contemporaries it was the shared historical understanding that God appointed special emissaries to be the champion of justice for the people of Israel, some of whom were kings, judges, prophets, each in his/her own way pointing them to the image of God and God's purpose within and through Israel. Constantly before them was the call for justice among God's people. In this sense, an idealized figure was conceived who would have the courage of a judge, the regal ways of another David, and the piercing message of the prophets, underscored by an oath to bring justice for the oppressed.

So one can only imagine the full import and the shades of meaning of this inaugural message from the synagogue. Luke uses this Isaiah passage to have Jesus introduce his mission to the world. It was unmistakably to proclaim the liberation of the oppressed and imprisoned and to announce his coming, cloaked in terms of justice. The reference to the Isaiah passage (Isaiah 61:1-2) depicts Jesus as having a mission

and vocation of social responsibility. We do great disservice to this text if we only interpret it to mean that oppression, deprivation, poverty, and bondage are exclusively “spiritual” metaphors.

This interpretation could be validated by Jesus’ choice of his first disciples. They were not members of the influential social aristocracy of wealthy means. It would appear that with intentional selectivity he chose those who were powerless and despised, un-credentialed and disreputable.

As a textual corollary, it is significant to observe a conversation that Jesus had with the disciples of the imprisoned John the Baptist. To the question, “Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?” (Luke 7:18-23) Jesus responds, “Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me.” Today it seems more popular to cite spiritual attributes exclusively to connote the discipleship paradigm. Instead, Jesus points to the human condition as being transformed, a sure sign of the validation of his Messiahship.

**“The poor have
Good News
brought to
them.”**

2. How did Christ live out his mission in this world?

In marked contrast to other leaders, Jesus said that his power places him “among you as one who serves” (Luke 22:27). The teachings of Jesus which give us some sense of disciple-

ship could be garnished from the Sermon on the Mount which begins with the Beatitudes since they constitute the core promise of blessedness to the poor in spirit, meek and merciful, and peacemakers here and hereafter. The *leitmotif* of the Sermon on the Mount is justice and righteousness, and two Beatitudes seem to convey this theme glaringly.

The first is "*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be satisfied*" (Matthew 5:6). Those addressed here were yearning for something far beyond themselves and into the future. As such, it could be concluded that they were in pursuit of this quality rather than being capable of bringing it about by themselves, or by their own efforts. The second Beatitude of note is "*Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven*" (Mt. 5:10). This edict would appear to contradict the first. However, the succeeding Beatitude elucidates this seeming contradiction, "*Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you and utter all evil against you falsely on my account*" (Mt. 5:11). The implication here is that the first and third application is somewhat synonymous, and therefore to be persecuted for Christ's sake is to partake of the *missio dei* of which he is the ultimate incarnation and embodiment.

One further reflection of the Sermon on the Mount is worthy of note. The last line recapitulates the entire sermon with the statement: "*But seek first the Kingdom and his righteousness and all these things will be added unto you*" (Mt. 6:33). The disciples are herein exhorted to prioritize their hierarchy of needs, relegating their earthly ambitions of justice to a God who is indispensably concerned.

Undoubtedly, these texts reveal a Christ whose life was revolutionary, evidenced by the dismantling of social barriers to affect the oppressive social system of his day. His commitment to liberation lifts the curtain surrounding the *raison d'être* for his being and mission. A peculiar vantage point could be reached to view this mission in Jesus' life by a cursory look at his interaction with the chronicled marginalized of his day. Robert Kysar, in his treatment of the image of God in Jesus sheds some rare light on this topic.¹

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First, Jesus, contrary to the accepted practice of the quarantine of those afflicted by physical, mental, and emotional disorders, included them as the objects of his mission of social welfare. The leper, previously reduced to being an un-touchable was accepted by Christ (Mk. 1:40-41). The woman with the issue of blood, living outside the mainstream of society, was reintegrated by Jesus' compassionate posture (Mk. 5:25-34). Second, Jesus' concern for the poor and ostracized of society certainly attest to his approbation for our concern for the physical and social welfare of our unlikely neighbors (Luke 14: 12-14). Third, it is very apparent that Jesus deliberately sought to violate and to make moot the established taboos of the day. For example, he touches the leper, he

makes the Samaritan the hero of a story, he dines with those of questionable social purity (Mark 2:15-16), he treats women with dignity (Luke 8:1-3), and he liberated many from a homeland of inferiority.

