

As I noted last week, this Sunday's sermon will examine 2 Cor. 9. Last week, as we looked at 2 Cor. 8, I pointed out that in verses 8:13ff, Paul seems to call for a kind of "fairness" or "equality" among God's people. This is a "fairness" or "equality" achieved by the generosity of the wealthy within the covenant community, as they part with some of their wealth and allow it to flow to the impoverished. While Paul is certainly not envisioning the church as an absolutely egalitarian social order, he does seem to indicate that the church should be a community in which God's plan for Israel is fulfilled, so that there are "no poor among you" (Deut. 15:7-11). This is why he refers back to Israel's period of wandering in the wilderness in 8:15, when God provided manna "equitably" for all the people so that, "He who gathered much had nothing left over, and he who gathered little had no lack" (Ex. 16:18). The question I raised is simple: How does the catholic (global) church become a community in which there is no lack? How do we ensure that all Christians get their daily manna?

In the sermon, I said that, given our global consciousness and economy, I am not exactly sure how we should go about tackling this problem. There are millions of people around the world in constant danger of starvation, and many, many of those are members of God's people. We should have a concern for every human's well-being, but especially those who are fellow members of Christ's body with us.

I'd be interested in hearing any suggestions you all have. Is this a problem you have given much thought to? One organization that my family has been involved in that seems to be doing a good job helping the world's poor in the name of Christ is World Vision. (David mentioned World Vision in one of his Sunday school classes a while back.) You can get some information here: http://www.worldvision.org/worldvision/comms2.nsf/stable/child_sponsorship_faith?Open&campaign=1193519&cmp=KNC-1193519. A high percentage of donations to WV go straight to helping the poor. They allow you to sponsor individual children in almost any part of the world for a very small amount of money. They are also concerned with dealing with the root causes of poverty, not just the symptoms. I'm curious if any of you have thoughts on other such organizations, or other ways to help in this area. Perhaps (with the help of the Global Mercy/Missions Committee) we can come up with a representative list of organizations that are worthy of our support.