

God's War on Poverty and Riches

by J. Vernon McGee

Dr. J. Vernon McGee's sermon explores God's perspective on poverty and riches, emphasizing equality among believers and the dangers of materialism.

Duration: 44:45

Scripture: Leviticus 19:15, Deuteronomy 1:17, Psalm 72:13, Jeremiah 20:13, Matthew 11:5, James 2:1-5

Topics: "Poverty And Wealth", "Gods Salvation Plan"

Description

In this sermon titled 'God's War on Poverty and Riches,' Dr. J. Vernon McGee discusses the concept of poverty and riches from a biblical perspective. He highlights that God is not partial towards the poor or the rich, but rather offers salvation to all who believe in Jesus Christ. Dr. McGee emphasizes that while the world may have its own strategies to combat poverty, only God's plan can truly transform lives from the inside out. He references James Chapter 2 to illustrate God's perspective on poverty and riches and encourages listeners to seek God's plan for their lives.

Transcript

How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord, Is laid for your faith in His excellent Word! But more can He say than to you He hath said, To you who for refuge to Jesus hath fled. Fear not, I am with thee, O God. President Lyndon Johnson, during his 1964 State of the Union address, said, This administration today, here and now, declares unconditional war on poverty in America.

Well, after 40 years, the poor are still with us, perhaps with a few more government handouts, but with little improvement in poverty levels, and a rapid decline in educational standards, morals, and ethics. For some, the war on poverty has been a war on the rich, as the government seeks to redistribute the wealth of this nation. Man's plans to fight poverty have failed.

But God has a plan that works, because He changes lives from the inside out. Today, our Bible teacher, Dr. J. Vernon McGee, takes us to James 2 and outlines for us God's war on poverty and riches. Dr. McGee first gave this sermon in 1965 as part of a series of messages on the book of James.

At that time, Dr. McGee was serving as the pastor of the historic Church of the Open Door in downtown Los Angeles. He ministered to God's people there for over 21 years. Now, let's go to the Lord in prayer.

Heavenly Father, may our eyes be opened to understand the Word, and to see the message that You have for us in the book of James. Bless Your Word as it goes out. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen. Now tonight, we want to read just a few verses from the second chapter of the epistle of James. My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons.

For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring and goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment, and ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place, and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool? Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts? Hearken, my beloved brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him? Now I have never, in my experience in attending services, I have never heard a message from this passage of scripture. And for sure, I have never myself preached upon this particular passage of scripture. Our subject this evening is God's war on poverty and riches.

Not just on poverty, but on riches. And perhaps I suggested this morning we could have a second subject, is LBJ's Great Society, the fulfillment of prophecy concerning the millennium that's mentioned in the word of God. Now both poverty and riches can be a curse.

And it's due to the curse of sin that is upon this earth that's brought about the imbalance of the wealth of the world. So that tonight the wealth of the world is in the hands of the few, while the bulk of the population of this world tonight can be classified as the poor. The fact of the matter is you and I today do not know what real poverty is.

If you and I were in India, or if we were in some other place, probably in the Orient or in Africa, we would be able to meet people and see people who have never known what it is to have a full stomach. They've never known what it is to sit down and eat a meal when they were completely satisfied. They've always had to leave before they received all that they would like to have.

So that tonight you and I are living in a world that has upon it the curse of sin. And that curse is evidenced in the fact of both poverty and of riches. Have you ever noticed that the Lord Jesus Christ was born in poverty? He went over to the side of the majority, where most people are.

He went over to that side because he came down here to bear the curse of sin. That was part of the curse. He was born in a borrowed stable.

He even borrowed sandwiches from a little lad to feed the multitude. He spoke from a borrowed boat. He never had a place to lay his head.

He could say, the foxes have holes, the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head. Never owned one foot of real estate, and yet he's the creator of this universe. He borrowed a coin on one occasion to illustrate a truth.

And he did it, I think, for several reasons, and I think the basic reason, the fundamental reason was he didn't have one himself. He borrowed a coin to even illustrate a parable. And then he borrowed a little donkey to ride in Jerusalem to present himself as the Messiah and the King.

