



Week 5:

Controlling the Lake

As the old proverb goes, *Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime.* This is a good insight, but who owns the lake?

Addressing poverty also requires us to look at structural problems. The global economy and American society is stacked against those who have less. How can we ensure that our societies provide a "preferential option for the poor," as our faith calls for?

The Lake's Potential

[W]hat happens when the fish disappear from the lake due to pollution and overfishing?

Then it's time for a change in strategy. Someone has to figure out how to get control of the lake: stop the pollutants, issue fishing licenses, put wildlife-management policies in place. Teaching a man to fish is an individual matter, but gaining control of the lake is a community issue.

That's why we call it "community development" and not



human services. While those of us in community development value personal, hands-on, high-touch ministry, we also see that there are larger issues that have an impact on person's potential for growth. What good is job training if the available jobs won't enable a man to support his family? Or what benefit is homeownership if the home is in a deteriorating, crime-infested neighborhood? If we are to teach people to both fish and thrive, we must figure out how to make use of the lake's potential.

– Robert D. Lupton, *Toxic Charity: How Churches and Charities Hurt Those They Help (And How to Reverse it)*

Pope Francis on Poverty

In The Joy of the Gospel, Pope Francis addresses poverty at length. Here are a couple excerpts. Read more on our website (see below).

[Mark 6:37] means working to eliminate the structural causes of poverty and to promote the integral development of the poor, as well as small daily acts of solidarity in meeting the real needs which we encounter. [188]

[Solidarity] refers to more than a few sporadic acts of generosity. It presumes the creation of a new mindset which thinks in terms of community and the priority of the life of all over the appropriation of goods by a few. [188]

Learn More on the Website

Poverty Infographics – “What Does it Mean to be Poor in America?” “Poverty Line Problems.”

A Short Video – “Wealth Inequality in America: 9 out of 10 Americans are Completely Wrong About This Mind-Blowing Fact”

Visit:

<http://gospel.link/helping5>