



Servant's Corner

April 2013

Gleaning Principles

By Rich Henderson, Love INC Director

Now when you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap to the very corners of your field...you shall leave them for the needy and for the stranger. I am the Lord your God.

The verse above from Leviticus 19:9-10 is one of many “gleaning laws” from the Old Testament. They were part of the anti-poverty laws God gave the Israelites concerning the poorer members of their community. The basic idea behind gleaning was for farmers to make provision for the poor by leaving unharvested food for them in their fields. Gleaning gave people in need tangible proof that God cared for them.

Gleaning allowed farmers to be generous and the poor to retain their dignity. Leaving part of his field unharvested was truly a sacrifice for the farmer in that it resulted in a loss of income. He could have gathered the food and sold it. It allowed the poor to retain their dignity in that they had to work to gather the food. This was no demeaning hand-out. With rare exceptions, the food was not brought to them, but left out in the field where gleaners were required to work as harvesters in order to benefit from the farmer's generosity.

While few of us have fields to allow the poor to glean, the principle of sacrificial giving that helps people retain their dignity is still in effect. Ask God how you might apply the principle of gleaning in your efforts to help people in need.



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