He borrowed a room to celebrate the Passover and actually he died on a borrowed cross. That cross was constructed for Barabbas, but Barabbas did not go to a cross, and they expected, Pilate did, to free Jesus.

And the way that the circumstances turned out, Jesus even died on somebody else's cross.

Not only Barabbas's, but your cross and mine, if you please, because it was your sin and mine that put him there. And then he was actually put in a borrowed tomb so that the Lord Jesus Christ came down to this earth and he knew what poverty really was. It's part of the curse that he bore.

I've never been able to accept the axiom that goes abroad that poverty is a blessing. When I was in college, and I want to tell you, in my day there was no handouts for college students. In fact, the matter is there were very few scholarships available in those days, and we had coming to the school for what was known as Religious Emphasis Week, and it was not religious nor very much emphasis either, but the man who came was a leading liberal from Chicago, and his theme that week was the blessings of poverty.

I heard that he was a pastor who made \$20,000 a year, and that was way back before the Depression. That was a great deal of money, and I want to tell you I was having a hard time getting through school. Fact of the matter is I never knew from one semester to the other whether I'd be able to pay my board, my tuition, and go.

I had to work, and I want to tell you it was difficult, and that man had no message for me whatsoever. When he talked about the blessings of poverty, for \$20,000 a year you can enjoy the blessings of poverty, but when you're working your way through school, my friend, especially in those days, there were no great blessings of poverty, and so poverty is part of the curse of the sin that our Lord bore, and it can be a curse. There have been times when men, great men, have overcome this matter of poverty, and I'm not sure but what a great many have too much today that's given to them, and that leads me to say that riches likewise can be a curse.

The Scripture says the love of money is a root of all evil, and you will always find in everything that is evil and wrong in this world today that money somehow or another is involved some way. The love of money, and not only the accumulation of money and not only the getting of it is wrong, but the spending of money for the wrong items. It's possible to deposit it in the wrong bank, and I do not mean that bank in San Francisco that went to the wall the other day, but what our Lord said, he said, gather not up for yourselves riches on earth where moth and rust doth corrupt and where thieves break through and steal, because even they can get in a Brinks truck these days and get your money, so that today the place to put your money, he says, is in the bank of heaven.

Gather up for yourselves treasures in heaven, and I take that literally, and I'm a literalist as far as the Bible is concerned, and I actually believe that you can take money and so use it down here that it's put in the bank of heaven up yonder for you, my beloved. I believe that it's put into the legal tender of heaven. When our Lord saw that poor widow who brought a few little mites and dropped them in, and those few little mites if you add them up corresponding to the wealth of that temple of Herod didn't amount to that.

Whether she gave or whether she didn't give did not help or hurt the work of that temple at all. It amounted to practically nothing. But our Lord took her few little old dull coppers and He kissed them into the coin of heaven and made them a rich treasure in heaven.

He transferred them there immediately, and I believe literally down here that wealth can be used for the glory of God, and it's not the amount of it, if you please, but it is the way that it is used for God and the percentage, I would say, that we use. It's very interesting that James has a great many harsh things to say to rich people, and I'm not sure but that is something that still would hold good. I'm of the opinion that if

communism comes to the United States and it's coming fast it will not be because of poverty but it will be because of the action of the rich today.

I'm of the opinion that they're affecting this more than any other group, my beloved. And the Word of God has a great deal to say to them. But ye have despised the poor.

Do not rich man oppress you and draw you before the judgment seats. And then he takes the entire fifth chapter to deal with the rich. Just listen to this sentiment he expresses.

Go to now ye rich man, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered and the rest of them shall be a witness against you, et cetera, et cetera.

It's harsh language that he uses concerning the rich. And he's speaking about those who've made their life's endeavor just to accumulate money down here for no other purpose than just to accumulate it and not to use it for the glory of God. I overheard two men talking the other day and he's a Christian man and they were talking about a third man who is a Christian.

And their comment was quite interesting. One of them said, you know the way that he is after money, you'd think that he's intending to take it with him. And I'm afraid that there are a great many Christians today that are so involved, and there's nothing wrong in making it, but the thing is they're so involved in that that that has become their entire goal in life.

