

ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS OF CHRISTIAN TEACHINGS ON WEALTH AND POVERTY

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the ethical implications of Christian teachings on wealth and poverty, focusing on both personal and societal dimensions. Christian perspectives on wealth, rooted in biblical teachings, emphasize that wealth is a responsibility rather than a privilege. The Old Testament presents principles of equitable wealth distribution, such as Leviticus 25's call for land restitution and the Sabbath year, and Proverbs advocates for wisdom, generosity, and avoiding greed. In the New Testament, Jesus' teachings shift the focus from material wealth to spiritual treasures, as seen in Matthew 6:19-21 and Luke 12:13-21, illustrating that wealth can become a moral issue when hoarded or used selfishly. Christian ethics also stresses community responsibility and social justice, exemplified by the early Church's communal practices in Acts 4:32-35. Contemporary Christian thought calls for addressing systemic poverty and advocating for structural change. Christian social movements and organizations like World Vision and Toms Shoes demonstrate the practical application of these principles, advocating for economic justice and ethical wealth distribution. This paper shows the ongoing relevance of Christian teachings in tackling modern issues of economic inequality, promoting generosity, stewardship, and compassion.

Keywords: *Christian ethics, Wealth and poverty, Economic justice, Social justice, Stewardship*

INTRODUCTION

Christianity has long addressed the relationship between wealth, poverty, and morality, offering profound teachings on the ethical implications of material

possessions, wealth management, and the care of the poor. From the laws of the Old Testament to the teachings of Jesus in the New Testament, the Bible underscores that wealth is a responsibility, not merely a privilege, and poverty demands the active engagement of believers. Leviticus 25, for example, emphasizes land restitution and the Sabbath year as mechanisms to help the poor recover from financial loss (Kollar & Shafiq, 2016). Proverbs also stresses the importance of wisdom in wealth management, urging generosity and caution against greed (Beed & Beed, 1969).

In the New Testament, Jesus' teachings offer a radical perspective on wealth, focusing on its transient nature and the eternal value of caring for the poor. Matthew 6:19-21 advocates for prioritizing heavenly treasures over earthly wealth. In the Parable of the Rich Fool (Luke 12:13-21) and the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats (Matthew 25:31-46), Jesus contrasts the selfish hoarding of resources with the righteousness of those who use their wealth to aid others, reinforcing the idea that wealth is a tool for service, not self-indulgence. While wealth is not inherently evil, it becomes morally problematic when accumulated at the expense of others, leading to self-reliance and complacency. The warning in Mark 10:25, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God," highlights the spiritual dangers of excessive attachment to wealth (Hunter, 2019). Christianity also stresses community and solidarity, with the early Church exemplifying mutual care in Acts 4:32-35. This continues to resonate today, urging Christians to address systemic inequality and advocate for the welfare of the poor, as seen in corporate social responsibility initiatives (Narwani, 2025).

These teachings are especially relevant in addressing global economic inequality. Christian ethics calls for not only charity but systemic change, challenging unjust structures and promoting compassion and justice (Kretzschmar, 2014). The stewardship model of wealth further encourages responsible resource management for societal benefit, rather than individual accumulation (Reda, 2018). Thus, Christian teachings provide a moral framework for addressing the ethical dimensions of wealth and poverty, with a focus on individual and societal responsibility in achieving justice and fairness for all.

The purpose of this article is to explore the ethical implications of Christian teachings on wealth and poverty, examining both individual and societal perspectives. Christian teachings, grounded in biblical scripture, offer a moral framework for understanding the use of wealth and the responsibility towards the poor. This article aims to analyze the core principles of Christian ethics on wealth and poverty, focusing on biblical teachings and their modern-day applications. It will consider how these teachings guide individual behavior, particularly in relation to generosity, stewardship, and the pursuit of justice for the marginalized.

Additionally, the article will examine the broader societal implications, addressing issues such as economic inequality and the ethical responsibility of Christians in advocating for systemic change. By engaging both theological reflection and contemporary economic challenges, the article seeks to provide a deeper understanding of how Christian ethics can inform personal decisions and shape social policies aimed at creating a more equitable and just society.

