



The Kingdom Perspective

The Church and Julian the Apostate

Hello, this is Pastor Don Willeman of Christ Redeemer Church. Welcome to the Kingdom Perspective.

Generosity is at the very heart of the gospel. If you do not understand generosity, you do not understand Jesus.

The Bible reminds us, that in this world there will always be those with physical and material needs. At times of extreme social and economic upheaval, this becomes all the more pronounced. At such times Christians are called to shine the most, by providing for those who cannot provide for themselves. One of the central ways we do this is through the shared benevolence or mercy ministries of our local churches. Therefore, we should always be eager to give to these above and beyond our regular faithful support to the church's gospel teaching ministry.

In the 4th century the non-Christian Roman Emperor Julian tried to squelch the growing Christian movement. He ultimately failed, and in a letter, admits why. He laments that his own pagan religion was failing to attract the public while “the charity of the Christians to strangers...has done the most to advance their cause.... For it is disgraceful that... [Christians] support our poor in addition to their own” (Roman Emperor Julian, “Letter to Arsacius,” 360 AD).

You see, the gospel makes those infected by it unusually generous—eager to meet the needs of others. Why? Because we are beneficiaries of the infinite and eternal generosity of God in Jesus Christ.

Something to think about from the Kingdom Perspective.

“The religion of the Greeks does not yet prosper.... Why do we not observe how the charity of Christians to strangers...has done the most to advance their cause? For it is disgraceful that...the impious Galileans [Julian’s name for Christians] support our poor in addition to their own, while everyone is able to see that our coreligionists lack aid from us!”

~Roman Emperor Julian (332-363), Letter to Arsacius, 360 AD

“Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you.”

~ Luke 6:37-38 (ESV)

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