

Benevolence: Casting a Global Vision

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INTRODUCTION

Although benevolence (performing of good deeds) is taught in Scripture, it is often practiced by people with little or no biblical faith. Benevolence is closely related to philanthropy, through which those with means seek to alleviate the poverty or suffering of others.

Benevolence in the Biblical sense, however, has the above meanings and more. Benevolence is qualitatively different for the Christian than for the non-Christian since Christ is its *example*, *motivation*, and *mandate*. His Spirit, who is love, empowers Christian service to others and makes it not an occasional or optional activity as it is with non-Christians, but a daily way of life. For the Christian, benevolence is directly related to truly following the example of Jesus Christ and the standard by which Christians will be judged.

I. BENEVOLENCE: ITS MEANING AND APPLICATION

- A. Root Meaning
- B. Application in Acts of Compassion and Humanitarian Service

II. BENEVOLENCE: ITS BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS

- A. Christ the Role Model
- B. Discipleship Its Formation
- C. The Great Commission Its Mandate

III. BENEVOLENCE: IT'S APPLICATION TO EVERY CHRISTIAN

- A. Its Motivation by the Holy Spirit
- B. Its Fulfillment in the Greatest Commandment (Love of God, love of neighbor)
- C. Its Application to All the World (Acts 1:8)

IV. BENEVOLENCE: ITS GLOBAL CONTEXT

- A. Its Requirement to Be All Inclusive (e.g., Samaritan on the Jericho Road)
- B. Its Power in the Supremacy of Love
- C. Examples in Northern Thailand

V. BENEVOLENCE: A STANDARD OF JUDGMENT

- A. Its Oneness in Proclamation and Service (the True Meaning of Religion, 1 John)
- B. Its Centrality in the Judgment (Matthew 25)