Now Solomon, who knew something about riches, says in the 30th chapter of the book of Proverbs, verse 8, he wanted to follow the middle of the road. He says, give me neither poverty nor riches. And I've always prayed that God would not let me go to either extreme.

That since I got out of the one class that I can stay in the middle of the road. That is the preferred place certainly to go through life. Now God's solution to the problem of poverty is actually not to rob the rich, to take care of the indigent, the lazy, the indolent, the drones, the loafers, the sluggards, and the laggards.

God has no program like that at all. Heard the story of the Sunday school teacher that said to a little boy in her class, she said, Johnny, which of the parables do you like best? And he says, the one where somebody loafs and fishes. And by the way, God doesn't have a parable like that, where somebody loafs and fishes, because God has never approved of that at all.

And a great deal is said in scripture about that class of individual who is a lazy loafer and a laggard as far as this life is concerned. Now on the other hand, God never destroys the dignity and the self-respect and the integrity and the honor of the poor by placing them on charity or make them some sort of an object less than before the world. I think it was entirely wrong when Mr. Johnson went yonder into the Appalachian area and these television cameras poked into the poverty-stricken home of those mountain people.

That's not right, my beloved, to humiliate people like that. Because actually, the people who are closer to those who did come over on the Mayflower and the early settlers live in the mountains of East Tennessee and North Carolina and South Carolina and West Virginia. And they are caught today in a very difficult situation back there.

But God never would permit His people to be made any kind of an object of display to reveal their poverty-stricken condition. Now God's war on poverty and riches does not march under the banner of the

dollar. He does not appropriate millions for relief.

God is not aiming at the head or the stomach primarily, but God is aiming primarily for the heart of both the rich and the poor. And it's a war actually against class distinction, a class distinction in the church, if you please. These distinctions and divisions that mar the body of Christ today.

Now, I want to come to our Scripture tonight. And again this evening, I'm turning to the Amplified translation. I found out that they do a better job than I do in translating James.

And so as long as they'll do better than I do, why, I'm going to read from the Amplified. Now will you follow your text? You may want to do that. He says, My brethren, pay no servile regard to people.

Show no prejudice, no partiality. Do not hold and practice the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, together with snobbery. And I like that translation.

What he's saying is simply this. Don't profess faith in Christ and at the same time be a spiritual snob. Don't form cliques in your church.

That's what he's saying. Very practical, is he not? He says here, carrying out again what Paul elaborates on, All believers are brethren. They're in the body of Christ.

They're in a different position in the body, to be sure. And there is a fellowship, though, of believers. And friendship is the banner that should be over all of them.

I was thrilled this morning with this message in mind. Tonight, after the service, I like to go out and shake hands with the folk. And this morning, there were people here, not only from all over this country, but all over the world.

A fine young fellow came up to me, and he was, my, he was a fine-looking young fellow, very cultured and refined. He said, Dr. McGee, I'm from Indonesia. Right after him came another young man.

He says, Dr. McGee, I'm from Korea. And another young man came up, and he says, I'm from Africa, Ghana, he said. Fine young man.

All of these young fellows, apparently in this country, to be educated, and we had them here. There was one from Germany. There were others from other countries in Europe here this morning.

And I thought, what a wonderful thing it is. All of these were believers. And my beloved, we're all in the body of Christ.

And nationality, and color, and class, and rich and poor have nothing to do with it. When you're in Christ, you're one in Christ. We need to emphasize that in these days.

And I'm talking now about the body of believers, not talking about unbelievers. Because the greatest division there is today in the world is between an unbeliever and a believer. Now James here is addressing the total community of believers.

And in his day, it was a cosmopolitan group. There was the rich, the poor, the influential, the common people, the high, the low, the bond and free, the Jew and the Gentile, the Greek and the barbarian, the male and female. Now he says, when you come together as believers to worship, let's remember one

thing.

When you come together as believers, you're all one in Christ. And there should not be any class distinction or clique distinction at all. And that's one of the greatest sins, I think today, in the local church.

