

A Statement on Charity

There are several aspects of the ministration of Charity by the Church for the congregation on behalf of the Father and Jesus Christ.

Preaching the Gospel of the kingdom of Heaven and the propagation of His doctrines and teachings is both a duty to Christ and a charitable act to the congregation of the people.

Beyond that there is the mission to heal the sick. This too is a charitable act and includes all aspects of making and assisting the people to be whole again.

There are several precepts to Biblical Charity:

Charity must be in accordance with God's will and His Sons ways.

Charity must help to strengthen those in need.

Charity must be voluntary and freely given.

Charity must be an unconditional release of what is given.

About charity

The word "charity" never appears in the King James translation of Old Testament nor does it appear anywhere in the four Gospels.

The word charity does appears some 27 times in the King James Bible in the epistles.

It is translated from the Greek word *agape* which appears in the Bible some 116 times as a noun and 142 times as the verb *agapao*.

When *agape* appears in the Gospels it is always translated as some form of the word "love".

Charity in the English language almost always has the idea of giving something or allowing something. But the word love and the word charity are identical in meaning when used in the Bible by its authors because it is the same exact word. It is the translators that altered love to the English word charity.

"Il traduttore è traditore" "Translators are traitors"

Charity must be in accordance with God's will and His Sons ways.

What does the word love mean in the Bible from our Father in Heaven's point of view? Good parents know that to love our children does not always mean to give them something. Love may mean the refusal to allow something or the refusal to give something. It may even mean the requirement that something be done before something else is given or granted or allowed.

If charity in the Bible and love in the Bible are the same then what does the Bible mean when it says charity, e.g. love.

Paul uses the same *agape* in Romans 13:10 but the translators choose to translate it Love. "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love [is] the fulfilling of the law."

So what is the "law" and what does it mean to fulfill it?

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." Matthew 5:17

What law is Jesus talking about?

"Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Matthew 22:37-40

What Paul is saying is that love fulfills these two laws. It is in accordance with these laws upon which all the law depend.

What does Paul mean by "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour" Some of the Laws given to man by God is that thou shall not steal, murder, commit adultery, lie, etc..

"And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, that is, God. Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother." Luke 18:18-20

Jesus never did away with the Ten Commandments but he knew if people obeyed the two mentioned in Matthew 22:37-40 then they would automatically obey the others. If people really loved God they would take on His character and if they loved their neighbor then they would not steal from, murder or lie to their neighbor or even covet their neighbor's wife or anything that was their neighbors. This would be in obedience to the Law of God given to Moses to govern the nation of Israel, the government where God prevails.

Charity must help to strengthen those in need.

Although there is not a direct commandment to give to the poor there is:

"For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land."
Deuteronomy 15:11

And in Leviticus 23:22 we see provisions made for the people that they might share in the extra or increase of the land,

"And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleanings of thy harvest: thou shalt leave them unto the poor, and to the stranger: I [am] the LORD your God."

To give or provide for the needy and the poor has always been a part of the kingdom of God on earth.

God by His Character gives life and man, made in his image, should do the same. The poor are not just people without money. Poor can mean poor in spirit and faith, poor in the knowledge of God, poor in understanding and patience.

The word is poor translated from the word the Greek ptochos which includes the idea of "reduced" to a lower state or "destitute of wealth, influence, position, honor".

A person may be poor for many reasons. It may be their fault or it may be through no fault of their own or some combination of the two. The purpose of giving to the poor does not seem to be based on whose fault it is that they are poor. God forgives and gives to the poor all the time which includes us who are poor in faith and have sinned against God.

The poor are possibly deserving of our compassion but they are not special or deserving of any special treatment just because they are poor. We see this pointed out in at least two verses.

"Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor

honour the person of the mighty: [but] in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour."
Leviticus 19:15

But Jesus does say, "For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always." John 12:8

God loves man and when man sinned he said that man must live by the sweat of his brow and that things will be difficult for him in many ways. Was God being mean or was God expressing His love for man?

Hardship, pain and burdens in life are gifts from God to teach us love. Love is long suffering and yet kind, love does not envy, it is not arrogant or proud, nor is it self serving, love is forgiving and tolerant bearing its burdens in faith and hope and does not fail.

God loves us but he did not make us comfortable in our error or sin. Biblical Love is not given to pacify, placate or palliate our departure from God's way. If love and charity is not simply to alleviate suffering or burdens then what is it for?

"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity [love], I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity [love], I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity [love], it profiteth me nothing."

