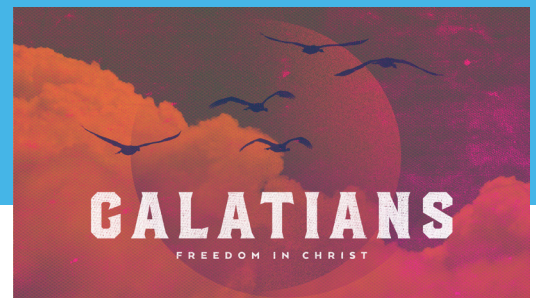


# Discussion Questions

March 15, 2026



## Galatians 2:10 - The Diagnostic Test of Grace

In the most significant meeting in early church history, the apostles gave Paul extraordinary freedom, no circumcision required, no law imposed, nothing added to the gospel. But they attached one vital instruction: “remember the poor.” This week’s sermon explored why that single command carried so much weight. In the Jewish world, caring for the poor wasn’t an add-on to faithfulness, it was faithfulness. Tracing God’s heart from Isaiah and Jeremiah into the teachings of Jesus, the message reminded us that knowing God means doing justice for the vulnerable. Care for the poor is not a political stance or an optional ministry; it is the inevitable fruit of the gospel, the visible evidence that grace has actually taken root in our lives. We are challenged to move from sentiment to action: moving away from a “safe distance” to build our lives, calendars, and finances around a rhythm of proximity to the hurting.

1. Read Galatians 2:1–10. The apostles gave Paul remarkable freedom regarding the law and circumcision, yet they attached one specific condition: “remember the poor.” Why do you think this was the only stipulation they made in a foundational meeting about the gospel of grace?
2. The sermon pointed out that biblical “remembering” is not a mental activity, it’s an action. When God “remembered” Noah, the floodwaters receded. “Remember the Sabbath” meant building your week around it. “Do this in remembrance of me” meant re-enacting Jesus’ death as a community. How does this change the way you hear “remember the poor”? What’s the difference between thinking about the poor and remembering them in the biblical sense?
3. Read Isaiah 58:6–7 and Jeremiah 22:16. In Isaiah, God redefines fasting as care for the hungry and homeless. In Jeremiah, God says caring for the poor is what it means to know Him. How do these passages challenge the way we tend to separate our “spiritual life” from practical care for others, especially coming out of our church-wide fast a few weeks ago?
4. Read James 1:27. James defines “pure and undefiled religion” not by our theological exactness, but by our active proximity to the vulnerable (visiting orphans and widows in their distress). If true religion requires stepping into the mess of someone else’s suffering, what does this look like for us today?
5. The sermon made a distinction between caring for the poor as the root of salvation (which is what the false brothers were pushing with circumcision) and caring for the poor as the fruit of the gospel. Why is that distinction important? How does it protect us from both legalism and apathy?
6. Read Matthew 25:34–46. The people condemned in this parable aren’t enemies of God, they call Him “Lord” and expected to be welcomed. Their judgment is for passive neglect, not active cruelty. What is unsettling about that? What do you think Jesus is communicating about how He sees the vulnerable?

7. The sermon acknowledged real tensions, people who have been burned by generosity, the feeling of being overwhelmed by the scale of need, debates about complex systems and dependency. Which of those tensions is most real for you right now? How do you hold that honestly without letting it become an excuse for inaction?
  
8. James shared three practical takeaways: be interruptible, build a rhythm of remembering, and focus on the one. Which of these is the Holy Spirit challenging you to lean into this week, and what is one specific step you can take?

**Galatians 2:6–10 (CSB)**

Now from those recognized as important, they added nothing to me. On the contrary, they saw that I had been entrusted with the gospel for the uncircumcised, just as Peter was for the circumcised... When James, Cephas,, and John - those recognized as pillars - acknowledged the grace that had been given to me, they gave the right hand of fellowship to me and Barnabas, agreeing that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. They asked only that we would remember the poor, which I had made every effort to do.

**Galatians 2:10 (CSB)**

They asked only that we would remember the poor, which I had made every effort to do.

**James Dunn - Blacks NT Commentary**

In Judaism almsgiving and righteousness were essentially synonymous. You could not separate loving God from providing for the vulnerable.

**Isaiah 58:3 (NIV)**

Why have we fasted, and you have NOT seen it?

**Isaiah 58:6-7 (NLT)**

No, this is the kind of fasting I want... Share your food with the hungry, and give shelter to the homeless. Give clothes to those who need them, and do not hide from relatives who need your help.

**Jeremiah 22:16 (NLT)**

"He gave justice and help to the poor and needy... Isn't that what it means to know me?" says the Lord.

**Tim Keller**

Jesus & the Apostles would say if you want to know whether the gospel of grace has actually taken root in a person or in a community, you look at how they treat the poor & hurting.

If a person has grasped the meaning of God's grace in their heart, they will do justice - if they do not care about the poor, it reveals that at best they do not understand the grace they have experienced.

**Matthew 11:4–5 (NLT)**

Go back to John and tell him what you have heard and seen - the blind see, the lame walk... the dead are raised to life, and the Good News is being preached to the poor.

**Galatians 2:10 (CSB)**

They asked only that we would remember the poor.

When the apostles say "remember the poor" they are saying, "organize your life around them, structure your rhythms, your budget, your calendar, your attention around the vulnerable."

**Galatians 2:10 (CSB)**

They asked only that we would remember the poor, which I had made every effort to do.

**Galatians 2:10 (NIV)**

...the very thing I had been eager to do all along.

## **Letter from Roman Emperor Julian (362 AD) to Arsacius, the Pagan High Priest of Galatia**

It is [the Christians] benevolence to strangers... that have done most to increase atheism [Christianity]? For it is disgraceful that none of them ever has to beg and the impious Galileans [Christians] support not only their own poor but ours as well, all men see that our people lack aid from us."

## **Martin Luther's Commentary on Galatians (1531 AD)**

Next to the preaching of the gospel, a true and faithful pastor will take care of the poor. Where the church is, there must be the poor.

## **Charles Spurgeon**

If you are going to give a hungry person a tract, wrap it in a sandwich.

## **Matthew 25:40 (NLT)**

*"And the King will say, 'I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!'"*

## **Matthew 25:41 (NLT)**

Away with you, you cursed ones, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his demons.

## **Matthew 25:42–43 (NLT)**

*For I was hungry, and you didn't feed me. I was thirsty, and you didn't give me a drink... I was naked, and you didn't give me clothing...*

## **Matthew 25:45–46 (NLT)**

*I tell you the truth, when you refused to help the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were refusing to help me. And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous will go into eternal life.*

**Eternal consequence Jesus describes is not for active cruelty It is for passive neglect.**

## **Proverbs 19:17 (ESV)**

*Whoever is generous to the poor, lends to the LORD...*

**The Good Samaritan did not run a background check.**

## **Shane Claiborne**

The great tragedy of the church is not that rich Christians do not care about the poor but that rich Christians do not know the poor.

## **Charles Spurgeon**

If you are placed above [the poor], your movements in life seldom bring you into contact with them, go and search out poverty.

## **Takeaways**

1. Be Interruptible
  - "Remember the poor" is not something you schedule for when it is convenient, it interrupts you.
2. build a rhythm of remembering the poor...
  - Are there structured, regular ways you are keeping the poor in your life...
3. Focus on the one

## **Mark 14:7 (NLT)**

*You will always have the poor among you.*