



Growing Closer to God

Changing Lives

Give to the Poor



Growing Closer to the Father

- Son felt close to Father when the Father was visible
=> But the Father was close even when the son couldn't see
- Father felt close to son because they were working together
=> The closeness was maintained by the son's obedience

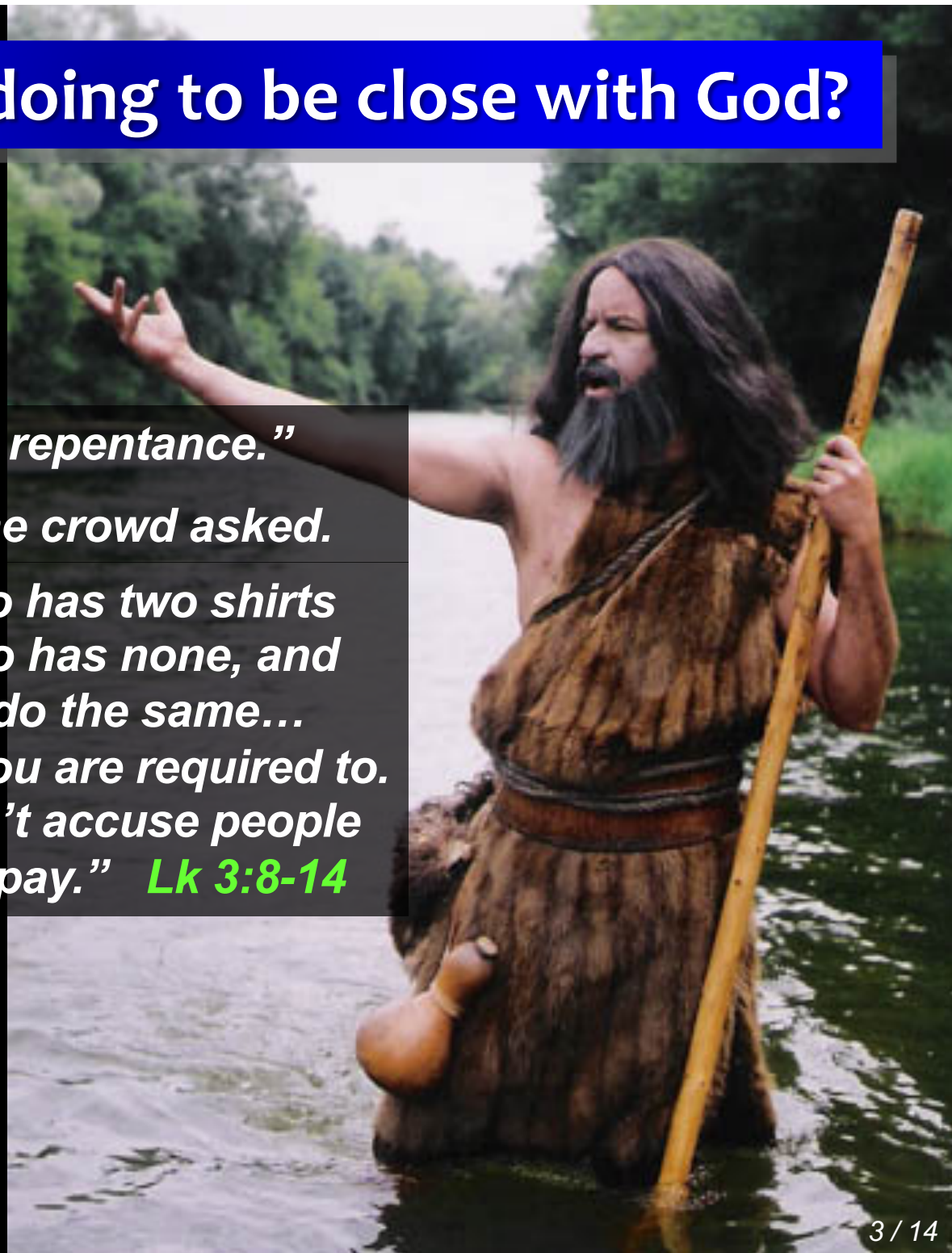
What should we be doing to be close with God?

John the Baptist explains:

“Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.”

“What should we do then?” the crowd asked.

John answered, “Anyone who has two shirts should share with the one who has none, and anyone who has food should do the same... Don’t collect any more than you are required to. ...Don’t extort money and don’t accuse people falsely—be content with your pay.” **Lk 3:8-14**



What should we do to grow closer to God?

John the Baptist explains:

Memory test

“Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.”

“What should we do then?” the crowd asked.