"Charity [love] suffereth long, and is kind; charity [love] envieth not; charity [love] vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."

"Charity [love] never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. And now abideth faith, hope, charity [love], these three; but the greatest of these is charity [love]." 1
Corinthians 13

It would seem reasonable that charity and love must always be in conformity with the precepts of God. In Ezekiel 16:49 we see, "Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy."

The iniquity or sin of Sodom was that though they had the time and the wealth to do so they failed to strengthen the poor. It is not that they did not give to the poor but that they did not strengthen them. There were often huge systems of welfare to pacify the public. In such cultures of self indulgence, apathy and avarice people are deceived about their true responsibility, which only lead to an abundance of idleness and a dissipation of morals and character.

God knows that it is important for the people to be fruitful, productive and propitious and if this precept is forgotten in our charity then that charity is not the Love required by God.

"For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus

Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread. But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing. And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother." 2 Thessalonians 3:10

From the beginning when God told man to be fruitful it has been a common precepts of His kingdom to be industrious and productive as well as generous. We should never be generous to the point where we remove the effect of God's wise judgment. We should never be charitable where our charity weakens the poor.

The Church saw this taking place in the first century Church and we hear in 1 Corinthians 11:22 :

"What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise [you] not."

The Family is the building block of God's kingdom and what does not make the family whole and strong, also, does not make the kingdom of God strong.

It is part of the mission of the Church as the servants of the Kingdom of God to strengthen the people and the families of the people.

"And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout [all] the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubile unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family." Leviticus 25:10

There is one more aspect that must be addressed.

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:" Matthew 7:7

The humility and recognition in asking for help is often an essential part of strengthening the poor.

"The fear of the LORD [is] the instruction of wisdom; and before honour [is] humility." Proverbs 15:33

"Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all [of you] be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." 1 Peter 5:5

Freely Given

Another aspect of charity in the Church and congregation is that it must be freewill and according to the direction of God.

In the Old Testament there several Hebrew words translated into the word offering or freewill offering. Most all of them have the idea of a volunteer choice in the making of an offering. God has given us a freewill to choose to give or not. This is an essential aspect of God's desire for man to be like He is and choose to give, share and contribute to the life and love to one another.

In the New Testament this precept of free giving continues. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give. Matthew 10:8

Even in the tithing²) of the Old Testament to the Levites was given according to his service. Although the Levites were the equivalent of a public servant in that kingdom of God he could not compel the giving of the

tithe with and exercising authority. He was a servant of the congregation called out by Moses and appointed by God.

"And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely." Revelation 21:6

Charity must be an unconditional release what is given. Charity is not an exchange. It must be freely given and freely received. To require respect in return for a gift is an exchange not charity. This is a basic but a seldom learned truth in the kingdom. Love is power, it is an "utility", it is life, it is of God. If you dampen it with your own will, desires or appetites you strangle, reduce, estrange God's love in your charity.

This is why eating of the tree of the deciding good and evil cuts us off from the tree of life.

Being a Father or Mother or minister of God requires a hundred percent. It is a duty to the God who gave you your family not a duty to the members. We owe our children nothing. We owe our God everything.

What is truly given in charity and love is as bread cast upon the waters or as a burnt offering laid upon the altars of God. What you give is given and creates no debt upon the receiver except to God. For what is given to or given from God's altar belongs to God and not His servants.

2) Tithing was the giving of one tenth share each from the ten families served by a Levite minister or the tenth share given by each of ten ministers to their chosen minister.

Numbers 7:5 "Take [it] of them, that they may be to do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation; and thou shalt give them unto the Levites, to every man according to his service."

"Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." 1 Corinthians 2:12

Charity is love and God's love in us will bring true charity.

"Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." 1 John 4:7

"No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us." 1 John 4:12

"Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with [his] hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth." Ephesians 4:28

Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Colossians 3:12-15

Grace

In 1 Peter 5:5, we see, "Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all [of you] be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble."

But what is grace which is given to the humble. The Greek word in the New Testament is charis. In Latin it is charisma a gift, which is where the word charity comes from in the English language. Charis is not translated charity but it means "merciful kindness" something granted, a gift. Obviously Yeshua is granting the grace that God Granted Him.

Luke 22:29 "And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me;"

It is His kind mercy to grant us a kingdom in which we might be saved by sending His son the Messiah, Christ the King.

John 3:17 "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."

John 5:34 "But I receive not testimony from man: but these things I say, that ye might be saved."

