

1 John 3:17

But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?

When you are driving down the street and see those men and women with their signs out asking for money, do you think of verses like this one and wonder if you should give to that person? If you do, do you feel bad or wonder if you should turn around and drive back and give to that person?

Well, before you get to convicted, we need to see what else God's word says about giving to those in need.

† **2 Thess 3:10** *For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat.*

Unfortunately, most of these people do not want to work, they just want a hand out. So, how do you know if they just want a handout or really want to work and they just feel upon bad times right now? Offer them a job, even if it's cutting your grass or washing your car for a few bucks. Most of them won't do it, but then there are those who will. Those who don't want to do it are not really in need as today's scripture states. Instead they just are in need because they are lazy and don't want to work.

† **Prov 11:18** *The wicked man does deceptive work, But he who sows righteousness will have a sure reward.*

They are good at working to deceive others so that they can get a hand out, but that's the extent of their work. But then there are those who really do want to work, and for whatever reason they cannot get a job. This is what today's verse is talking about.

Now, what if you want to help but have very little or nothing to give?

Peter and John ran into this situation in the book of Acts, and how did they resolve it?

† **Acts 3:4-6** *And fixing his eyes on him, with John, Peter said, "Look at us." So he gave them his attention, expecting to receive something from them. Then Peter said, "Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk."*

Sometimes money is not what a person needs. What else can you offer to him or her? What gift has the Lord blessed you with that you could use to minister to that person?

If you have the ability to, then share with those who are truly in need, with you not wanting anything in return and showing the love of Jesus to them. If you don't have financially, then give what you do have, even if it's just a little time to share with

someone who may be hurting inside, because of his or her homelessness or their lack of a job.

I would encourage you to pray and ask the Lord who is really in need, and who He wants you to give to, or to talk to. Maybe they are not willing to work, but the Lord may still direct you to him or her because what they really do need is His Son Jesus, and a life change, not spare change.

† **James 1:19 (NLT2)** *Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry.*

† **Acts 3:6a** *Then Peter said, "Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you."*