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The Challenges of Poverty to the North American Church

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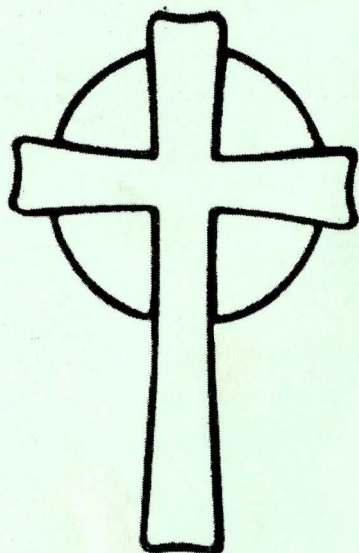
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THE CHALLENGES OF POVERTY TO THE NORTH AMERICAN CHURCH

MICHAEL LANDON

Center for Christian Education

Poverty was a serious national political discussion in the 1990s, but has faded into the background recently. Many middle-class Christians have probably given it little thought. After all, did Jesus not say that we would always have the poor with us (Matt 26:11)?

Hidden by the calm façade of the bureaucracy of poverty, however, is a reality that continues to be a serious challenge to American churches. Poverty is certainly a significant Biblical topic; we just do not realize it because we avoid many of those texts and often spiritualize those we do encounter. Poverty also continues to be a significant global socio-political problem that eventually will have to come to bear on the richest and most self-indulgent people of history. Christianity as practiced by the middle class has for several centuries been scrutinized and criticized by some of the finest minds of history, and we have just ignored them.

Most of the readers of this journal probably attend middle class churches highly attuned to the ethos and values of American culture. In 1978 Solzhenitsyn charged that the western world had lost its courage and turned to the cult of well being, legalism, hastiness, and superficiality.¹ Tony Campolo probably best expressed this in his book *Partly Right*:

This book is about the critics of the Christianity of the middle class. ...I hope that by reviewing the critiques of these significant authors, some insights into the shortcomings of the religious thought and practice of middle-class Christian churches might be discovered. A religious group matures and improves only by correcting its flaws, and usually the enemies of that group can help it to see those flaws better than its friends can. ... I hope that by studying the arguments of our enemies we will recognize our sins, confess them, and work to cleanse ourselves of them.²

¹ Aleksandr I. Solzhenitsyn, *A World Set Apart: Commencement Address Delivered at Harvard University, June 8, 1978* (New York: Harper and Row, 1978), 10–27.

² Anthony Campolo, *Partly Right: Learning from the Critics of Christianity* (Dallas, TX: Word, 1985), ix–x.

The purpose here is to discuss the main challenges of poverty to North American churches. It begins with the theological challenge of distinguishing the biblical view of poverty from our cultural view, then continues with a significant sociological, theological, and practical challenge—the alienation of the poor from churches. This is followed by a discussion of the ideological use of Christianity to support the status quo. The last section makes suggestions to meet these challenges.

First Challenge: A Biblical View of Poverty

Most of what each individual “knows” comes from what has been learned by experience. This includes not only our own actions but also hearing the stories and judgments from others and seeing how those we admire acted in certain circumstances. The difficulty is when we confuse what we “know” from our own experience with what we “know” from the Bible.

I found ten different theories in the literature explaining why people are poor, yet two seem to be most prominent among the general population.³ In the United States, most people offhandedly categorize poor people as either lazy or victims. One “treats the poor as pathological, passive, or in need of moral uplift,” while Goode and Maskovsky express the other theory, which

strives to show how the modes of power, politics, economics and governance . . . work against the poor by creating new forms of impoverishment, and, importantly, new challenges to poor people’s collective efforts to overcome the political, economic, and ideological crises they face.⁴

The Bible, however, has a more complex view of poverty. The Bible uses a variety of words to describe the poor—nine in the OT and two in the NT—that recognize the different causes and levels of poverty.⁵ A simple overview of the OT demonstrates that poverty is a complex human situation that defies simplistic explanations and value judgments. In the book of Exodus, the people of Israel are impoverished, enslaved, and oppressed on the basis of ethnicity, and Pharaoh wanted to do some ethnic cleansing. In the Law of Moses, God made laws to help the poor such as the prohibition of usury (Lev 25:36–37) and the Sabbath Years

³ Michael L. Landon, “The Causes of Poverty as Perceived by Low Income Adults in Hammond, LA and the Implications for Christians,” dissertation at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, IL, December, 1997. Available through UMI Dissertation Services.