All one in Christ. All one great brotherhood, a body of believers. The Lord Jesus Christ is the common denominator.

And friendship and fellowship is the legal tender. Someone has put it in this lovely way, concerning friendship. Gold cannot buy it.

Poverty try it. Thrift may not cheapen it. Sorrow must deepen it.

Joy cannot lose it. Malice abuse it. Wilt cannot choke it.

Wit cannot choke it. Folly provoke it. Age can but strengthen it.

Time only lengthen it. Death cannot sever. Friendship forever.

Heaven's the true place of it. God is the grace of it. What a beautiful thing.

Now, in the Old Testament, God taught Israel not to regard the person of the rich or of the poor. I wonder if you've ever noticed how he has developed that in the Old Testament. Those of you who follow our high noon broadcast know that in teaching Leviticus, that I spent a great deal of time in the 19th chapter on these very unusual things that God gave to his people.

And one of the things is this. Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment. Thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty.

But in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbor. What a wonderful thing. God taught his people that they were not to make a distinction between the rich and the poor at all.

And then again, over in Deuteronomy, the very first chapter, let me turn there to the 17th verse. Ye shall not respect persons in judgment, but ye shall hear the small as well as the great. Ye shall not be afraid of the face of man.

That's the thing so many people, causes them to move like that. Now that, I think, is in the background of the thinking of Simon Peter who knew the Old Testament. When he went to Cornelius, he didn't want to go, you'll recall.

He was a Gentile. And he very frankly said when he got there, this is my first trip to the home of a Gentile. He got to the place, he wouldn't go.

And the thing that amazed him was not the coming of the Holy Spirit. The thing that amazed him was the fact that Gentiles could be saved. And he made this statement.

He says, of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons. Not a wonderful thing. At the very beginning of the church, the man who preached the first sermon, he says, I am beginning to see something that as a Jew I'd lost sight of.

That is, that God was no respecter of persons. And it doesn't make any difference who the individual is, that when you come to Christ, class distinction is broken down. Now, with that in mind, let's go on to verses 2 and 3 that James deals with here.

And he always gives an illustration. You remember this morning we saw again? We saw it last Sunday? Here he comes again. James is very practical and very much down to earth.

The fact of the matter is, I think I know why I've never preached on James. I know of no epistle that pinches me like the epistle of James. He pinches, he hurts you because he gets right down where we are living today, probably I should say where we are not living today.

Now listen to him. For if a person come into your congregation whose hands are adorned with gold rings and who is wearing splendid apparel and also a poor man in shabby clothes comes in and you pay special attention to the one who wears the splendid clothes and say to him, sit there on this preferable seat while you tell the poor man stand there or sit there on the floor at my feet. Now here comes in to the church a rich man.

And the way that James describes him is quite interesting. And the reason I've used this translation it's very close to the original. He doesn't say he has a gold ring on and that's caused a great many saints to misunderstand this and they're actually saints that won't even wear a gold ring because they say Christians shouldn't wear a gold ring.

That's nonsense. He's not saying that at all. Actually it's gold rings or the literal is rather this.

There comes into your assembly a gold ringed man and you have to put yourself back in the first century in that day. And the men in that day that were the rich that moved in the upper echelons to distinguish them from the common people in the mob they wore rings. The common people wore no rings at all.

And the more rings the better by the way. There is a story told that comes out of the first century of one man who wore six rings on each finger. And when he'd take a bath he wouldn't even take them off.

The gold ringed man some of them were very valuable the rings that they wore. And the minute that man stepped in and flashed that hand around immediately you know the usher said my here's a very rich man we better give him the best seat we got in the place. We give him a back seat in church of course.

But nevertheless we want to give him the best seat that we got in the house. And I think maybe back in the first century they brought him down front. Now the other thing was he had our translation says goodly apparel.

The literal is bright and shining clothes. And his wife wore mink. It's not in the literal I put that in.

But that's the way he came in. He's really ostentatious. He's overdressed.

He's pretentious. There is a dash and a splash and a flash about him. It's with pomp and pomposity he enters the church.