He said 6 things:

1. Take care of the poor
2. Take care of the poor
3. Don't create more poor
4. Don't create more poor
5. Don't abuse your authority
6. Don't be greedy

Take care of the poor



1 Getting Treasure in Heaven

“Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?”

“Why do you ask me about what is good?” Jesus replied.

“There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, obey the commandments.”

...“All these I have kept,” the young man said.

“What do I still lack?”

Jesus answered, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.” Mt 19:16-21



We gain treasure in heaven by giving to the poor

2 Becoming Clean on the Inside

When Jesus had finished speaking, a Pharisee invited him to eat with him; so he went in and reclined at the table. But the Pharisee, noticing that Jesus did not first wash before the meal, was surprised. Then the Lord said to him,

“Now then, you Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness. You foolish people! Did not the one who made the outside make the inside also?

But give what is inside the dish to the poor, and everything will be clean for you.” Lk 11:37-41



We become clean on the inside by feeding the poor

3 The Sin of Sodom

“Now this was the sin of your sister Sodom: She and her daughters:

- 1 were arrogant*
- 2 were overfed and unconcerned*
- 3 **did not help the poor and needy***
- 4 were haughty*
- 5 did detestable things before me.*

Therefore I did away with them as you have seen.”

Ez 16:49-50

God destroyed Sodom, partly because they didn't help the poor

4 God Refusing to Hear Prayer

This is what the Sovereign LORD says: “Will you defile yourselves the way your fathers did and lust after their vile images?



When you offer your gifts—the sacrifice of your sons in the fire—you continue to defile yourselves with all your idols to this day. Am I to let you inquire of me, O house of Israel? As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, I will not let you inquire of me.” Ez 20:30-31

*If a man shuts his ears to the cry of the poor,
he too will cry out and not be answered. Prov 21:13*

**God won't hear prayers of those who sacrifice children
- or won't give to the poor**

Summary: The Importance of Giving to the Poor



If we don't, our prayers won't be heard
Prov 21:13 (& Isa 58:6-9)

Sodom was destroyed because they didn't
Ez 16:49-50



It's the way we become clean on the inside
Lk 11:37-41

It's the way we gain treasure in heaven
Mt 19:16-21



*"They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor,
their righteousness endures forever" Psa 112:9*

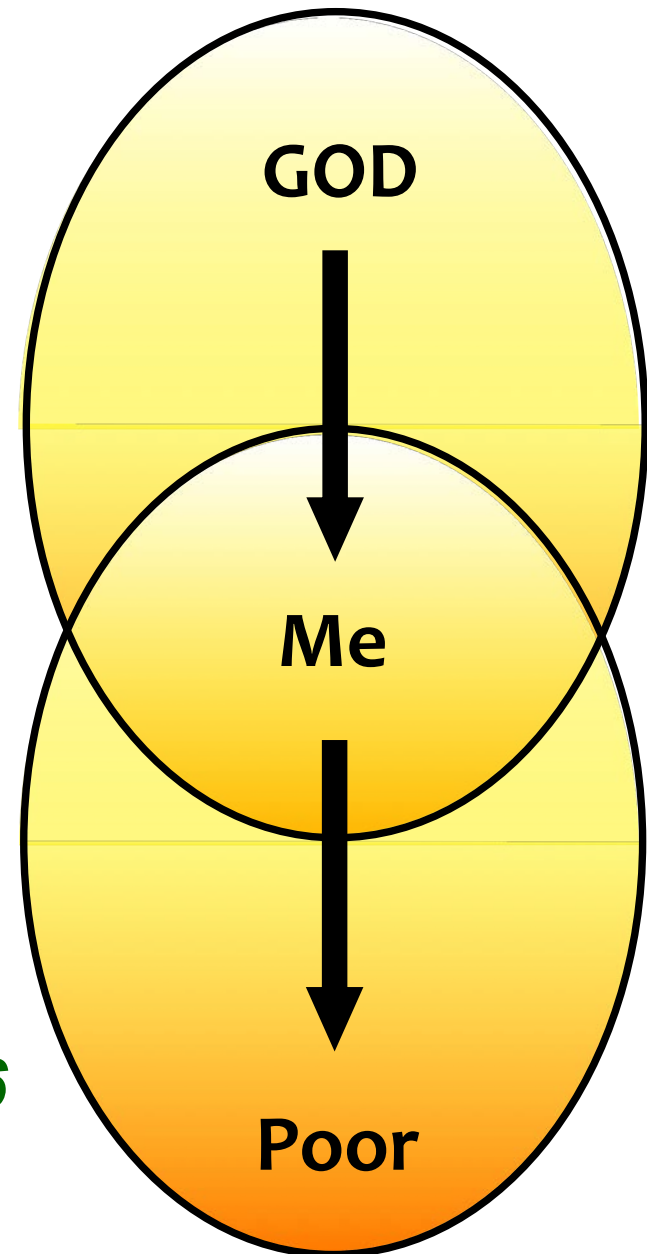
Giving to the poor



Gen 1:26

So God sees His reflection in us

Grow Closer to God



Preparing for Kingship

“The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them... But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves.”