⁴ Judith Goode and Jeff Maskovsky, eds., *The New Poverty Studies* (New York: New York University Press, 2001), xi.

⁵ Lausanne Committee for World Evangelism, *Consultation on World Evangelism. Mini-consultation on Reaching the Urban Poor 1980: Pattaya, Thailand* (London, England: Lausanne Committee for World Evangelism, 1980), 22–26; L. Coenen, “Poor,” in *International Dictionary of Theology of the New Testament*, (gen. ed. Colin Brown, 2:820–9; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976), 820–1.

and Jubilee (Deut 15; Lev 25). Judges includes examples of poverty as the result of sin against God (Judg 6:1) and the foreign oppressors he sent (Judg 6:1–6). Naomi is impoverished first by a famine (Ruth 1:1); then both she and Ruth were impoverished by the death of their husbands and sons (Ruth 1:5; 2:2) and the temporary failure of the nearest male relative to fulfill his obligations. Nehemiah had to struggle not only with the oppression caused by war (Neh 1:1–3) and intimidation from neighboring peoples (Neh 4, 6) but also with the oppression of the people by their own wealthy class through debt and taxes (Neh 5).

The Wisdom literature also instructs about poverty. Job was impoverished as a test by Satan (Job 1). Proverbs teaches us that poverty can be caused by laziness and a desire for immediate gratification (6:6–11); failure to take care of one's possessions (24:30–34); finding excuses to avoid work (22:13); oppression in general (13:23) and through the justice system (22:22) and government (28:3), failure to heed discipline (13:18), pursuing fantasies (28:19), co-signing notes (22:26–27), and alcoholism (21:17).

And the prophets! What more could they say?

1. The righteous were sold into slavery (Amos 2:6; 8:6; Joel 3:3).
2. Some of the slaves were submitted to illicit sexual treatment (Amos 2:7, 24).
3. The court and justice system were perverted against the poor (Amos 2:7; 5:7, 10, 12; Mic 3:1, 9, 11; 7:3; Zech 5:3–4; 7:8; 8:16; Hab 2:6–8; Hos 10:3–4).
4. Property of the poor was confiscated illegally (Amos 5:11; Hab 2:6–8).
5. The poverty of the poor was used to provide luxury for the rich (Amos 2:7; 6:1–7; 8:4).
6. The commercial powers cheated and took advantage of the poor (Amos 8:5; Mic 6:10–11; Hab 2:9–11; Hos 12:7).
7. The stranger, widow, and orphan were abused (Mic 2:8–9; Mal 3:5; Zech 7:10).
8. Laborers were defrauded of their wages (Mal 3:5).
9. Common laws of humanity were disregarded (Amos 1:611; Obad 10–14; Zeph 2:8–11).
10. The flesh of the poor was torn and their blood was shed (Mic 3:2–3; Hab 2:12–14).⁶

When Jesus began his ministry, he announced,

The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
because he has anointed me
to preach good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners
and recovery of sight for the blind,
to release the oppressed,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor. (Luke 4:18–19 NIV)

Jesus taught that his followers were those who fed the hungry, clothed the naked, and tended to the thirsty, sick, and imprisoned (Matt 25). The early church

⁶ Landon, *Causes of Poverty*, 33–34.

fed the poor widows (Acts 6:1), and James identified service to the powerless as true spirituality (Jas 1:27). These references do not address the subject of voluntary poverty, with examples such as John the Baptist, Jesus, and the Twelve.

In summary, the Bible views poverty as a complex situation that may arouse both God's mercy and anger. Far too many of us Christians view poverty with simplistic, self-congratulating explanations that echo the sentiment of the Pharisee in the temple, "Thank you, Lord, that I'm better than he is" (Luke 18:11).

Second Challenge: Alienation

Campolo clarifies that alienation is not simply a separateness, but a "synonym for estrangement, it refers to a social psychological condition that leaves people with a sense of powerlessness, emptiness, and psychic deadness."⁷ According to Marx, this alienation began with alienation from nature through the scientific worldview and was followed by alienation of human beings from each other through the stress on competition in capitalism and the extensive use of machines in the Industrial Revolution.⁸

What do poor people think about the Christian churches in the United States? Shank and Reed document the isolation of suburban churches from urban poor, but one does not have to go to a large city to see alienation.⁹ My informants for my dissertation on poverty in a town of 13,000 in Louisiana had mixed views on churches.

