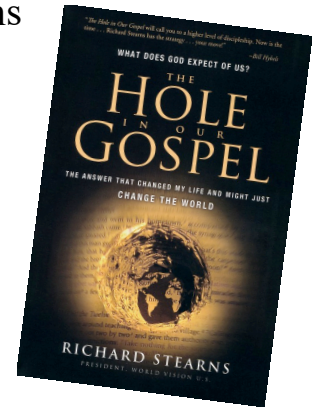




As Christian citizens  
we call our democratic republic to  
promote the general welfare of all people  
because we all bear God's image.

Richard Stearns

President  
World Vision U.S.

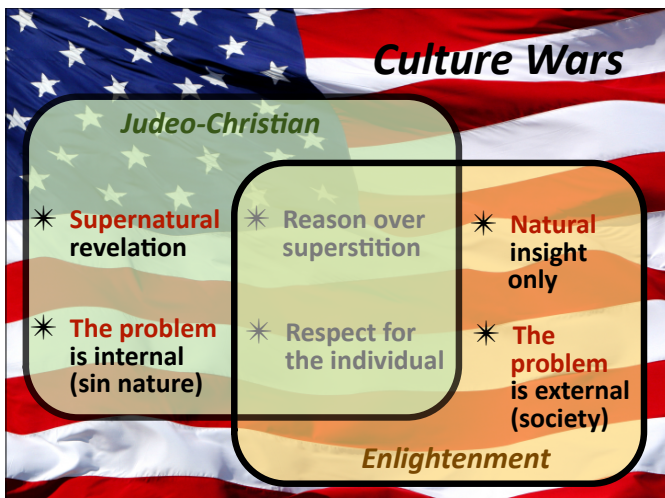


Promoting the "general welfare"  
with respect to poverty is not easy.

1. The nature of poverty is usually misunderstood.
2. The culture of poverty is very complex.
3. Our response to poverty is often conflicted.

*Common misplaced hopes in  
popular culture.*

- ✓ Our basic problems are **external** - **economic, educational, and political.**
- ✓ Christianity is respected to the extent that it **reforms our external environment.**



**The American Constitution  
Tension between  
competing values**

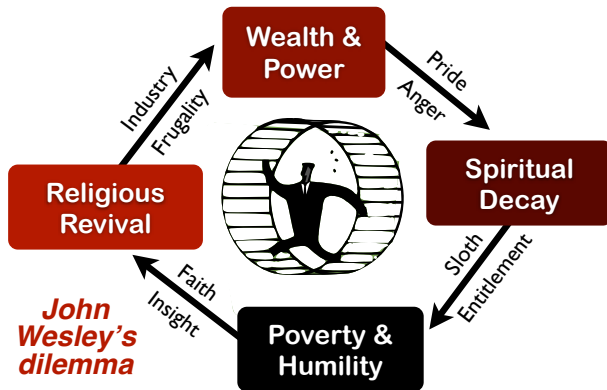
The state is to  
protect  
religious freedom.



The state is to  
promote the  
general welfare.

- ✓ Polygamy in LDS communities.
- ✓ Medical care for children of Christian science families.
- ✓ Honor killing in some Muslim communities.

*The cycle of poverty and wealth reveal a spiritual problem.*



*1 Corinthians 15:50*

“Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.”

**Our physical body  
is not the object of  
salvation.**

*1 Corinthians 15:42-44*

<b>It is sown</b>	<b>It is raised</b>
a perishable body	an imperishable body
in dishonor	in glory
in weakness	in power
a natural body	a spiritual body

*1 Corinthians 6*

“<sup>18</sup> Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body. <sup>19</sup> Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? <sup>20</sup> For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.”

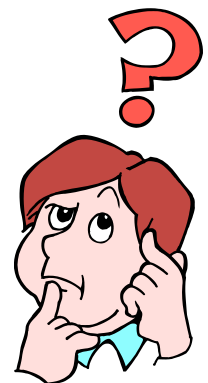
**Our physical body  
in this life belongs to God  
as a holy temple of His Spirit.**

*Romans 12:1*

“I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.”