It is His kingdom, granted to Him by the Father, that he granted by grace when he appointed it to his faithful servants who remained with him in his temptations.

The question is, "Was Christ king of the kingdom of God on earth". Some chose not to follow him and some chose to follow him and give allegiance to him under his merciful judgment.

Mark 15:32 "Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe. And they that were crucified with him reviled him."

Of course Christ did one better he rose from the dead as king of God's kingdom. It was not like the kingdom of the other nations which exercised authority but was a kingdom operating under the perfect law of liberty.

Everyone knew that a king of a kingdom was to be born. Herod knew it, the Magi, angels and shepherds knew it. At Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem the people hailed him the highest son of David, the king, the anointed, even the procurator of Rome admitted this was the king, and officially proclaimed it so.

Luke 23:38 "And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS."

Judea was the remnant of God's kingdom and Jesus was its king. He came as the house of David to serve and to set the captive free so that they could walk in God's ways. He was setting them free from the apostate kings and priests of God's kingdom as the righteous king and high priest of Judea and of Israel.

"Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." Matthew 21:43

Christ was king and appointed that kingdom as it was meant to be. Many people still wait for that kingdom to be restored because they seek a kingdom like the other nations but that is not God's way. He is our loving and charitable father who has sent his son so that the kingdom would be at hand for us to seek.

No one is under grace unless they have turned around, repented and begun to seek the kingdom and the righteousness of God.

Matthew 3:2 "And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Matthew 4:17 "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Mark 1:15 "And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel."

No one is forgiven unless they forgive.

Matthew 6:12 "And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors."

Matthew 6:14 "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:"

Matthew 6:15 "But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

It is most amazing that the word translated love throughout the Gospels is translated charity only in the epistles and then word charis is translated grace almost everywhere except when the specific grant of charis takes place in the Gospels with the granting of the kingdom. Christ took the kingdom from those who were abusing and twisting it to their own will and granted it by grace to men who followed his teachings and way.

If you leave God out of your heart in any way deception will come in and play its mischief and works in you. You will be deceived that the kingdom is not at hand or that it is like the kingdoms of the gentiles, or that you are saved by saying Lord, Lord but do not have to repent or turn around or do the will of the Father.

Matthew 7:21 "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

Matthew 7:22 "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

If you are unrepentant, unforgiving, impatient, judgmental, intolerant, quick to anger, slothful, avaristic, vulgar, arrogant.... you have opened the door to evil and excluded the character or name of Christ from your life.

If some one says you are saved by grace, or the grace of Christ but does not speak of the kingdom and the whole of the Gospel then they are not preaching the whole truth of Christ, the anointed. They are preaching a half truth which is, of course, a lie.

Matthew 4:17 "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Matthew 10:7 "And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Luke 4:43 "And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent".

Luke 9:2 "And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick".

The word grace appears far more in the New than the Old testament. In Greek it is from charis meaning 1) grace 2) good will, loving-kindness, favour. It is translated grace 130 times, favour 6, thanks 4, thank 4, pleasure 2 ...

The Greek word charis does not translate well into the English word grace without adding new definitions to the word grace. It has been suggested that a better word to have translated charis into would have been favor.

If you look up the word favor in the Bible you will find it appear in the Old more than the New testament. The few times it appears in the new it is translated from charis which is most often translated grace.

God did not change one bit over the centuries and neither did his desire and message for us. His message has always been the same. The Modern Church is often as confused as the Pharisees as to exactly what that

message is.

Psalms 30:5 "For his anger [endureth but] a moment; in his favour [is] life: ..."

Psalms 106:4 "Remember me, O LORD, with the favour [that thou bearest unto] thy people: O visit me with thy salvation;"

In Genesis 4:7 we see at the beginning God told Cain, "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee [shall be] his desire, and thou shalt rule over him."

I have always felt there was something wrong with this translation or at least misleading. If we look at "sin lieth at the door", This whole line "and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door" is from 4 words which are literally translated, 'be not pleasing or do not well' 'sin offering' 'lay down' 'entrance' .

What God said was that if your sacrifice was not sufficient and you were not doing well give a sin offering so that you will find favor and you will have dominion. The words 'thou shalt rule' is from one word defined "to rule, have dominion..." The words 'over him' are no in the original text.

God wants us to have dominion but not over each other. We will have that dominion if we learn to sacrifice for others. This sacrifice begins with forgiveness and forgiving and continues with thanks giving. As we forgive so shall we be forgiven as we give so shall we be given to and as we grant mercy, favor and grace so shall it be granted unto us.