THE BIBLICAL FOUNDATION ON WEALTH AND POVERTY

Christian teachings on wealth and poverty are deeply rooted in the Bible, where both the Old Testament and New Testament offer critical insights into how believers are to view material wealth, its responsibilities, and its potential dangers. The Bible emphasizes a balance between the wise stewardship of resources and the imperative to care for those in need, providing a comprehensive moral framework for understanding wealth and poverty.

Old Testament Perspectives

In the Old Testament, wealth and poverty are not merely seen as individual circumstances but are closely tied to the covenantal relationship between God and His people. One of the most prominent teachings in the Old Testament is that wealth is a gift from God, but it also comes with great responsibility. The book of Leviticus presents God's commands for managing wealth in a just and equitable way. Leviticus 25 outlines the concept of the Year of Jubilee, where debts were forgiven, and land was returned to its original owners, ensuring that no one would be permanently impoverished (Kollar & Shafiq, 2016). This law provided a divine check on the accumulation of wealth and power, reinforcing the idea that God's people must live in a way that prevents the exploitation of the poor.

Similarly, Deuteronomy 15:4-11 calls for the remission of debts during the seventh year, urging Israel to care for the poor among them. These passages emphasize God's concern for the equitable distribution of wealth and the alleviation of poverty. Proverbs echoes these themes, presenting wisdom on the proper attitude toward wealth. Proverbs 10:22 teaches, "The blessing of the Lord brings wealth, without painful toil for it," signifying that wealth, when acquired through righteousness and divine blessing, is not inherently bad. However, the Proverbs also warn about the dangers of greed and selfishness. Proverbs 28:22 states, "The stingy are eager to get rich and are unaware that poverty awaits them," showing that selfish hoarding of wealth leads to moral and spiritual destruction. The Prophets in the Old Testament repeatedly call for justice in the distribution of wealth and a condemnation of those who oppress the poor. Amos 5:11-12 criticizes the wealthy for exploiting the poor: "You levy a straw tax on the poor and impose a tax on their grain. Therefore, though you have built stone mansions, you will not live in them." The prophets emphasized that wealth should not come at the expense of justice, fairness, and compassion for

the poor (Beed & Beed, 1969). These teachings frame wealth as something to be used in accordance with God's justice, to care for others and prevent the systemic oppression of the poor.

New Testament Perspectives

The New Testament builds upon the foundations laid in the Old Testament, intensifying the ethical call to care for the poor and warning against the spiritual dangers of wealth. Jesus' teachings in particular, challenge the conventional understanding of wealth and offer a radical perspective on poverty.

In the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7), Jesus sets forth a moral vision that redefines the values of the kingdom of God, where material wealth is not the measure of success. In Matthew 6:19-21, Jesus teaches, "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven... For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." This passage critiques the accumulation of material wealth as an end in itself, urging instead that believers focus on eternal rewards, which transcend earthly riches.

The Parable of the Rich Fool (Luke 12:13-21) vividly illustrates the futility of placing trust in material wealth. The rich man in the parable builds larger barns to store his abundant crops, only to have his life demanded of him that very night. Jesus ends the parable with the warning, "This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God" (Luke 12:21). This parable underscores the dangers of greed, self-reliance, and the illusion of security that wealth provides. It teaches that wealth, when hoarded or sought for selfish purposes, can lead to spiritual emptiness and separation from God.

In Matthew 25:31-46, the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats reinforces the ethical responsibility of Christians toward the poor and marginalized. Jesus depicts a final judgment where the righteous are separated from the wicked based on their treatment of the hungry, thirsty, stranger, naked, sick, and imprisoned. He declares to those on His right, "For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink..." (Matthew 25:35). The central message here is that caring for the poor is not optional for Christians but is a reflection of one's relationship with Christ. Wealth and material success, according to Jesus, are not the criteria for divine approval. Rather, it is the use of wealth for the service of others that demonstrates true discipleship.

BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES

The Bible's teachings on wealth and poverty can be summarized through a few principles that emphasize responsibility, generosity, and justice.

1. **The Call to Care for the Poor:** One of the strongest ethical calls in both the Old and New Testaments is the duty to care for the poor and marginalized.

Scripture consistently places responsibility on God's people to be agents of justice, providing for the needy and ensuring they are not oppressed. Proverbs 19:17 states, "Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will reward them for what they have done." The New Testament builds upon this by emphasizing that caring for the poor is a reflection of one's faith and commitment to God.

2. **The Dangers of Greed:** The Bible frequently warns against the pursuit of wealth for selfish reasons. Greed is seen as a spiritual disease that distracts from God's purposes. As 1 Timothy 6:10 notes, "For the love of money is the root of all evil," indicating that an unhealthy attachment to wealth can lead individuals away from righteousness and into sinful behaviors. Jesus' teachings in the Parable of the Rich Fool and the Sermon on the Mount warn that wealth, when idolized, becomes a hindrance to spiritual health.
3. **Wealth Should Be Used Responsibly:** The Bible teaches that wealth is not inherently bad but must be used responsibly. This includes managing wealth with integrity, avoiding exploitation, and ensuring that wealth does not become a source of pride or self-reliance. Proverbs 3:9 says, "Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops." Wealth is a tool that can be used for good, but it must be aligned with God's purposes to care for others and build a just society.
4. **Justice and the Redistribution of Wealth:** In the Old Testament, the concept of the Year of Jubilee and laws like Leviticus 25 and Deuteronomy 15 advocate for the redistribution of wealth, ensuring that no one is permanently impoverished. These laws set the framework for a society where material wealth is balanced with the moral duty to ensure equity and justice for all. This principle is carried forward in the New Testament, where Jesus critiques social systems that allow wealth to be concentrated in the hands of a few while the many suffer.

ETHICAL THEMES IN CHRISTIAN TEACHINGS ON WEALTH AND POVERTY

Christian teachings on wealth and poverty emphasize a complex relationship between material resources, divine responsibility, and moral action. Throughout the Bible, wealth is not seen as merely a personal possession, but as a means by which Christians are called to live out their faith, manage resources responsibly, and advocate for justice.

The Role of Wealth: A Blessing or a Test of Character?

In Christian theology, wealth is understood both as a potential blessing and a test of character. Wealth itself is not inherently good or bad; rather, it is the attitude and actions associated with it that determine its moral value. In the Old Testament,

wealth is often portrayed as a blessing from God. For instance, in Deuteronomy 8:18, it is stated, "But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth." This perspective emphasizes that wealth is a divine provision, meant to be used in accordance with God's will.

However, the Bible also presents wealth as a test of character. Jesus' teachings in the New Testament, particularly in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 6:19-21), suggest that material wealth is a tool for spiritual development but also a potential stumbling block. In Matthew 6:24, Jesus warns, "No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other." This statement illustrates the danger of wealth becoming an idol, distracting believers from their devotion to God. Luke 12:15 further reflects on the relationship between wealth and spiritual health, with Jesus warning against greed, as life does not consist of an abundance of possessions.

This tension between wealth as a blessing and wealth as a test of character is also highlighted in the Parable of the Rich Fool (Luke 12:13-21). The rich man, who builds larger barns to store his wealth, is rebuked by God for his selfishness and failure to use his wealth for the common good. The key takeaway here is that wealth is a test of a person's priorities whether it leads them toward God and service to others or toward self-centeredness.

Thus, Christians are called to view wealth not as an ultimate goal or an assurance of God's favor, but as a resource that must be managed in alignment with Christian values. Hunter (2019) highlights this moral complexity in his analysis of Christian ethics, arguing that wealth is often a reflection of one's relationship with God and can either be a blessing or a snare, depending on how it is handled.

Charity and Justice: The Christian Emphasis on Caring for the Poor

One of the central ethical imperatives in Christian teachings regarding wealth and poverty is the call to charity and justice. Throughout both the Old and New Testaments, there is a strong emphasis on the duty of the wealthy to care for the poor and advocate for social justice.