Lk 22:25-36



**Not because those who serve will rule later
but because serving is the true way to rule**

Giving to the Poor

Grow Closer to God

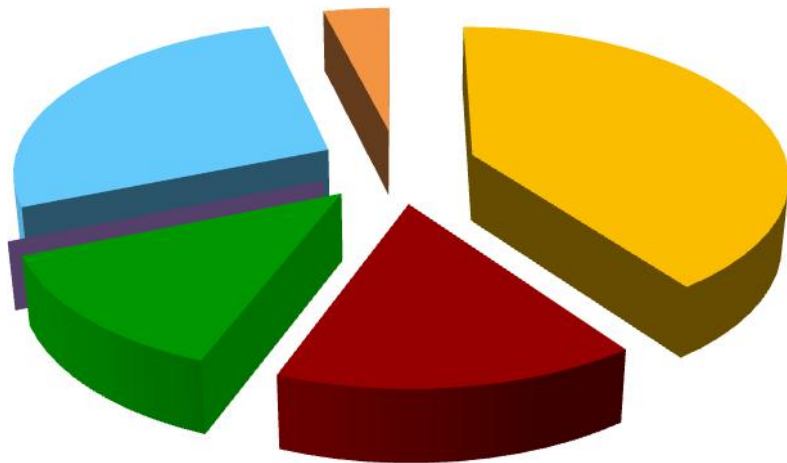


***“I am shepherd to the stars,
chef to the lions and ravens;
& midwife to the mountain goats.”
Job 38:31-39:3, paraphrase***

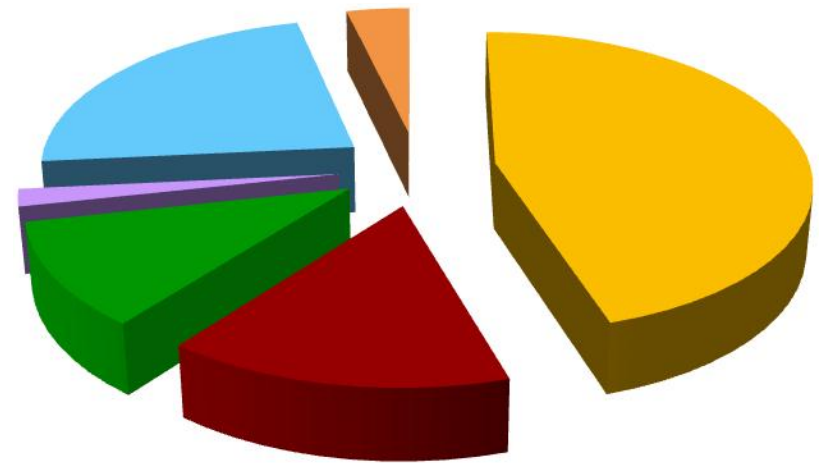


It changes us **inside: we develop
God's traits of loving service**

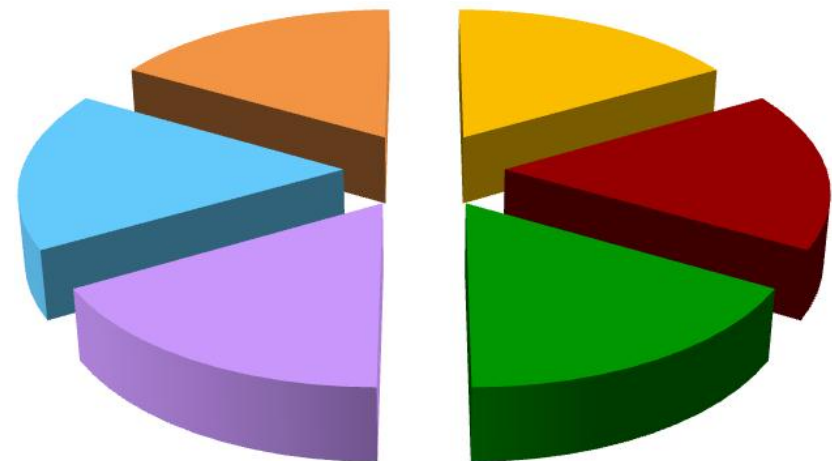
How Can We Learn from Our Experience?



Activity: 2001-2010



Activity: 2011



Activity: Ideal?

Theologically active

Pastorally active

How Can We Learn from Our Experience?