3. How did Christ expect his disciples to continue the mission that he had inaugurated?

The superimposed question is really to ask how much following Christ should entail compassion and justice for the oppressed, and concern for the social and political conditions of our contemporaries and modern society. How much is the oppression and poverty in our communities the business of the community of believers we call the church? There is no simple answer because of the extraordinary complexity of the relationship between the church and the world. And it is not a single answer because within the community of faith there are many legitimate allegiances that clamor for attention.

“How much is the oppression and poverty in our communities the business of the community of believers we call the church?”

In Christ's farewell address to His disciples, he clearly commissioned his followers to go and fulfill the *missio dei*. The mission and ministry of Jesus is book-ended by the final charge to bring peace into the world. No other text seals the motivation and purpose of Christ's mission and charge to his disciples as is found in John 20:19-23. Greeting them behind closed doors the risen Christ declares “Peace be with you!” followed by the injunction, “As the Father has sent me, so

send I you." Afterward he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

We have all become guilty of short-circuiting the implied import of bringing peace to the world, which is essentially more than the absence of war and strife. *Shalom* is a lofty relational Judaic concept that is probably best encapsulated by Jesus' dictum that "I have come that they might have life, and have it in the full" (John 10:10). It is incumbent upon the Christian community today to be about securing this harmonious, just, and enjoyable existence until the Second Coming. This is the expression of solidarity that gives credence to our alignment with Christ's continuing mission on earth.

It could be safely deduced that Christ was commissioning his disciples to become peacemakers in their world of turmoil and war of all dimensions. The heretofore mission of these Christlike disciples now becomes an extension of Christ's mission to be an agent of purposeful transformation of society. Herein lies the theology of mission. We have been given the authority to craft ministries of compassion that are grounded in this theology.

All the aforementioned demonstrate a proclivity inherent in

“The heretofore mission of these Christlike disciples now becomes an extension of Christ’s mission to be an agent of purposeful transformation of society.”

Jesus to minister to those in need. If we are to be Christlike disciples, could it not be that to imitate Christ is to be compassionate even as he was? With competing descriptions of what it means to be a Christlike disciple, the compassionate genre emerges as the most legitimate, authentic, relevant, and valid.

Recommendations for living out the compassionate lifestyle

Each Christlike disciple, embedded as a partnership with others in community should initiate new ministries of serving, caring, social concern, justice, liberation, peace, and love to the varying contexts and cultures in which they are placed to serve the Triune God. Winston Worrell of Emory University reminded a group of us while attending the World Methodist Evangelism Conference in 2002 as ministers after the Wesleyan tradition that “Wesley’s cell groups – the classes and the bands – were all involved in key social ministries of justice and caring, clinics and education, outreach to the needy and breaking down of structures where necessary. Could it be that the renewal in our church in the Americas will take place through a balance of mission ministry of organized word and of strong deed ministries to reach the world for Jesus and by reflecting the moral image of God’s love, justice, mercy and truth?”²

In view of the announcement of Jesus’ mission, his life, and the final charge to his disciples it could hardly be justified to proffer that Jesus intended for his church to be solely absorbed with the salvation of the souls of human beings. Any such claim blatantly ignores his devotion to the liberation of human travail here and now in a generally holistic manner.

Anchored by an understanding of Scripture and the mission of God lived out through Christ, the contemporary disciple can therefore resolutely fashion a life that is funded by the conviction that he or she is following Jesus according to what is clearly a dominant motif of his ministry.

Ours should be a lifestyle marked by the ethos of compassion. Any efforts to claim that allegiance to Christ is translated to a works theology should be eschewed and guarded against. Christlike disciples of our day should not delimit compassion simply to mean programs of compassion; compassion is a lifestyle! *Being must precede doing!* We are a compassionate church because we have been unashamedly committed to be like him in mission and ministry. The validation of this commitment is demonstrated by how we live out the same by involvement in ministry towards the outcast, the neglected, imprisoned, and marginalized.

Here are some ways that Christlike disciples could be involved in meaningful compassionate ministry. These are merely intended to be suggestive, not exhaustive:

Immediate Relief:

These ministries shall include emergency response programs, victim assistance, healthcare, soup kitchen, food pantry, clothing ministry, lunch, restrooms, transitional housing, telephone for outgoing local calls, showers, washer and dryer and a mail drop.

