

Exam Practice: World Poverty

Why are the poor poor? Include in your answer a Christian perspective.

a) Mark the following samples out of five. Pick out any errors of spelling, punctuation or grammar. Include brief comments to justify the mark you awarded.

The poor are poor because the rich keep getting richer. It says in the Bible that money is the root of all evil and thats very true. Another reason why the poor are poor is because of overpopulation and disasters. This means that they have not enough money to become developed like the rich countrys. There is also a lot of debit that they owe to us in the west. Jesus said that we should respect each and every poor person we meet. He said this in Good Samurai Parabel. He also said love thy neighbor.

I think the poor are poor because of the cycle of poverty. A child suffers setbacks phisiologically and pyschologically by being raised in extream poverty; that child, should he or she survive, may well continue in the poverty of his parents. I also think that the scale of indebtedness is like a great milestone around the necks of poorer nations; how can a country like Mozambique develop when it's GNP is massively outweighed by it's debt? This pattern of chronic debt and economic stagnation is repeated elsewhere.

The root cause of all poverty is human greed; St Paul wrote that the love of money is the root of all evil. Love of money drives out love of the person, promoting the kind of exploitative business practises by which the minority live off the sweat and penury of the majority. The Catholic notion of the Common Good serves to remind us that God intended the wealth of the world for all peoples in order that each may derive enough through land or labour to live reasonably well and to provide for there children.

Before I write about poverty I wish to define my terms. Relative poverty is the lack, not of essentials, but of those luxuries enjoyed by wealthier people. Absolute poverty is the lack of the essentials: food, shelter, clothing, and so on. This type of poverty afflicts many in what is termed the Third World. It is estimated that three quarters of the world's wealth is in the hands of one quarter of the world's population. How can that be right? Poor people are unlikely to have access to schools or hospitals.

b) Now write a 200 word answer to the question.

Why should Christians help the poor? Justify your views, showing awareness of Christian teachings.

- c) Mark the following samples out of five. Pick out any errors of spelling, punctuation or grammar. Include brief comments to justify the mark you awarded.

Christians should help the poor because they wouldn't wish to be in that situation themselves. Cristians should care for, respect and love everyone. It says in the Bible that you should help poor people, also the catholic church says that too. If you don't help the poor the Bible says you deserve to go to hell forever. But if your kind to the poor people then you shall go straight to heaven without any problem at all. You get a clear choice and it will be no use complaining to god because you know you could of done better in your life.

Christians should help the poor out of simple human compassion. The great famines in various parts of the world have alerted people in richer nations to the plight of the poor. No one can look at the sight of a starving mother trying to feed her equally starved child without being moved deeply. Christians should seek to raise money through various agencies like CAFOD or Oxfam and ensure that money raised is targeted on the most needy people in the world, not siphoned off by corrupt middlemen and local overlords.

Christians should help the poor in fulfilment of the Great Commandment: love God, neighbour and self. St James criticised the kind of religion that satisfies itself with pious thoughts without practical deeds - faith without works is dead, he writes. Love shows itself in action. In fact, love is the one thing on which all will be judged, according the Parable of the Last Judgement. Christ identifies with the poorest and the most destitute on earth. To help a needy neighbour is to help Christ.

Christians should help the poor because much poverty stems from greed and basic injustise. Christians see their act of giving as an act of sharing - an injustise is being righted. This recalls the Hebrew idea of the Jubilee Year, the Sabath of Sabaths, in which God's right order was restored: slaves were freed, loans canceled, land restored to the landless, and the fields aloud to recover. The Year of God was, in the words of Pope Paul VI, the Year of the Human Being, the Year of the Poor, and the Year of the Earth.

- d) Now write a 200 word answer to the question.