

Quest 9th May 2021

“Everyone is equal in the sight of God. Yet we live in a world where poverty still persists.

Poverty is an outrage against humanity. It robs people of their dignity and lets injustice thrive. But together we have the power to transform lives.



For over 70 years, we've been standing with the poorest of our neighbours. We work in 37 countries, with people of all faiths and none, to stand up for dignity, equality and justice.

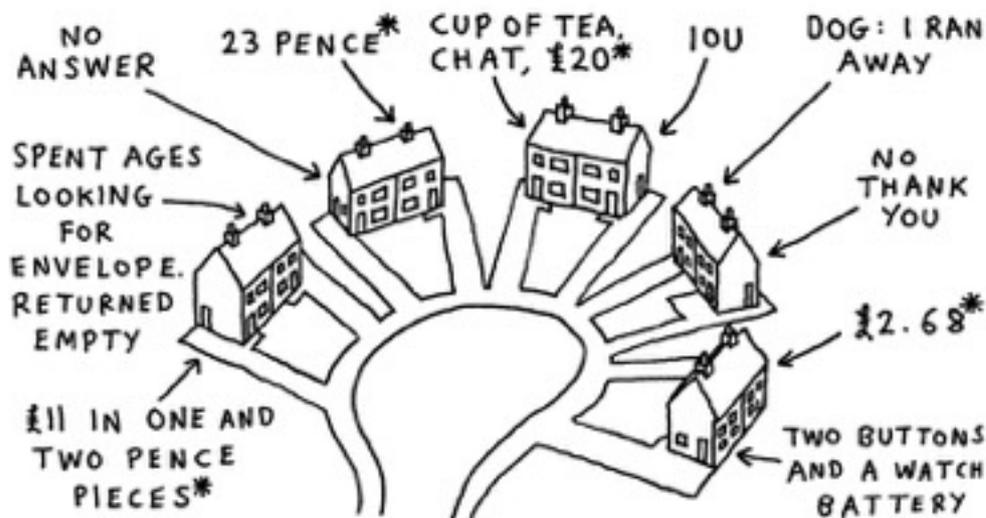
Together we can create a world where everyone can live a full life, free from poverty.”

Any guesses what organisation says this as their 'mission statement'?

It's ChristianAid. You may have seen their logo or heard them mentioned in church. There is a ChristianAid group in Abingdon who run events to raise money such as a sponsored walk on New Year's Day every year. This week is ChristianAid week and normally there would be a big collection, but Covid is still making things difficult to arrange.



COLLECTING CHRISTIAN AID ENVELOPES



* ADDED TO EVERYONE ELSE'S: 12.5 MILLION POUNDS FOR CHRISTIAN AID

By a happy coincidence, our reading for this Sunday fits perfectly with the aims of ChristianAid:

John 15:9-17

*“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: **Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.** You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. **You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you.** This is my command: Love each other.”*

This is a beautiful passage and although at first reading it may seem a little difficult to understand, the core is the bit I’ve highlighted: as Jesus/God loves us, so we must love one another. I don’t think Jesus means us literally to die for our friends (although many people have), but I think he means by “lay down one’s life for one’s friends” that we should think about and care for our friends as much as we care for ourselves. And I believe that by ‘friends’ he means all other human beings. In other words, do very much what ChristianAid does - help those in poverty or suffering injustice and inequality.

It sounds like a tough order, but then at the end of the passage Jesus tells us that we are not alone - he has chosen us to “go and bear fruit” and that whatever we “ask in my name, the Father will give you”. The phrase ‘go and bear fruit’ is a clever one as it could cover so many different things - become a nurse or scientist and help the sick, use your skills to become an expert at IT, teach and nurture others, care for an elderly person, put a little money aside each week for charities like ChristianAid, use your talents at acting or writing to give enjoyment to others.

If it still sounds pretty tough, Jesus promises us that God will support us in whatever we do to help and love other people and our world.

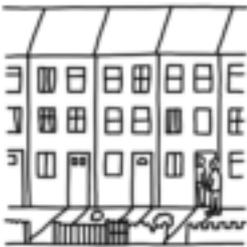


Things to do

1. Have a look at the ChristianAid website. You could have a go at walking 300,000 steps in a month! <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/key-appeals/christian-aid-week/challenge-yourself>
2. If you like making things, you could make some friendship bracelets for your friends (and for yourself). And, yes, boys can make and wear these too! Instructions are at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n2rq-btMNFI&t=41s>
3. Make yourself a prayer poster. In one colour pen, write down the names of **who** you want to pray for; in another colour write down **why** you want to pray for them; in a third colour write down **what** you should pray for them

CHRISTIAN AID COLLECTING

REASONS TO DO IT



A CHANCE TO
MEET YOUR
NEIGHBOURS



SOME PEOPLE
HAVE DONATIONS
WAITING



IT'S INCREDIBLY
RARE TO BE
KIDNAPPED



WHETHER
PEOPLE GIVE
ISN'T YOUR
RESPONSIBILITY



CAMERADERIE
WITH FELLOW
COLLECTORS



IT SHOWS
PEOPLE THAT
YOUR CHURCH
IS ACTIVE



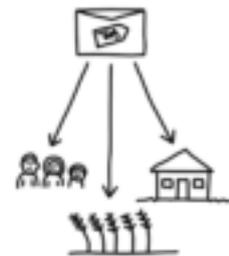
THERE ARE
GENEROUS
PEOPLE
OUT THERE



HELPS YOU TO
SEE BEYOND
YOUR OWN
PROBLEMS



THE POST-
COLLECTING
CELEBRATION



IT MAKES
A HUGE
DIFFERENCE

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