Transformational Ministry:

These shall include adult literacy education, family life classes, counseling, healthcare, job training, employment re-

ferral, immigration services, AIDS education and prevention, social justice, and teen activity.

Community Development:

These shall include community empowerment, self-sufficiency initiatives, housing reclamations, urban regeneration, community organizing and capacity-building and micro-enterprise solutions.

Global and National Consciousness:

As we become a global denominational organism it will presuppose an embrace of much broader concerns for the social welfare and future of our fragile world. No longer could we fall prey to become insular in our view of world conditions. For example, we will do well to lend our collective voices as Christlike disciples to the impact of arms production and proliferation on respective domestic economies; tax reforms to express Christ's preferential option for the poor; environmental and ecological issues; international financial institutions and Third World debt; world food security problems; assistance to Third World nations, and both voluntary and forced migration and their effects. In this increasingly complex world our moral responsibility for the larger community should be expanded to force us to help shape the church as a model for social reform and economic justice.

We need a renewed approach to the implications of this global social partnership. It will be one that commits us to the universal mandate to bring about a just and equitable social order. Cautiously, the affairs of this world cannot be catalogued as separate from the spiritual hunger of the human heart. These concerns must become an integral manifesta-

tion of our participation in the struggle to be an effective Christlike witness that is transformed by the worship to God through concrete deeds of justice and mercy. Since we claim to be a global church, we must raise our sights to the quality of life of every individual in this world, regardless of geographical location, and plagued by the most precarious situation of human reality. Philip Jenkins rightly observed that "when American Christians see the images of starvation from Africa, like hellish visions from Ethiopia in the 1980s, very few realize that the victims share not just a common humanity, but in many cases, the same religion. Those are Christians starving to death."³



Kevin Carter, *New York Times*, 1994.

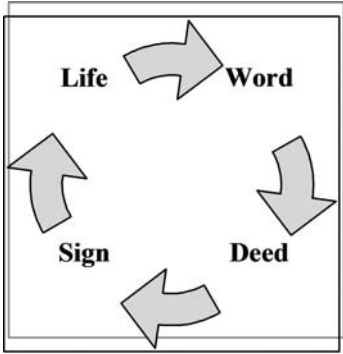
The global village already exists and is essential for human survival. We are not called to create it, but to respond to universal human need and despair. The most imminent threat to global involvement in compassionate causes would be an entrenchment in nationalistic, cultural, ethnic, and other human-made loyalties. Our primary loyalty must be to the compassionate Christ whose ministry was laden with references to the poor and excluded. If we see ourselves chiefly as Americans, as Hispanic, as Black, as white persons, as the privileged class, as the educated majority, as the protectors of tradition, or primarily as members of an institutionalized church, then it would be increasingly difficult for us to move beyond the present toward future involvement in global justice. Such loyalties are too parochial. We are called to dis-

mantle such barriers as we become Christlike disciples with a persuasive passion to make a significant difference in our world.

The Four-fold Nature of Christlike Compassionate Evangelism

There is historical evidence that a divorce has taken place that separates traditional evangelism and compassionate ministry. This has created unnecessary division in the camp, one which has provoked a postulation that evangelism is different from and unrelated to compassion. As a result of this attitude it is often difficult for evangelicals to advance the cause of compassion without reducing it to another voluntary option of discipleship. This truncated approach has not served us well.

A more healthy approach would be holistic, overcoming the dichotomy between evangelism and compassion. A new paradigm of holism may include a four-fold nature: life, word, deed, and sign.



Life: This represents the foundation upon which the other three are expressed. Life with Jesus is the contemplative intimacy with Jesus that is fostered through the means of grace, devotion, bible-reading, worship, and liturgy.

Word: This is expressed through the proclamation of the Word in various cultural adaptations, manifestations, and methodologies. Jesus used different faith-sharing models to reach

different persons with the message of the Kingdom of God; hence, several faith-sharing methodologies must also be in place in the life of the local congregation and in the life of each Christian believer.

Deed: Each Christian and each local congregation must continue to plan and initiate new ministries of serving, caring, social concern, justice, liberation, peace, and love to the varying contexts and cultures in which he or she is placed to be the presence of Christ.

