



Thursday Thought

by Pastor Myron D. Atkinson

Guilt-Ridden

Thursday, 12-6-2018

Verse for the week: Mark 9:41 (NLT) “If anyone gives you even a cup of water because you belong to the Messiah, I tell you the truth, that person will surely be rewarded.”

Most of us have seen the commercials on TV or heard the heart-wrenching stories at a concert about children in need around the world. Stories like G, a 5 year old little girl being molested by her father, unwanted by her mother, and somewhat taken care of by the community. Or L, who as a child, her mother prostituted her out for money so they could have food. Now at the age of 14, she has left her mother, is connected with a gang and is pregnant. Or M who was molested by his older brothers as a child and received an illness that almost took his life. These stories are heart-wrenching and sadly these stories are not fiction. These are individuals that I have met first-hand and my heart breaks for them. Often, when we hear stories like this, we are challenged to give a monthly amount to partner with some organization. We do this because it eases our guilt and it makes us feel better. It's good to give, and it does make a difference, but generally we go on our way and we forget. We have eased our guilt and continue to live our self-centered lifestyle. Consumed with sports, expensive coffee and luxuries that will rarely be used. The average person in America gives less than 3.6% of their annual income to charitable causes. The Church is on the front line making a difference, yet within the church there are still many people, who attend faithfully and enjoy all the blessings, yet give little to nothing. I don't think giving out of guilt is necessarily healthy, but giving sacrificially out of gratitude for what Christ has done for us is! Many of us could give up an expensive cup of coffee or a fast food meal which would make a profound impact. Others of us could adjust our thermostat or get rid of something (extra cable channels, etc.) to make a difference. Whatever we do, we need to consciously begin to think of others and the impact it will have on them. We may not be able to make a difference in everyone's life but we can make a difference in one person's life!

Challenge Question: What life style change do you need to make, so you can give in order to make a difference in other people's lives?

“Rodney Stark of Baylor University has ample evidence to persuasively conclude that "the total current savings to US society from America's religiousness is 2.67 trillion per year."
- *Unimaginable - What our world would be like without Christianity* by Jeremiah J. Johnston