**Our physical body  
is to be sacrificed in  
service of worship.**

**Is there more to  
the feeding of  
the 5000 than the  
alleviation of  
material needs?**



"45 And immediately **He made His disciples get into the boat and go ahead of Him to the other side** to Bethsaida, while He Himself was sending the multitude away. 46 And after bidding them farewell, He departed to the mountain to pray. 47 And when it was evening, the boat was in the midst of the sea, and He was alone on the land. 48 And seeing them straining at the oars, for the wind was against them, at about the fourth watch of the night, He came to them, walking on the sea; and He intended to pass by them. 49 But when they saw Him walking on the sea, they supposed that it was a ghost, and cried out; 50 for they all saw Him and were frightened. But immediately He spoke with them and said to them, "Take courage; it is I, do not be afraid.""

"51 And He got into the boat with them, and the wind stopped; and they were greatly astonished,

52 for they had not gained any insight from the incident of the loaves, but their heart was hardened."

### ***What insight were they to get?***

? **Jesus will supply all our material needs.**  
But is this the disciples' experience after the light of Pentecost?

- ✓ **We are to be fearless in following Christ by faith.** Jesus calls us to tasks that require a walk of faith and resources beyond the natural.
- ✓ **Jesus is the bread of life.** We are to find our life (security, significance, serenity) in Jesus, not in this world.

### ***Matthew 16:9-11***

"Do you not yet understand or remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many large baskets you took up? Or the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets you took up? **How is it that you do not understand that I did not speak to you concerning bread?"**

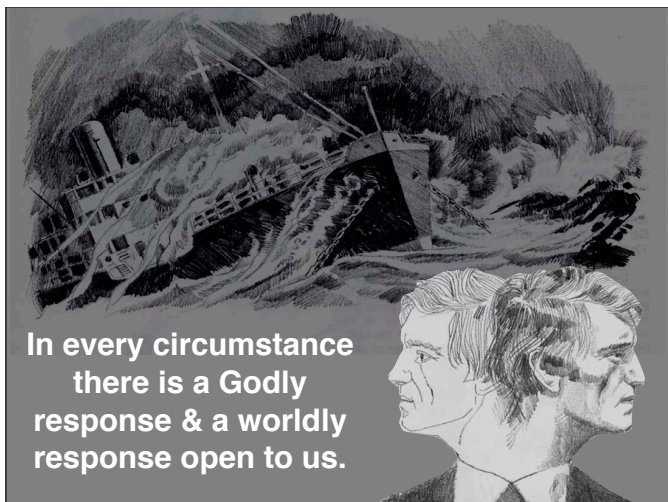
**Example  
of Jesus being IN but not OF  
the world.**

**God calls us to tasks  
that demand a walk  
of faith not sight  
and courage not fear.**

"37 But He answered and said to them, **"You give them something to eat!"** "

"45 And immediately **He made His disciples get into the boat and go ahead of Him to the other side** to Bethsaida,"





**Example  
of Jesus being IN but not OF  
the world.**

**Like Jesus and unlike  
the world, we see man's  
basic problem as spiritual  
not material.**

### *Matthew 4:4*

“Man shall not live  
on bread alone, but  
on every word that  
proceeds out of the  
mouth of God.”

### *John 6:35*

“Jesus said to them, **I am the bread of life**; he who comes to Me shall not hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.”

### *John 6:51*

“**I am the living bread** that came down out of heaven; if any one eats of this bread, he shall live forever; and **the bread also which I shall give for the life of the world is My flesh.**”

### *John 6:27-29*

“Do not work for the food which perishes, but for **the food which endures to eternal life**, which the Son of Man shall give to you, for on Him the Father, even God, has set His seal.’ They said therefore to Him, ‘What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?’ Jesus answered and said to them, ‘This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.’”

✓ **When we find our life in Christ we are free to sacrificially address the felt needs of others with spiritual insight.**

### **Lessons for us today**

- 1. We must find our energy to love and serve in our relationship with Christ and take our baptism seriously.**
- 2. We are to view the suffering and blessings of this life in the context of eternity.**
- 3. We must be reminded that there is more to life than this world offers or takes away.**

**The kind of attention we give to this material world will reveal the true object of our faith, hope, & love.**