

Re: Persevere (Or Keep On Keeping On!)

Posted on **December 4, 2012** by **Daniel Kelly**

Kyle is doing some great spadework on why we need to care for the poor, and some of the issues we must address as we do so. I would like to add, if he doesn't mind, another "P" to the growing alliterative list: "Product."

Kyle's "P" list lays out the foundation for effective compassion. He recommends prayer — always good for keeping the right perspective on what we are doing. And maintaining a presence in the midst of the poor will likely reinforce and direct our concern for them. Personalizing our assistance (that is, treating the person as a responsible moral actor with inherent dignity and worth), of course, is one of the key differences between compassion and compulsion. And partnering with others who are also loving our neighbors will conserve our resources and maximize the number of people we can serve. All of this is good and true.

But I have a bias towards action. I want to know how we get to the "product." We need to move from the theoretical to actually delivering on our agreement that we should love our neighbors by serving them.

Can I make a few waves here? I have said before that it is the church's glory to help the needy in real, physical ways. And if that is to happen, it has to be church leaders who actually, well . . . you know . . . lead. That, I think, has to take place on two levels.

First, church leaders need to move care for the poor away from the periphery of church life into the center. This is not a yearly sermon or two plus an admonition to pray. It needs to become a core part of the church's life. And this shouldn't cause any concerns about the disciple-making mandate. What better way of making a disciple than getting him out there and acting like one — being a disciple consists primarily, I believe, of following Christ's example, which consisted primarily of caring for those around him, yes?

Second, church leaders actually need to get out front and make this happen. They need to organize. The scale of the project is too big for individuals to tackle alone. And as Kyle recognized, caring for the poor can sometimes be difficult. Making a concerted, organized effort will not only maximize the help we provide, it will also make our response more rugged, less prone to fatigue.

I think we would be surprised by the number of people who would be thrilled to get involved in a real, compassionate push to care for the poor — if one existed. I don't mean a stint in the communal pantry (though that could be part of it). I mean a comprehensive, uncompromising commitment to take back our right and duty to love our neighbors that is so insistent, so *persistent*,

that we actually stand a chance of rescuing the poor from the soul-crushing “compassion” inflicted by the state.

We must do this. We are called to it. It is an imperative.

And if love for our neighbor is not enough to motivate us, then let it be an act of self-defense against fiscal implosion. Our economy cannot stand much more “compassion.” Our government’s coercive redistribution of wealth from producers to non-producers is killing the very system that allowed creation of the wealth to begin with. We need to stop this self-destructive behavior. But the only way that will happen is if society becomes convinced that someone loves those in need enough to provide for them without the government compelling it.

So . . . where is the church that puts loving its neighbors in the center of its mission? Where is the program that makes a credible sortie into territory given to, and once held by, the church? Where is the church leader who is leading the charge? Where are the pastors?

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You And Your Silly Rights

Posted on **November 20, 2012** by **Daniel Kelly**



— You want your rights? You can’t handle your rights!

Rights have existed from time immemorial, and they’ll continue into the indefinite future. Real rights, that is: Those fundamental incidents of simply being human – the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness (according to some dead white European guys at least).