In the Old Testament, Leviticus 19:9-10 instructs the Israelites not to reap the edges of their fields but to leave them for the poor and the foreigner. This command demonstrates God's concern for the well-being of the vulnerable in society, mandating economic practices that prioritize equity. Proverbs 14:31 reinforces this idea, stating, "Whoever oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honors God."

The New Testament carries this emphasis forward, particularly through the teachings of Jesus and the actions of the early Church. The early Christian community as described in Acts 4:32-35 practiced a radical form of communal sharing, where believers sold their possessions and distributed the proceeds to

ensure that no one in the community was in need. This model of economic justice reflects a deep theological understanding that material wealth is temporary and should be used to foster community welfare and care for the marginalized (Kretzschmar, 2014).

Jesus' own teachings in Matthew 25:31-46 illustrate the importance of caring for the poor as a fundamental aspect of Christian faith. In the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats, the righteous are praised for feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, and welcoming strangers. Jesus equates serving the poor with serving Him, thereby emphasizing that charity is not just a moral duty but a spiritual act of devotion. Christian teachings on wealth and poverty also emphasize the importance of social justice, which goes beyond charity to address the structural causes of poverty. The prophet Amos strongly condemns the exploitation of the poor, stating in Amos 4:1, "Hear this word, you cows of Bashan on Mount Samaria, you women who oppress the poor and crush the needy." The call to justice is a prophetic challenge to societal systems that perpetuate inequality, and the Church is called to be an advocate for those systems to be reformed in line with God's justice (Beed & Beed, 1969).

Thus, the Christian moral tradition teaches that wealth should be used to support charity and to challenge unjust systems, ensuring that all people, especially the poor, are treated with dignity and fairness.

Stewardship and Responsibility: Wealth as a Trust Entrusted by God

Another central ethical theme in Christian teachings on wealth is the concept of stewardship. Wealth is seen not as an individual's permanent possession but as something entrusted by God to be used wisely for the benefit of others. Genesis 2:15 presents humanity's role as stewards of God's creation, a mandate that includes the management of material wealth. Psalm 24:1 reminds believers, "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it," highlighting that all resources ultimately belong to God.

This concept of stewardship is further emphasized in the Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30), where servants are entrusted with their master's wealth and are expected to manage it responsibly. The servant who buries the talent out of fear and fails to use it productively is condemned, illustrating that God expects His people to manage resources wisely and for the common good.

Stewardship in Christian ethics involves several key responsibilities:

1. **Generosity:** Wealth should be used not only for personal enjoyment but also to bless others. Christians are called to give generously to those in need (2 Corinthians 9:7).
2. **Accountability:** Christians will be held accountable for how they use the resources entrusted to them. Luke 16:10-13 teaches that faithfulness in small matters (including the use of wealth) reflects one's ability to handle larger

responsibilities.

3. **Justice and equity:** Stewardship also involves ensuring that wealth is distributed in a way that reflects God's justice. This includes fighting against systems of oppression that exploit the poor and advocating for policies that ensure a fair distribution of resources (Reda, 2018).

THE CHALLENGES OF WEALTH AND POVERTY IN THE MODERN WORLD

The challenges of wealth and poverty in today's globalized world are more complex than ever before. Economic inequality is on the rise, with the disparity between the rich and the poor growing ever wider, not only within nations but also between them. This presents an ethical dilemma for Christians living in societies where materialism and consumerism dominate cultural values. The ethical responses to these modern challenges can be found in Christian teachings, which consistently call for justice, generosity, and a focus on spiritual rather than material wealth. This section will explore the contemporary issues of economic inequality, consumerism, and global poverty, while reflecting on how Christian ethics can inform responses to these pressing global challenges.