There's a glitter and a gaudy about him and the vulgar and the vain if you please. And he made his entrance with his flags flying fanfare of trumpets parade and pageant strutting like a peacock when he came to church. And the usher immediately began to kowtow to him and said my we'll find the best place for you brother.

And they gave him the best place. And I think James saw that in some church. I think he's giving us an illustration from life in that day and he didn't like it at all.

Therefore he remarks about it. Our Lord talked along the same line. He gave what we call a parable.

Not a parable a true story about a rich man and a man by the name of Lazarus. Rich man. Lazarus a poor man.

And it says concerning the rich man and my sometimes our authorized version in its wonderful translation. Don't misunderstand me. But it loses the punch line.

And believe me there's a lot of that in the word of God. Our translation says he fared sumptuously. Actually the word has in it he was in purple.

And that means he was in clover. Using our expression today. I'd like to put it like this.

The poor man the dogs licked his sores. But the rich man he put on the dog. I tell you by how he strutted you see.

And that was the picture that's given of him here. Now the rich man comes in and there is given a preferential treatment to him. Now a poor man enters.

Hatted and torn. Hatches in poverty. He's not a bum.

He's just a poor man. He's shabby and shoddy. He's dilapidated and deteriorated.

He's seen better days. He didn't even have Sunday clothes. I heard the story years ago in the middle west of a man who in a certain city back there came to church.

Very spiritual man. And he always wore frayed garments. His coat frayed.

And people began to criticize him. And especially one lady who criticized him went over to see and found out that he had a paralyzed wife. He was spending all of his money taking care of her.

And may I say to you that woman quit criticizing him. We do not know why certain people dress a certain way. We have no business criticizing them because of that either.

By the way. And for that reason here comes in the poor man. Now the usher he says to him you better take the back seat here.

Or better still you just sit here under me. And that gave him the usher of course a sense in that day there were no ushers. But it gave the man that asked him do you sit here by my seat.

It gave him a high position to be elevated above this poor man that had come in. Now James puts these two men in contrast. These men are at the extreme end of the social ladder.

May I say that in this country today in an affluent society we don't see too much of that right now. I notice that in my ministry when I first began always in every congregation that I ever served or where I ever preached there were the extreme. There were the well-dressed people.

Then there were those that you could tell were poor people not well-dressed. But you don't see that much. Actually tonight here at the Church of the Open Door all of you look like you're doing pretty well.

And we don't have that distinction that we did have. But there were people in those days I know when I visited as a pastor in those days I would meet people and say well Dr. McGee we'd like to come to church but we don't have clothes. Have you ever met folk like that? I can remember and some of you people may be able to remember back to days like that.

And I can remember as a boy that I used to complain to my dad I didn't want to go to Sunday school because I didn't like to go with patches. And I had patches on my pants and I didn't want to wear them on Sunday and I didn't want to go to Sunday school. But he just warmed up those patches and sent me on and I went.

Let me tell you. But I didn't want to do it. But you don't see that sort of thing today.

But wait just a moment. What today about race? Don't misunderstand me tonight. I'm a southerner.

But I want to say this to you. When a man is a believer in Christ he's my brother. And I don't care what his color is or where he's from.

You know this morning I just put my arm around that little fellow from Indonesia because I know how Indonesia is today going into the communist camp. He was a wonderful fellow. Wonderful Christian.

He's my brother. And the one from Korea he's my brother also. And that little fellow from Africa from Ghana he's my brother also.

Now don't talk to me tonight about integration or segregation. There's no such thing when you're a believer of believers. I'm not talking about the outside world.

You can't bring together the sinners. But you can bring together believers. And that's the thing that he's talking about.

Now will you notice what he's saying here and I must read this again. I want to read verses 3 and 4 together. And you pay special attention to the one who wears the splendid clothes and say to him sit here in this preferable seat while you tell the poor man stand there or sit there on the floor at my feet.

Are you not discriminating among your own and becoming critics and judges with wrong motives. Now today we have ushers to seat people. And our ushers have a real problem at times.

Sometimes that they have somebody to seat and they say to a certain party would you mind moving over. And this party says no this is my seat. Well I have news for you.