Alienated from the Church

Churches are often condescending. Poor people are looked at with suspicion. "Maybe they aren't asking for money now, but they will!" One respondent reported that one church she visited encouraged her to ask for help when she needed it, but then became irritated when she did.

And I didn't have groceries. They brought me groceries, and uh, encouraged me to come to church. And prayed with me, and for me. And um, encouraged me that, to, to ask, if I needed something, to ask, because they knew my situation.

And once I started asking, then, well, you know, I was, I felt like I was gettin' on their nerves! You know, so I don't ask anymore! I, I just, I don't! I just say, "Well, Lord, it's up to you because well, I mean, I've got to have some pride!"¹⁰

That church compounded the problem by trying to enlighten this woman on personal money management.

⁷ Campolo, *Partly Right*, 167.

⁸ Campolo, *Partly Right*, 167-73.

⁹ Harold Shank and Wayne Reed. "Challenge to Suburban Churches: Theological Perspectives on Poverty in America," *Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies* 7 #1-2 (1995): 119-34.

¹⁰ I have tried to reproduce the taped responses of those interviewed, including pauses, repetitions and other forms of informal speech.

"Well, what did you do wit' your money?" Uh, and they wanted to, to help me once with uh, a budget. Try and tell you, they're gonna try and tell me how they're, how to make four hundred eighty dollars last a whole month. (laugh)

Society has already labeled the poor person, and the church may do that as well. Churches may label the poor person as a receiver, the object of poverty; and as such, the poor person loses the courtesy and respect accorded peers.

That was a problem! That was a serious problem! [Name deleted] thought that she could fuss at my children as if they were hers! . . . One of my biggest things is just because this is a [Christian social organization] doesn't mean I'm not due privacy. And that is something [name deleted] and I have hammered at for the entire year! . . . Privacy has to go with it. . . . Because they would not, they wouldn't accept limits! . . . and that was real difficult because I was the receiver as far as they were concerned. And I wasn't, I was, I am the receiver, but I also worked for it.

Sometimes poor people do not go to church because a church expelled them. Approximately two thirds of poor families in the United States are headed by single mothers. While all the informants indicated that part of the responsibility for being poor was their own, part was also how society had dealt with them. By this, they usually meant society in general and "him," their ex-husband, who may have not only divorced them, but also left them in debt, with little financial support, with poor credit, alienated from their families.

Sometimes the complex problems that created the financial problems that led many to poverty are also the same problems with which some churches do not want to deal, such as divorce, single mothers, mental illness, homosexuality, and released convicts. These poor people do not conform to our expectations, and historically churches have not dealt well with difference. One informant wondered why churches that preached that mothers of young children should stay at home and take care of their children vilified single mothers on welfare who did just that. Another reported

When, I went to talk to [clergy member], number one about could I receive communion because their, their rules about communion and the divorce and stuff, he told me I couldn't because I obviously could not satisfy the needs of my husband, but that he would allow my husband to receive communion. And that maybe the grace would bring him back into the family. If I would become what my husband needed. I begged him, . . .

Angry at Church

A second category of relationship between the poor and churches is one of anger.

I think the Lord, way he is, he said his house for everybody. My hope and believing on day I wish they would open up back the church door and stop locking them and get these people off the street. And stop being demon, the demon way because you have equipment inside your church house. If that's your equipment take it home with you. Let's open up these door. The house is the Lord. Maybe we can save somebody.

Another reported,

According to [the minister], I was white trash! I begged [the church school] to take my children on scholarship. All of them had read since three years old! All of, I mean, I have spent time with them. I mean, that's the difference. And [the school] would do nothing! I mean I offered to be janitor to pay for it! I offered to do anything to get what I consider a better education! No way!

These informants also strongly believe that churches are rich. Most middle-class church members would laugh, but we have to remember that the poor and the middle class have different definitions of "rich." The poor often live in a coupon and subsidy society where cash is rare; consequently, there is very little choice. Therefore, to the poor, rich is someone who has cash and the opportunity to choose what to do. By this definition, most churches are quite wealthy. Given this wealth, the church is often perceived to be insensitive, hypocritical, and selfish.

