



CHOSEN  
Pastor Keith Stewart  
September 18, 2021

*Brothers, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. 1 Corinthians 1.26*

## *1. The Patronage System*

### ☐ Patron/Client relationship

*"A patron-client relationship exists when a patron who has money, who has resources, gives the client what he or she needs, what he or she wants." - Dr. Athena Gorospe*

*Because there is one loaf, our many-ness becomes one-ness...Christ doesn't become fragmented in us. Rather we become unified in Him. We don't reduce Christ to what we are; He raises us to what He is. 1 Corinthians 10.17 (Message)*

*When you come together, it is not the Lord's Supper you eat, for as you eat, each of you goes ahead without waiting for anybody else. One remains hungry, another gets drunk. Don't you have homes to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you for this? Certainly not! 1 Corinthians 11.20-22*

❑ Beggars can't be choosers

For he that eats and drinks in an unworthy manner, eats and drinks damnation to their soul, because they are not discerning the body of Christ. 1 Corinthians 11.29

*To whom much is given, much will be required. Luke 12.48*

"In 2002 Bruce Wilkinson, a Georgia preacher whose self-help prayer book had made him a rich man, heard God's call, moved to Africa and announced his intention to save one million children left orphaned by the AIDS epidemic. In October [2005], Wilkinson resigned in a huff from the African charity he founded. He abandoned his plan to house 10,000 children in a facility that was to be an orphanage, bed-and-breakfast, game reserve, Bible college, industrial park and Disneyesque tourist destination in the tiny kingdom of Swaziland. What happened in between is a story of grand hopes and inexperience, divine inspiration and human foibles. His departure left critics convinced he was just another in a long parade of outsiders who have come to Africa making big promises and quit the continent when local people didn't bend to their will." – Wall Street Journal

1.) The poor must be given a choice.

2.) We must be in relationship with the poor.

"When I was young, even though I couldn't express it in words back then, I knew that somebody, somewhere cared about me." -  
Veronica Muthoni

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. The patron/client relationship is one of the persistent and pernicious abuses that continues to manifest itself in churches across this country and around the world. In short, those with money and resources often give in such a way as to make the poor more conscious of their poverty. Can you think of ways you have seen this dynamic play out? Have you yourself ever done it? Why do we sometimes feel so entitled when we give especially as it relates to deciding what should be done, who needs what, and how we want to help?
2. Giving the poor a choice, a say-so, is the only way to effectively combat the patron/client relationship. Why is it so important to be in relationship with those you want to help? The power of choice is empowering to the poor. But having a choice is one of the last things most people ever offer the poor. We live instead by the flawed statement, "beggars can't be choosers." But if we really hope to change the world, it won't happen by merely throwing money at problems. It will happen as we work alongside those who've been disadvantaged and help to create not just new opportunities but also ownership of the solution. This is why the poor must have a say in how they're being helped. It

causes them to own the solution for themselves. Can you think of examples of where and how this has worked? If you can't think of examples, ask yourself why is there such a shortage of this approach?

3. Pastor Keith shared a couple of stories of sponsor children as he wrapped up his message this weekend. First, he shared how easy it was in the old way of doing sponsorship for children to be passed over for the most superficial of reasons. He then shared the story of a young woman, her sponsor story and the connection she had with her sponsor family – how a sponsor's love made all the difference in her life. If you sponsor a child now or have done so in the past, did you connect with your child? What did you learn about them and from them? If you've never sponsored a child but began that process this past weekend, what kind of questions might you ask your child to get to know them better? For kids who've lost parents or are living in extremely vulnerable circumstances, what kind of messages do you think are important for them to hear from you? Lower is the promise of Christ that He is our friend and has brought us into a relationship where all of these qualities are perfectly fulfilled in Him. Because we have the security net of His friendship love, we can risk loving others in this way knowing if they disappoint us, hurt us or betray us, we have One Who never will. How has the friendship of Christ helped you in your less than perfect friendships? If you've never thought about it in those terms before now, what examples can you think of from Scripture or your own experience where Jesus had modelled these qualities of a great friend?