Economic Inequality: The Growing Disparity Between the Rich and the Poor

Economic inequality has become one of the most pressing issues in contemporary society. According to the World Inequality Report 2022, the richest 1% of the global population now owns more than 40% of the world's wealth, while the poorest half of the world owns less than 2% (Chancel, Piketty, Saez, & Zucman, 2022). This widening gap between the rich and the poor not only exacerbates social tensions but also presents significant moral and ethical questions for believers. How should Christians respond to this growing inequality?

Christian ethics, rooted in biblical teachings, addresses economic inequality with a call for justice, compassion, and active engagement with the structures that perpetuate poverty. Proverbs 22:16 highlights the moral implications of wealth disparity, stating, "Whoever oppresses the poor to increase his own wealth, or gives to the rich, will only come to poverty." This passage underscores the inherent injustice in the unequal distribution of wealth, particularly when it results from exploitation. Jesus' words in Luke 16:19-31 further critique economic inequality through the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, where the rich man's failure to care for the poor leads to his eternal punishment. The parable illustrates the profound spiritual consequences of ignoring the plight of the poor.

In modern society, the Christian call for economic justice can be seen in advocacy for policies that address wealth redistribution, reduce inequality, and protect the rights of the marginalized. Narwani (2025) explores how Christian values can

inform corporate social responsibility, emphasizing that ethical business practices rooted in biblical principles are essential for creating a more just economic system. Additionally, Christian ethics urges believers to challenge the systemic structures that create and perpetuate inequality. The early Church's communal model in Acts 4:32-35, where believers shared their possessions to ensure that no one among them lacked, serves as a model for addressing inequality today.

Consumerism vs. Christian Values: The Ethical Dilemma of Materialism

In the West, consumerism and materialism dominate cultural values, with the pursuit of wealth and possessions often seen as a primary goal in life. The advertising industry continually reinforces the idea that happiness and fulfillment can be purchased, contributing to a culture of excess and unsustainable consumption. This conflict between consumerism and Christian values raises profound ethical dilemmas, especially in a society that prizes material success over spiritual depth.

Christian teachings challenge this materialistic mindset, urging believers to reevaluate their relationship with wealth and possessions. In Matthew 6:19-21, Jesus explicitly warns against storing up treasures on earth, where material possessions are vulnerable to decay and loss. The ethical dilemma here is clear: the pursuit of material wealth distracts from the eternal and spiritual riches that Christians are called to seek. Jesus' teachings emphasize that true fulfillment comes not from material gain but from loving God and serving others. In Luke 12:15, Jesus warns, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions." Moreover, consumerism often leads to an environmental crisis, as excessive production and consumption deplete natural resources. 1 Timothy 6:7 teaches, "For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it," reminding believers of the transient nature of material possessions. Christians are called to be stewards of God's creation, which includes being responsible for how we use resources and rejecting a lifestyle of overconsumption. Reda (2018) argues that Christian teachings on wealth and poverty urge believers to adopt an ethic of contentment and moderation, where material possessions serve to enhance one's relationship with God rather than define it.

The ethical dilemma between consumerism and Christian values calls for a deeper examination of how individuals and societies prioritize values. The ethical response is not only individual restraint but also systemic change, advocating for an economy that values sustainability, justice, and community rather than material excess.

Global Poverty: Christian Teachings on Global Inequality and the Call for Action

Global poverty remains one of the most pressing ethical challenges of our time, with millions of people worldwide living in extreme poverty, lacking access to basic necessities such as food, clean water, healthcare, and education. According to the

United Nations, over 9% of the world's population lives on less than \$1.90 a day, and this stark inequality is compounded by economic and political systems that often prioritize the interests of wealthy nations and corporations over the welfare of the impoverished.

Christian teachings on wealth and poverty offer guidance on how believers should respond to this global issue. The Parable of the Sheep and the Goats (Matthew 25:31-46) calls Christians to see the face of Christ in the poor, the hungry, the thirsty, and the sick. In this parable, Jesus states, "Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." This powerful teaching underscores that Christians have a moral and spiritual duty to address global poverty. The prophets, such as Isaiah, also call for action against systemic injustice, with Isaiah 58:6-7 emphasizing that true worship of God involves actions that relieve the suffering of the poor and oppressed. The early Church's model of economic sharing in Acts 4:32-35 serves as a theological foundation for global Christian efforts to combat poverty. The early Christians sold their possessions and shared with those in need, establishing a precedent for collective responsibility in addressing societal needs. Modern Christian movements, such as Christian Aid and World Vision, embody this theological framework, advocating for both immediate relief efforts and long-term structural changes to combat global poverty and inequality (Kretzschmar, 2014).