I mean like, like if, I think that my church can send thousands of dollars to Mexico every month, or two thousand dollars here, two thousand dollars over there, why can't we spend a couple of those thousand, and take care of our people in our own church? You know, because if you've ever been on a fixed income, that doesn't last a whole month! You know, and so there are people right here in our congregation at the end of the month, they just don't have. But you know, they'd rather send it someplace else. Instead of, you know, give to the people right there. So needless to say, I don't go to church over there very much.

Another reported,

What brought me to Hammond is I have been in Texas for all these years with my family (pause) insulting me and calling that help. With every, I even called the churches in town. I've been to just everything, anything and everything I could find, anywhere, to help me and have been refused by all of them! The only one that didn't refuse me was the one people who paid that electric bill. Refused by all of them.

These informants had plenty of examples of Christian hypocrisy.

[They say,] "We don't have anything to give." Well now, my Bible says that the church ought to be run on tithe and offering. Am I right? You know, and if, if, and if widows and orphans are to be taken care of by that, uh! OK, well, I don't know. I haven't found a church that believes that yet!

If you're preachin the Bible, then you do what the Lord says to do. You, you don't think about it. You just do what the Lord tells you to do! And he'll take care of the rest! He'll let you know which ones to give to and which ones not to because the Holy Spirit is a teacher, and it'll teach you that! Am I right? That's what I think!

One informant reported that not only were some Christians and ministers hypocrites, but church members owned the dangerous and run-down projects in which she lived.

But now it just, it a money racket, the laws, the churches, mostly it's a lot with the church, and the laws. It just stick 'em in here, in the pot. Just like the projects—you

got a lot of church member over that, they got stocks and bonds in too many projects and I know that they can fix the place better than what they are doing. But, they rather spend the money for the outside, and try to put a fence around it. Instead of fixing the building up itself.

It is easy to say that I would never treat a poor person like that and those charges are just exaggerations, but that is what some poor people think about us.

Practical Problems for Church

This alienation is also the source of the practical problems of dealing with the poor—to whom to give, how much to give, are they worthy? The problem is that poor people are “them,” the “others,” or “They’re not like me.” This line of thinking is a direct result of alienation. My first recommendation for anyone who wants to help the poor is to make friends with first one, and then several, poor people in equal relationships. Replace alienation with fellowship.¹¹

Conclusion

Sadly, the alienation described by the informants above also existed during the first century. The poor were unwashed and unwanted by the religious leaders (Mark 2:16; 7:4; Luke 7:39; 10:31–2). They were burdened by religious regulations (Matt 23:4). They were cheated when they appeared before God in the temple.¹² In so many ways we have become the Pharisees; and by living alienated from the poor, we risk alienation from Jesus (Matt 25). Some of the poor doubt the genuineness of our faith not because of the existence of poverty, but because of the way they are treated when they go to a church.

Third Challenge: Ideology

Given the absence of a well-thought-out biblical understanding of poverty among many church members and the lack of practical knowledge from personal relationships with poor people, the secular humanistic thinkers of our society have led the church in many cases to adopt their strategies to combat poverty, while we remain unaware of their often anti-Christian and ego-centric implica-

¹¹ Of course, another large social problem is the lack of true fellowship among even middle class church members, which springs the difficulty of relationships in western society. See Peter Berger, Brigitte Berger and Hansfried Kellner, *The Homeless Mind*, Vintage Book ed. (New York: Vintage, 1974): 63–68; Shank and Reed, *Challenge*, 120. Alienation can expedite oppression of the powerless, but even for the wealthier, it makes life old and substitutes I-It relationships for I-Thou relationships. See Campolo, *Partly Right*, 175–6 and Martin Buber, *I and Thou* (trans. Walter Kaufmann, New York: Scribners, 1970).

¹² Joachim Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, paperback ed. (trans. F. H. and C. H. Cave; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975), 49.

tions. At times, some have even used Christianity to preach their message and maintain their control over the poor.