You don't own any seat in the church of the open door. Everybody here is on the same par. We have no section reserved for the rich or no seats reserved for anybody.

All are welcome that want to come in here and sometimes when the usher has two people and you're sitting in a spot where there's a seat on either side of you move over. That's the courteous thing to do. I can give you an experience.

Before I became pastor here there was an evangelist holding meetings and I invited a friend from Pasadena and he and I came down here one night and I sat right back down there and there was a lady sitting in the second seat. And I don't know why she picked the second seat but there she sat. And there was a seat the outward seat and a seat on the other side.

And I just thought took it for granted that everybody in the church of the open door was not only a fundamentalist but was a lovely Christian. And I said to her would you mind moving over so my friend and I can sit here. Do you know that woman didn't quit talking to me during the entire service and I think she called me everything that was imaginable.

I just asked her to move over. So this friend who's an unsaved man I got him in and a little farther down and a seat next to him. I do not think he heard one word the evangelist said that night because every now and then I'd see him he'd look around look at that woman.

I do not think this unsaved man could believe that there was anybody who's a Christian would act like that. And I'm of the opinion that he didn't want to be a Christian after he saw that kind of conduct. Oh my friend may I say to you that believers are in a brotherhood.

They're in the body of Christ. And that's the thing that James is talking about. And it's a real joy to me to sit here as it was this morning.

And sometimes I get a little provoked at my ushers but I love them and they do a good job. And I love to sit here and watch them seat people of a morning especially. And I have never yet seen an usher look a person over and say boy he's rich I'll have to get him a good seat.

What he does is sometimes they actually just don't pay much attention to the individual. They start looking for a vacant seat and they don't care where it is when there's a vacant seat they want to put them there. May I say to you that's what James is talking about.

James says let's not have this class distinction. This class business in the church of the Lord Jesus Christ because you drive the unsaved away if you please. Now I want to read verse 5 and I'm through.

I think I better stick with the amplified for verse 5. Now listen my beloved brethren has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and in their position as believers and to inherit the kingdom which he's promised to those who love him. Now he says something there quite wonderful and I wonder today if we appreciate that. God has chosen the poor who are rich in faith.

They're rich in faith today. Not rich in money or rich in position. I've had occasion recently to be in two groups where actually the leading conservative believers of Southern California were gathered.

This is on two occasions been recently and I won't tell you where they were or what it was. But on both of these I was not involved and so I could sit in the background which I enjoy doing when I can and it was amusing to me to watch certain individuals. It reminded me of the parable that the law untold.

You remember about the men that Pharisees that went to a dinner and each tried to get to the first place get the best place that was there. Well the very interesting thing was that in these groups I watched them. There's certain laymen if I call their name tonight you'd know them.

Several preachers there if I call their name you'd know them. To sit back and watch these brethren juggling for the first seats. And I want to tell you it was amusing because when the time came to sit down there wasn't enough room down front for those that had juggled their way down front to sit down and it was amazing the most prominent people there the ones who should have been honored had to actually move to the background because these had moved down front and taken all the places.

James says a believer a real believer is not to do that. That there is no such thing as class distinction among believers. And that God has really chosen the poor of this world.

He became poor you remember. It was Lincoln who said God must love poor people because he made so many of them. And there seems to be more of them than any other group.

And God has a concern for the poor. I brought together here a great many scriptures and I was amazed at it and I've only got just a very small segment. But notice the concern that God has for the poor.

I'm reading now just excerpts from the scripture. First Job 5, 15 He saveth the poor from the sword and from the mouth and from the hand of the mighty. So the poor hath hope and iniquity stoppeth her mouth.

Job 36, 15 He delivereth the poor in his affliction and openeth their ears in oppression. Psalm 9, 18 The needy shall not always be forgotten. The expectation of the poor shall not perish forever.

Psalm 68, 10 Thou O God hast prepared of thy goodness for the poor. Psalm 69, 33 The Lord heareth the poor. He shall deliver the needy when he crieth the poor also.