Christian teachings also call for believers to advocate for justice on a global scale. This includes supporting policies that promote economic equality, fair trade, and sustainable development. Beed and Beed (1969) highlight that the ethical response to global poverty is not limited to charity alone but extends to addressing the root causes of economic disparity, including colonialism, exploitation, and unjust trade practices. Christian ethics encourages active participation in global efforts to alleviate poverty, reflecting the belief that wealth is a tool for serving others, and that the moral responsibility to care for the poor transcends national boundaries. Hunter (2019) argues that Christians are called to engage with global economic systems, advocating for policies and practices that promote the well-being of all people, especially the most vulnerable.

CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN RESPONSES TO WEALTH AND POVERTY

Christian responses to wealth and poverty in the modern world continue to be shaped by biblical teachings, but they also evolve in response to contemporary social, economic, and political realities. Christian leaders and organizations today interpret biblical teachings on wealth and poverty through the lens of social justice, advocating for both personal responsibility and systemic change. This section will explore how the Church engages with social issues related to wealth and poverty, the

rise of Christian social movements, and real-world examples of Christian organizations and businesses that put these ethical principles into practice.

The Church's Role in Social Issues

The role of the Church in addressing wealth and poverty has been evolving, especially in the face of growing global inequality, environmental challenges, and the increasing disconnect between the rich and the poor. Modern Christian leaders and organizations have expanded the Church's traditional charitable role to include a focus on systemic economic justice, calling for changes to structures and policies that perpetuate poverty.

Pope Francis has been a prominent advocate for the poor and marginalized, emphasizing the ethical responsibility of Christians to address poverty and inequality. In his encyclical *Evangelii Gaudium*, Pope Francis criticizes the global economic system for its exploitation of the poor, calling for a “new economic paradigm” that prioritizes human dignity over profit (Pope Francis, 2013). His call for “economic justice” aligns with biblical teachings, such as Luke 12:15, which warns against the greed that leads to inequality, and James 5:1-6, which condemns the exploitation of workers.

Modern Christian leaders, particularly those in mainline Protestant denominations, often interpret biblical passages like Matthew 25:31-46 (the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats) as a direct mandate to address social issues like poverty, healthcare, education, and housing. Christian leaders today are vocal in advocating for policies that protect the poor, such as advocating for minimum wage increases, universal healthcare, and fair housing policies. For example, many Christian leaders actively participate in campaigns for living wages, fair trade, and sustainable development, framing these issues as not only social concerns but spiritual imperatives.

Christian organizations have also taken on a more proactive role in creating solutions to address poverty. The Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD), for example, supports community organizing initiatives and educational programs designed to empower marginalized communities to address economic inequality. This represents a shift from simply offering charity to advocating for justice, aligning with biblical principles of caring for the poor and marginalized.

Christian Social Movements

Christian social movements have played a critical role in advocating for systemic changes in economic systems, often challenging societal structures that perpetuate inequality and poverty. Two significant movements in contemporary Christianity are Christian economic justice movements and liberation theology, both of which emphasize the responsibility of Christians to actively work for societal change.

Christian Economic Justice Movements focus on addressing wealth disparity and

advocating for an economic system that prioritizes the welfare of the poor. These movements argue that Christian teachings on wealth and poverty are not only about personal generosity but also about challenging and reforming economic structures. Gustavo Gutiérrez, a Catholic theologian, is often associated with the development of liberation theology, which emerged in Latin America in the 1950s and 1960s. Liberation theology emphasizes the preferential option for the poor, advocating for social and economic systems that empower the oppressed. Gutiérrez argued that the Church should actively engage in social issues, and that salvation is not just a spiritual matter but also involves liberation from material poverty and social injustice (Gutiérrez, 2001).