Modernization

Modernization (also called developmentalism and desarrollismo) is the belief that poor countries will become wealthy when they develop economically in the same way as Europe and North America, including economic growth and institutional modernization. According to Peter Berger, "Developmentalism' in this sense has, until very recently, been the underlying assumption of most North American social scientists dealing with Third world problems."¹³ Some of its leading proponents have been Novak, Harrison, Huntington and Rangel.¹⁴

While I believe that this explanation for poverty has some merit, what concerns me about modernization is that it is biased against traditional authority and advocates secular-rational authority. According to Harrison, scholars as early as Myrdal "concluded that cultural factors, profoundly influenced by religion, are the principal obstacles to modernization."¹⁵ Inglehart said,

Societies at the traditional pole emphasize religion, absolute standards, and traditional family values; favor large families; reject divorce; and take a pro-life stance on abortion, euthanasia, and suicide. They emphasize social conformity rather than individualistic achievement, favor consensus rather than open political conflict, support deference to authority, and have high levels of national pride and a nationalistic outlook. Societies with secular-rational values have the opposite preferences on all these topics.¹⁶

It is true that Weber identified Protestantism as a positive influence for wealth in North America, but it was because of its "pharisaic" nature that it was helpful, according to Grondona.¹⁷ In other words, America has become wealthy despite

¹³ Peter Berger, Brigitte Berger and Hansfried Kellner, *The Homeless Mind*, Vintage Book ed. (New York: Vintage, 1974), 161.

¹⁴ Michael Novak, *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism* revised ed. (Lanham, Mar: Madison, 2000); Lawrence E. Harrison, *Underdevelopment Is a State of Mind* (Lanham, Mar: The Center for International Affairs, Harvard University and University Press of America, 1985); Lawrence E. Harrison and Samuel P. Huntington, ed. *Culture Matters: How Values Shape Human Progress* (New York: Basic Books, 2000); Carlos Rangel, *O Ocidente e o Terceiro Mundo* (trans. Clecy Ribeiro; Rio de Janeiro, Brazil: Francisco Alves, 1984).

¹⁵ Lawrence E. Harrison, "" in *Culture Matters: How Values Shape Human Progress* (ed. Lawrence E. Harrison and Samuel P. Huntington; New York: Basic Books, 2000), 301.

¹⁶ Ronald Inglehart, "Culture and Democracy" in *Culture Matters: How Values Shape Human Progress* (ed. Lawrence E. Harrison and Samuel P. Huntington; New York: Basic Books, 2000), 83.

¹⁷ Mariano Grondona, "A Cultural Typology of Economic Development" in *Culture Matters: How Values Shape Human Progress* (eds. Lawrence E. Harrison and Samuel P.

its Christian background and the Protestant work ethic—it is secular humanism that leads to wealth. I am concerned that Christians unthinkingly support modernization, not realizing that it is secular humanism at its core.

Culture of Poverty

Some may think that this concern only deals with international poverty. The national version of modernization is the culture of poverty explanation for poverty that places the cause of poverty on dysfunctional ways of life passed from generation to generation through the family. Leading proponents have been Myrdal, Lewis, Moynihan and Harrington.¹⁸ President Johnson's War on Poverty was based on Moynihan's work.

While the culture of poverty explanation for poverty does not presently discourage religious belief and promote secular humanism, both the modernization and culture of poverty explanations strongly encourage the poor to progress economically by becoming "like me." There is an intrinsic ego-centrism in both these theories that concerns me. I am not the standard to be imitated nor is the middle class. God is the standard. Both the wealthy and the poor are to imitate him. When I become the standard, ideology is the next logical step.

Ideology

Ideology can have several meanings. The broadest is any explanation for reality.¹⁹ The more precise meaning used here is defined by Berger and Luckmann as "ideas serving as weapons for social interests" in which "a particular definition of reality becomes attached to a concrete power interest."²⁰

A section above has already addressed the serious problem of confusion between what the Bible teaches and what our society teaches. Because of that ignorance, Campolo says that Christianity has often been unconsciously seduced and twisted by American "dominant institutions and values of bourgeois culture" and been used to support the status quo.²¹ "Herberg showed us that, all too often, American Protestant churches have become primarily propagators of American

Huntington; New York: Basic Books, 2000), 47.

¹⁸ Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma* 2 vols. (New York: Harper and Row, 1944); Oscar Lewis, *Five Families* (New York: Basic Books, 1959), 4; Oscar Lewis, *A Study of Slum Culture* (New York: Random House, 1968), 4–6; Daniel P. Moynihan, *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action* (Washington, DC: U. S. Department of Labor, 1965); Michael Harrington, *The Other America* revised ed. (Baltimore: Penquin Books, 1971), 10, 17–18, 170–171.

¹⁹ Berger et al, *The Homeless Mind*, 159.

²⁰ Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality*. Anchor Books ed. (New York: Anchor Doubleday, 1966), 123.