And him that hath no helper he shall spare the poor and needy and shall save the souls of the needy. Psalm 72, 12, 13 And if you went all the way through the scripture you'd find that Jeremiah 20, 13 Sing unto the Lord praise ye the Lord for he hath delivered the soul of the poor from the hand of the evil doer. And one of the most wonderful things our Lord said was when the disciples of John came to him and said John has sent us.

He sent us to ask you are you the Messiah? John was in prison and he had reason to ask the question. The Lord Jesus said you go back and tell him this the blind receive their sight and the lame walk the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear the dead are raised up. All of that was prophesied of the Messiah.

But he crowned it all with this and the poor have the gospel preached unto them. The most wonderful thing in this age had you ever stopped to think about it? That today literally millions of rich people in this country went to church and they haven't heard the gospel until tonight. Oh they heard a sermon but they never heard the gospel.

They've never heard it. Let me close with this story. It's a story I love.

The story of Mr. and Mrs. Quitemoha. Very wealthy people in New York City. Members of the most fashionable church.

One evening they were entertaining guests and they were trying to think of something new to do to entertain their guests. They decided that they would go slumming and so after a very sumptuous supper they went slumming. They went down through the slums of New York City east side, west side.

Then they concluded by going to the Bowery and you couldn't go slumming in that day without going to the Bowery Mission where Jerry McCauley the converted drunkard was holding forth. And they went that

night. Mr. Quittemoha wearing a high silk hat evening clothes.

Mrs. Quittemoha had on her ermine and the guests sat with them. They also were rich. They sat in the back and they were enjoying it all looking at these bums, these drunks that came in.

And old Jerry McCauley came out and his manner of preaching it was direct. But he preached the gospel. And did you know that Mr. and Mrs. William Quittemoha who had been members of the church since they were young people they had never heard the gospel.

The Lord says the poor have the gospel preached unto them. Never said the rich and they had never heard it until that night. And then Jerry McCauley gave the invitation.

The bums came their hallways came. Some were real some were not. But that night Mr. and Mrs. Quittemoha came.

And down there with the bums with the smell of sweat and liquor the high silk hat and the ermine knelt down and came as sinners to the Lord Jesus Christ. My beloved God has rubbed out all class distinction at the cross. And he says to the rich you come as a beggar to me.

You have nothing to offer. And if you are poor you can come without money and without price. Because at the cross I have waged a successful war against poverty and against riching.

I can save you. And that's the most wonderful thing I can do for you. Would you tonight like to come to this wonderful Savior? It doesn't matter to God whether you're rich or poor.

And by the way he's not partial toward the middle class either. So if you recognize that you need a Savior we trust that you'll take a step forward in faith today. As Dr. McGee has said the Lord Jesus Christ paid the penalty for your sins and mine.

And when you believe in him you'll receive new life. So come to Christ in simple faith and let him save you. If you'd like to know more about God's plan of salvation for your life then we'd like to send you some helpful information.

To receive your salvation packet all you have to do is call us at 1-800-65-Bible-anytime and leave your voicemail request along with your name, address, and the call letters of this station. Dr. McGee's sermon today was titled God's War on Poverty and Riches. If you'd like a copy it's available in three different formats.

First, it's available for purchase as an individual cassette tape. Second, it's also part of a 12-sermon tape album called Jesus Prepares Us in the College of Life. Or if you'd like it in print it's a chapter in Dr. McGee's hardback book on James called Living by Faith.

For ordering information on any one of these you may contact one of our service operators at 1-800-652-4253 Monday through Thursday from 6 a.m. to 4 p.m. Pacific Time. The hardback book is also listed in our online bookstore which you'll find at ttb.org. Be sure to join us on the weekday through the Bible radio program as Dr. McGee continues his exposition of the book of Joel. This little prophecy is power-packed.

Or as Dr. McGee says, it's like an atom bomb, it's not very big, but it sure is potent and powerful. For more information about the ongoing work of this ministry as it reaches out into over 100 languages and dialects

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For those in the U.S., Box 7100, Pasadena, California, 91109. In Canada, Box 25325, London, Ontario, N6C 6B1. Now, until this same time next week, we leave you with a prayer that God will fill you with His grace, mercy, and peace.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/7/SID7111.mp3>

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