In the United States, the Poor People's Campaign is a contemporary example of a Christian-led movement for economic justice. Rev. William Barber II, a prominent figure in the movement, frames economic justice as a moral and spiritual issue, rooted in Christian ethics. The Poor People's Campaign advocates for an end to systemic racism, economic inequality, and environmental injustice, calling for a society where all people, especially the poor, have access to basic human rights. Liberation theology, as reflected in movements such as the Black Church's advocacy for civil rights, frames economic and social liberation as a continuation of Jesus' mission to "bring good news to the poor" (Luke 4:18-19). This theological perspective encourages Christians to resist systems of oppression that sustain economic inequality.

Practical Examples: Christian Organizations and Businesses Applying Ethical Principles

Christian organizations and businesses around the world are increasingly applying biblical teachings on wealth and poverty in practical ways. These examples reflect the deep moral commitment to Christian ethical principles, such as generosity, justice, and stewardship, and they provide models for addressing global issues related to wealth and poverty.

1. World Vision is a Christian humanitarian organization that works to alleviate global poverty. They focus on child welfare, education, health, and economic development, emphasizing sustainable solutions to poverty that empower communities. World Vision's work aligns with biblical teachings on caring for the poor and marginalized, applying Proverbs 19:17, "Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the Lord," by providing long-term development aid rather than just short-term charity.
2. Toms Shoes is a business founded on the principle of giving. For every pair of shoes purchased, Toms donates a pair to a child in need. This business model is based on the biblical mandate of generosity and stewardship of

resources to improve the lives of others. The company incorporates a Christian ethic of generosity into its business model, reflecting the teachings of 2 Corinthians 9:7, which encourages cheerful giving.

3. The Salvation Army operates in more than 130 countries and focuses on a wide range of services for the poor, including food programs, emergency shelters, addiction recovery programs, and job training. The Salvation Army's mission is rooted in Christian teachings on poverty, reflecting the Acts 4:32-35 model of communal sharing and care for the most vulnerable. Their emphasis on holistic care addressing both physical and spiritual needs aligns with the biblical call to love and serve others as an expression of Christian faith.
4. Fair Trade organizations, such as Ten Thousand Villages, promote economic justice by providing artisans in developing countries with fair wages for their goods. These businesses align with biblical principles of justice and stewardship, advocating for fair compensation and ethical working conditions. This model echoes the call in James 5:4 to pay workers fairly, as it critiques the exploitation of laborers in the global marketplace.

CONCLUSION

Christian teachings on wealth and poverty provide a profound ethical framework for individuals and societies, emphasizing both personal responsibility and systemic justice. From the Old Testament laws on equitable wealth distribution, such as the Year of Jubilee (Kollar & Shafiq, 2016), to Jesus' teachings in the New Testament, wealth is depicted as both a blessing and a test of character. Matthew 6:19-21 and Luke 12:15 warn against hoarding wealth, while the Parable of the Rich Fool and the Parable of the Sheep and Goats stress the moral obligation to care for the poor (Luke 12:13-21, Matthew 25:31-46). Christian ethics call for more than charity; they demand economic justice, urging believers to challenge the systemic inequalities that perpetuate poverty. Movements like liberation theology and Christian economic justice emphasize that true faith involves working for structural change (Gutiérrez, 2001). Organizations such as World Vision and The Salvation Army actively apply these ethical principles through their focus on poverty alleviation, human dignity, and community empowerment (Reda, 2018).

As global inequality continues to rise, Christian teachings remain highly relevant. They encourage believers to view wealth not as an end in itself but as a tool for justice and service. The call to stewardship and generosity challenges both personal behaviors and global systems, offering a biblical path for addressing the ethical dilemmas of wealth and poverty in today's world.

Christian ethics on wealth and poverty remain crucial in promoting a world that

balances personal wealth with justice and compassion for the poor.

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