²¹ Campolo, *Partly Right*, x–xi, 48–51.

social values rather than advocates of biblical values."²² And "the Protestant religious system . . . supports and legitimates the bourgeois position as the ruling class."²³ Berger and Luckmann go so far as to say that

[i]n the period following the Industrial Revolution, however, there is a certain justification for calling Christianity a bourgeois ideology, because the bourgeoisie used the Christian tradition and its personnel in its struggle against the new industrial working class. . . .²⁴

Some may claim that because their church stands in a tradition that may have once been identified as a sect by sociologists, this middle-class orientation does not apply. But really, how do the poor see your church? Do they see it as a friend? Do they feel comfortable there?

Suggestions to Meet These Challenges

The discussion above leads to the conclusion that the core of the problem of poverty for Christians is a theological problem because it is the lack of understanding the biblical teaching on poverty that leads to alienation and ideology. Thus the fundamental step toward dealing with this problem is Bible study.

Numerous biblical texts make fundamental contributions to our understanding of poverty,²⁵ but Nehemiah is an excellent model of how to deal with poverty.²⁶ The following is a summary list of suggestions for working with the poor based on Nehemiah.

1. Neh 1:1–11—decide if the poor are "other" or "brother." Build mutual relationships.
2. Neh 2:2—conquer your fear. While Nehemiah dealt with fear of the emperor, we usually have to deal with the fear of strange neighborhoods and people different from us.
3. Neh 2:5—you probably cannot make a significant difference in the lives of needy people if your focus is on maintaining your personal wealth and status. The Christian's prime example is one of voluntary poverty—Jesus left heaven to save needy people such as me (Phil 2). The point here is not that one must become poor to help the poor, but that you will very likely become less wealthy in doing so.
4. Neh 2:17–18—help needy people help themselves. Charity is often done to help our conscience; it seldom truly helps needy people.
5. Neh 4—be prepared to deal with the oppressors who do not want needy people empowered.

²² Campolo, *Partly Right*, 48–9.

²³ Campolo, *Partly Right*, 12.

²⁴ Berger and Luckmann, *Social Construction*, 123.

²⁵ Shank and Reed, "Challenge," 123–8.

²⁶ Michael L. Landon, "Community Development According to Nehemiah" *ResQ* 42 #1 (Winter 2000): 47–51.

6. Neh 5—be prepared to deal with oppressors among your own group. Some poor people will become oppressors the first chance they get. Some social service organizations make up the “industry of poverty,” whose existence and jobs depend on continued poverty.²⁷
7. Neh 6—your integrity must be above reproach so that you will be prepared for attacks on your character and motives.
8. Neh 7:1–3—choose leaders wisely. Self aggrandizement is a problem in any mission work where the most impressive (young, educated, helpful) people are often working for their own advancement. Nehemiah chose a leader “because he was a man of integrity and feared God more than most men do” (NIV).
9. Neh 8–10—economic renewal alone has little chance of lasting: holistic people-building and community-building are the keys. Nehemiah led people to the Mosaic covenant, in confession of sin, and in commitment to God.
10. Neh 10:27–43—praise God for success and celebrate!
11. Neh 13—long term commitment to transformation is necessary.

Missionaries and Christians from the third world may be our greatest hope for growth in understanding biblical teaching on poverty, the ideological captivity of churches, and how to deal with it. My own interest in poverty was provoked by an encounter with liberation theology in Brazil. Numerous scholars and church leaders from around the world (especially India, Africa, and Latin America) are sharing new insights on the Bible based on new questions from their perspective.

Campolo and Befus point out that evangelical missionaries are developing new economic patterns that go beyond the traditional capitalist/socialist categories. In these small production systems, there is economic freedom (free enterprise); the workers own and distribute the profit among themselves (socialism); the product meets a need; it is produced in ways that encouraged community; and the primary objective is not profit, but love (creation of jobs, job training, helping others).²⁸

Conclusion

This study has discussed just three of the most important challenges of poverty to North American churches. Based on my own experience and confidence in the Bible, I think the key to meeting those challenges is biblical study and teaching on poverty. And we have practical experience and models from foreign missionaries and organizations such as the Christian Community Development Association. What do we lack?

²⁷ Michael Hudson, *Merchants of Misery* (Common Courage Press, 1996) as cited in Fred Clark, “Merchants of Misery” *Prism* 5 #3 (March April 1998): 38.

²⁸ David R. Befus, “Kingdom Business,” *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 38 #2 (April 2002): 204–9; Campolo, *Partly Right*, 154–62.