Sign: The result of life, word, and deed would be what Tom Nees calls the “Signs of the Kingdom” or “Resurrection Stories.” Jesus did not try to console or convince John about his Messiahship (John 7:18-23). “The two messengers were simply to return with a report of how the blind, the lame, the lepers, the deaf, even the dead were receiving new life—all this was summed up in two Greek words translated by the phrase ‘the good news is preached to the poor.’ The literal translation is ‘the poor are evangelized or good newsed.’”⁴

“Teaching them to do all I have commanded” links obedience, faith, witnessing, and service to others.

—Board of General Superintendents
Church of the Nazarene
15 February 2007

A Call to Return to Our Roots

“Evidence abounds that early Nazarenes considered love to neighbor as expressed in concrete acts of compassion toward the poor, the hungry, those in prison, the sick—the generally vulnerable and marginal—to be an essential expression of

'perfect love' or 'entire devotedness to God.' What Nazarenes today have come to call 'compassionate ministries' was viewed as an essential dimension of the church's calling by God. In some cases, in fact, the ministry of compassion was emphasized in such a manner as to place it very near to the center of the fundamental reason for the church's existence. Such a sense of 'holy compassion' was an authentic expression of the American Holiness Movement's roots in the Wesleyan Revival, in spite of the various modifications of and departures from Wesleyan models which marked some other aspects of the Holiness Movement."⁵

"We seek the simplicity and the Pentecostal power of the primitive New Testament Church. The field of labor to which we feel especially called is in the neglected quarters of the cities and wherever else may be found waste places and souls seeking pardon and cleansing from sin. This work we aim to do through the agency of city missions, evangelistic services, house to house visitation, caring for the poor, comforting the dying. To this end we strive personally to work with God and to incite others so to do."

—The Articles of Faith and General Rules of the Church of the Nazarene, November 26, 1895

Manual, Church of the Nazarene

903.4. Responsibility to the Poor

The Church of the Nazarene believes that Jesus commanded His disciples to have a special relationship to the poor of this world; that Christ's Church ought, first, to keep itself simple and free from an emphasis on wealth and extravagance and, second, to give itself to the care, feeding,

clothing, and shelter of the poor. Throughout the Bible and in the life and example of Jesus, God identifies with and assists the poor, the oppressed, and those in society who cannot speak for themselves. In the same way, we, too, are called to identify with and to enter into solidarity with the poor and not simply to offer charity from positions of comfort. We hold that compassionate ministry to the poor includes acts of charity as well as a struggle to provide opportunity, equality, and justice for the poor. We further believe that the Christian responsibility to the poor is an essential aspect of the life of every believer who seeks a faith that works through love.

Finally, we understand Christian holiness to be inseparable from ministry to the poor in that it drives the Christian beyond his or her own individual perfection and toward the creation of a more just and equitable society and world. Holiness, far from distancing believers from the desperate economic needs of people in our world, motivates us to place our means in the service of alleviating such need and to adjust our wants in accordance with the needs of others. (2001) (Exodus 23:11; Deuteronomy 15:7; Psalms 41:1; 82:3; Proverbs 19:17; 21:13; 22:9; Jeremiah 22:16; Matthew 19:21; Luke 12:33; Acts 20:35; 2 Corinthians 9:6; Galatians 2:10)

Conclusion:

There is optimism for the church! Bob Linthicum gave useful insights to help the community of faith to reconnect with the challenge to be engaged with the community at large, he said:

I think it takes three things. The first is that of building significant relationships. Because of our theology,

evangelicals are, by our very nature, relational people—amazingly relational people. If evangelicals are given the opportunity to build relationships of trust with others involved in working for social reform, we will get engaged.

Second, we will get engaged if there is a cause that is compelling enough for us to join. Evangelicals are naturally compassionate people.

We care about the world. We are taught to care about the world. And if you can tap us into direct, personal relationships with people who are struggling

because of the injustice they are

experiencing, and if evangelicals can see that injustice at work in our own lives as well—then, we'll come out fighting.

**“We care
about the
world.”**

Third, and most important, an evangelical engagement in public life must be built upon the formation of a solid biblical theology of justice. It takes biblical reflection. First, last and always, evangelicals are people of the Word. We are grounded in scripture as our ultimate authority. And when we can see that the biblical message is centered in calling God's people to seek the shalom of the city by joining with people and organizations of good will to use relational power, then we will return to the passionate engagement of our spiritual ancestors.... And when we are so convinced, then we can—and we will—reclaim our great heritage of social reform and will get so engaged in public life

on the side of justice that we will 'turn the world upside down.'⁶

It is hoped that this document may not be interpreted as an attempt to portray response to human needs as the final purpose and scope of being a Christlike disciple. This would be far from the truth. Discipleship is a lifelong process as well as a complex and comprehensive undertaking. We need to leave no stone unturned in our effort to incarnate Christ's disciple-making mission to our world through the Church of the Nazarene. The goal of this document is to have us all devoted, inspired, motivated, determined, and excited to share Paul's conviction that "I do it all for the sake of the Gospel, so that I may share in its blessing (1 Cor. 9:23).

