

Theme: To know God is to love kindness and to do justice. Our loving service in Christ's Name is the direct result of God's saving grace at work in us. Our personal care for the poor and needy is not an addition to our faith – it is the necessary evidence of it.

#### Introduction & Background:

- Peter Singer's "ethical" views on persons
- Ethics rooted in "the image of God in us"
- Is caring for the poor/outcast/oppressed rooted in "salvation by works"?  
Is there an inherent contradiction?

#### I. No Contradiction!

- The New Testament view of faith and works
- A. By faith alone
  1. Righteousness apart from works
    - Romans 4:1-8 (Isaiah 64:6)
  2. By grace alone
    - Ephesians 2:8-9
  3. Bringing new life
    - Ephesians 2:10; Romans 6:22-23
- B. A faith that is not alone
  - James 2:14-26 (cf. 16, 26)
  - True faith = justification (righteousness before God)
  - True faith – good works (sanctification)

#### II. Perfect Integration of Word and deed.

- A. The Gospel message (John 6:69)
  1. Sharing the gospel - a Core Value!
    - Why does the church exist?
    - Worship, Fellowship, Witness
  2. The great commission
    - The message of salvation
    - With testimonies that affirm its power
- B. Gospel life
  1. Full of Compassion
    - a. Seen in Christ's life and ministry
    - b. Seen in the life of the church
      - James 2:15, 16; 1 John 3:16
  2. With full conviction
    - Witness and Works in the book of Acts (Timothy Keller, Generous Justice)
    - Acts 2:44-27; 4:32-35; 6:7
- C. The perfect balance
  - Ministry to the body leads to ministry through the body
  - Jesus' ministry of compassion did not diminish His ministry of the Word

#### III. Finding Expression

- A. You first!
  1. It's already happening!
    - Through personal relationships and ministry engagement

2. It will be "demanding"
    - We will often need help
    - It will likely be costly
  3. Raising many challenging questions
    - How much help do I give?
    - When and for how long?
    - Can I handle disappointment?
- B. Working together
1. As the church
    - Our ministries of mercy
  2. Raising more questions

#### IV. A Growing Passion

- To love one another (John 13:35; 15:12)
- To love our neighbors, as ourselves (Mark 12:31; 2 Corinthians 8:9)
- To love our enemies and do good to them (Luke 6:35; Romans 5:8)

Conclusion: May God teach us how to love one another - to love our neighbor - and to love our enemies as we reach out to them in deed, with the truth of the Word.