

Charity (appears New Testament only)
agape (ag-a-pay) Translated:
Love 86
charity 27
dear 1
charitably 1 (Rom 14:15)
feast of charity 1

Hebrew counterpart Tzedakah Does not appear in the Bible (Torah yes).
Tzedakah (Jewish term often translated as "charity.")
Hebrew root (tezdik) means "righteousness" "justice" or "fairness".

Some of God's Attributes that pertain to Charity

Joy - deep sustaining pleasure
Love & Mercy (God's greatest gifts)
Love - unconditional comfort and support are the core of love.
Mercy - undue, unearned, undeserved favor
Righteous - Just, equitable, impartially in word and deed.
Impartial - evenhanded treatment. Showing neither pride nor respect, because each elevates above the other.

The Importance of Charity

1Co:13:1: Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and **have not charity**, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

1Co:13:2: And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and **have not charity**, I am nothing.

1Co:13:3: And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and **have not charity**, it profiteth me nothing.

The value of Charity

1Co:8:1: Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.
(Instructs in Righteousness, Love, Mercy, Impartiality - Godly building blocks)

Scripture describing Charity

1Co:13:4: Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

1Co:13:5: Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

1Co:13:6: Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

1Co:13:7: Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

1Co:13:8: Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

1Co:13:9: For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

1Co:13:10: But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

1Co:13:11: When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

1Co:13:12: For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

1Co:13:13: And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

Charity among brethren

2Th:1:3: We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth;

2Tm:2:22: Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

1Pe:4:8: And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.

Giving to the poor

Attitude toward and treatment of the poor is well documented in the Bible. (Connotations of poor: financially destitute, humility, defenseless, in want or need, spiritually lacking). Although charity is toward all, here the consideration is those financially destitute and in need.

If gifts of money to the poor displeases God then Christ sinned when he said "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me". M't:19:21 (The lessons of this act go beyond charity but charity is among them). Christ does God's Will, so how can this be any less.

God is not indifferent to the poor

Question: if you have no harvest are you absolved of responsibility?

Proof: provide scriptural passages.

Ex:23:11: But the seventh year thou shalt let it rest and lie still; that the poor of thy people may eat: and what they leave the beasts of the field shall eat. In like manner thou shalt deal with thy vineyard, and with thy oliveyard.

Le:19:10: And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every grape of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger: I am the LORD your God.

Le:23:22: And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleaning of thy harvest: thou shalt leave them unto the poor, and to the stranger: I am the LORD your God.

De:15:7: If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother:

De:15:9: Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him nought; and he cry unto the LORD against thee, and it be sin unto thee.

De:15:11: For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land.

God instructs impartiality

Le:19:15: Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour.

Job:34:19: How much less to him that accepteth not the persons of princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor? for they all are the work of his hands.

God instructs attitude toward giving

2Co:9:6: But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

2Co:9:7: Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.

2Co:9:8: And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:

2Co:9:9: (As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever.

2Co:9:10: Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;)

2Co:9:11: Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God.

My notes on Charity

Charity is not just giving to the poor it's Brotherly Love with a touch of empathy (the ability to stand outside of yourself and walk in another's place) plus Mercy (showing undue favor) and Righteousness (just in word and deed). It's man's love (comfort and support) for man as instructed by God. Because it's Love it lifts up (because God's Love lifts up); it's joyous giving (it's not done for personal gain, because God gave joyously not for gain but to Glorify); Love is its own reward, because Love seeks only itself (God so Loved the World that he gave his only begotten son, that we may Love also). It's empathy, because unless one is able to extend themselves beyond self-interest, as Christ did, as God does, they are unable to extend love. (Love is not Love unless it's freely and joyously given away). It's Mercy, because no one deserves or earns Love. No one is born of their own free will. It's a gift from God. From each persons beginning at birth they have done nothing to earn or deserve life, love, empathy, or mercy. It's Righteousness, because it's the just thing to do. The Righteous are Charitable, because they Love impartially in both word and deed; because they empathize and compassionately forgive; because they show mercy by setting sin aside thorough forgiveness, raising the sinner by restoring the path to salvation through repentance and right themselves by doing God's Will.

Thinking that Charity belongs only to the poor as magnanimous gifts, or to an elect group, is foolish. Charity is a loving extension of self, beyond self-interest and reward. It is doing God's Will, his instruction of loving one's neighbours as thyself. In Luke 10, Christ expresses who neighbour is as well as neighbourly acts. In Leviticus 19 neighbour applies generally. What neighbour is not is an elect or select group.

Charity is Joyful expression of Love toward man. God and the Angels understand the joy of love. The Angles rejoiced (express deep sustaining pleasure over an act of love) when God created Heaven and Earth and they rejoice over a repentant sinner. It's God's pleasure (Joyful expression of Love) to extend Himself far beyond self-interest; to create; to lift up; to raise that which never existed, or had the right of existence, to everlasting life. Charity among men should mirror God's example and Christ's example.

Christianity is not a club. It's evolution of God's Will. It's man voluntary undergoing change; to learn and adopt God's selfless Will over mans self-serving will. All sinners are welcome whether their choice was before, now, or futuristic. Supporting of the body of Christ is important but it should not be the exclusive goal of Charity.

At times magnanimous gifts of money to the poor is an appropriate Charitable act. One of the ideals of Charity is enabling the recipient to become charitable also. Lingering unwarranted dependency is not charity it's a form of pride. Distinguishing between continuing need and unwarranted dependency is something that must be addressed in prayer. Charitable acts reflect your attitude toward man and include all aspects of the human condition. Charity builds a healthy Godly heart; sets things right among men and lifts up both the giver and recipient.

Finally, it's difficult to argue with Christ when he tells everyone what they must do to be perfect and who neighbour is. The alternative is to argue with God in the Old Testament.

Mt:19:21

If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me"

Col:3:14:

And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

Lu;10:29

But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour? And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.

And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.

But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him,

And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?

And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.