It is also hoped that this discussion would open the doors to more adequately comprehend the implications of the 2007 General Board Resolution. Since this has emerged as a result of the resolution, my desire is to instigate intellectual dialogue, help to interpret the intent of those who believe that the resolution was necessary, anchor the response within the framework of the Statement of Mission, explore possible mandates from the life of Christ as recorded in the Gospel narratives, and to assist our denomination in remaining true to our heritage, history, and core values.

The enormity of the challenge to transition to a new paradigm for making Christlike disciples through a compassionate lifestyle should not paralyze us. We must design new wine-skins to effectuate any such attempt. Denominational structures may have to be changed, district priorities may have to be reorganized, local congregations may have to revisit and

reevaluate evangelism and deeper life strategies, and new converts may have to be alternatively trained for service in mission. The fact remains that we must be committed to this task of impacting our community and world, at any cost. It is the only course left to us if we would maintain our theological integrity and historical efficacy.

Bryan Stone very succinctly stated the plea for an integrated gospel approach at a Compassionate Ministry Conference held in 1998. Bryan said, "Compassion, then, must come to define the church at its center. Our theological starting point must become an indispensable identification with victims, with the sufferer, with the outcast, with the marginalized, and with the dying. When compassion really is 'suffering with' rather than a condescending charity dropped onto situations of need from positions of privilege and comfort above, it can become the rich soil from which a liberating Christian theology and subversive Christian praxis can blossom and grow."⁷



Further Scripture Readings:

Deut. 15:7 -- If there is a poor man among you, one of your brothers, in any of the towns of the land which the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart, nor close your hand to your poor brother; but you shall freely open your hand to him, and generously lend him sufficient for his need in whatever he lacks.

Deut. 26:5-9 -- The Egyptians treated us harshly and afflicted us, and imposed hard labor on us. Then we cried to the LORD, the God of our fathers, and the LORD heard our voice and saw our affliction and our toil and our oppression; and the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm and with great terror and with signs and wonders; and He has brought us to... this land flowing with milk and honey.

Isaiah 41:17 -- The afflicted and needy are seeking water, but there is none, and their tongue is parched with thirst. I, the LORD, will answer them Myself, as the God of Israel I will

not forsake them.

Isaiah 58:6ff. -- Is this not the fast which I choose, to loosen the bonds of wickedness, to undo the bands of the yoke, and to let the oppressed go free, and break every yoke? Is it not to divide your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into the house; when you see the naked, to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?

Jeremiah 7:5-7 -- For, if you truly amend your ways and your deeds, if you truly practice justice between a man and his neighbor, if you do not oppress the alien, the orphan, and the widow, and do not shed innocent blood in this place, nor walk after other gods to your own ruin, then I will let you dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers forever and ever.

Jeremiah 29:7 -- Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.

Amos 5:24 -- But let justice roll down like waters
And righteousness like an ever flowing stream (NASB).

Footnotes:

¹Robert Kysar, *Called to Care*, Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991.

²Winston Worrell, Unpublished Document, "Discipline as a Way of Ordering Our Lives," 2002.

³Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom*, New York: Oxford Press, 2002.

⁴Tom Nees, Unpublished Document, "Signs of the Kingdom" – A paper presented at The Conference on Evangelism, Ft. Worth, 1991.

⁵Harold E. Raser, Unpublished Document, "Beating Back the Amnesia: Love for Neighbor in the Church of the Nazarene, 1975 – 1998 — A paper presented at the Fourth Quadrennial Compassionate Ministries Conference of the Church of the Nazarene, 1998

⁶Robert Linthicum, *The Surprising History of Evangelicalism – And Why we Need to Rediscover It*, 2003.

⁷Bryan Stone, Unpublished Document, "Subversive Compassion" – A paper presented at the Fourth Quadrennial Compassionate Ministries Conference of the Church of the Nazarene, 1998.



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