

1. The Compassionate Ministry of Jesus

- a) What prophecy regarding Messiah did Jesus read in the synagogue in Nazareth? Luke 4:16-19
- b) Share examples of how this prophecy was fulfilled in the life of Jesus. (Matthew 11:5, Mark 1:32-34, etc.)
- c) Why did Jesus place such a great emphasis on caring for the poor and oppressed?
- d) Read Matthew 25:31-40. What is the connection between our care for “the least of these” and our relationship with Jesus, our compassionate Savior?

2. Inspired guidelines regarding caring for the poor

- a) Deuteronomy 15:11, Psalm 82:3-4, 1 Timothy 6:17-19, etc.
- b) What were some practical ways God’s people were instructed to care for the poor? Exodus 23:10-11, Leviticus 23:22
- c) What promises were given to those who cared for the poor? Proverbs 28:27a, Psalm 41:1-2, Isaiah 58:6-9a.
- d) Share a time when you were blessed as you cared for someone in need.

3. The example of Job

- a) How does the Bible describe this man from the land of Uz? Job 1:1,8
- b) How did Job relate to the poor? Job 29:12-16

- c) What can we learn from Job’s testimony that “I searched out the case that I did not know”?
- d) How can we locate the people in need God wants us to help? James 1:5, Psalm 32:8, etc.

4. The contrasting stories of two rich men

- a) The rich young ruler
 - i) Matthew 19:16-22 What do you learn about this rich young ruler by reading Matthew’s account?
 - ii) Jesus didn’t ask everyone to give all their possessions to the poor. Why did Jesus give these specific directions to the rich young ruler?
 - iii) How do the words of Jesus recorded in Mark 8:36 relate to this rich young ruler?
- b) The rich tax collector, Zacchaeus
 - i) Luke 19:1-10 How did the reaction of this rich tax collector differ from the reaction of the rich young ruler?
 - ii) How did the behavior of Zacchaeus demonstrate a complete surrender to Jesus as his Savior and Lord?
 - iii) Why didn’t Jesus ask Zacchaeus to give away all his goods to the poor rather than 50%?
- c) What important lessons can we learn from these stories for our lives today?

