

**Sept 9<sup>th</sup> 2007: SAO Day: Fulfilling our responsibility: Luke 12:35-49**

As I was researching my sermon for last.....I came across a list of things a Christian father should do

- It was pretty normal stuff.....**Except** it had a section...  
on being a father for the fatherless

**The implication was clear: It was presented as an expectation...not a choice**

**Christian fathers** have a responsibility before God.....to care for and look after their own

**But also.....**to do what they can for those who

- **This shouldn't surprise....when.....consider the description of God.....**

Found in Ps 68:4—5...

*“Sing to God, sing praises to His name, extol Him who rides on the clouds—His name is the Lord—and rejoice before Him.  
A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in His holy dwelling.”*

**It was ....no doubt.....**with thoughts like that in mind.....that James wrote this in

James 1:29

*“Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this:  
to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself  
from being polluted by the world.”*

**Suddenly James opens this up.....** to become a responsibility before God

Not just for fathers.....or fathers and mothers.....**but** for every believer  
..who desires to please God

**And it hangs there....**right next to *“Keeping ourselves from being polluted by...”*

**Now most of us.....are probably doing pretty well.....at keeping ourselves**

**But what** are we doing.....to look after orphans and.....

**Because:**

I've got this funny feeling ....that this is one of the things....God keeps tabs on

(Remember Cornelius.....ACTS 10:2 tells us that even b4 he became....

*“he gave generously to those in need and prayer to God regularly.”*

**And when** God's angel appeared to him in a vision.....The angel said

*“Your prayers and gifts to the poor have come up as a memorial offering before God.”*

**GOD NOTICED**

**And surely He must notice when we don't.....as well as when we do**

- **Today we are remembering...work....of SAO**

- And with it.....we see one very effective way.....that we can help.....

**Over the years.....**the growth in the organizations that offer this-→Compassion...  
have made this an easy way to fulfil

**And of course.....support is not just to be financial**

It's interesting to note the very next verse in Ps 68(v6) says:

*“God sets the lonely in families,”*

**There's Yet another way....can fulfil this resp.....**

IS a lot harder.....lot nearer to home

**Instead** of just money....it takes time....it takes love

**It relates to the fatherless in our church....in our community**

- What are we doing.....What am I doing.....What are you doing ??

when we look at this responsibility Biblical.....we find two strong reasons.....  
For us accepting it

- **The first is STEWARDSHIP**

Luke 12 :48 says

*“From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.”*

**This whole section of Scripture**.....from way back in v13.....where someone in crowd .says to Jesus → tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me..

**IS about** being good stewards of all that God has given us

**The story that leads into this verse**....Is about people left in charge Masters resources And told to use those.....to help the other servants.....who have little

**When the Master returns**.....he expects to find.....those who have much have been.....

**When the Lord returns.....He will have the same expectation of us !!!!**

**I have often wondered**.....why.....some believers.....have so much.....

**In terms of material.....spiritual resources.....** **While some have so little**

*(Talking to Fay about her visit to s church group in Zimbabwe.....)*

**It may well link up with this parable**

**We have** ...so that we can experience the joy of giving.....and they.....exp joy of receiving

**But what if we don't give**.....THEN we have no joy

**There is a joy in costly giving**.....A joy in living on the edge.....where.... because of your giving.....**you then** have to rely upon God.....to provide

- **The Second Biblical Reason**.....for accepting this responsibility.....  
is **GRACE**

**Grace.....which is showing kindness to those in need**

To those you know.....and to the stranger

To the friend and the enemy.....The deserving and the undeserving

**Grace which** has been shown to each of us.....in an Amazing way.....in Christ

**And now we**.....have the privilege.....of showing Grace.....smaller way to.....

**In Matt 10**.....we find Jesus sending out His disciples.....to perform acts of..villages

**He tells them**.....that if their offer of grace is refused.....then they are free to move on

**But the offer** is still to be made.....**For in Matt 10:8 he says**

*“Freely you have received, freely give.”*

**(This morning Terry is preaching.....His sermon is about Grace**

Made up a word.....**UNGRACE**.....

.**Ungrace** is not just about doing the bad.....

.....**it's also** about not doing the good: **Holding** back from forgiving...giving..loving)

**And His challenge**.....**Should** we dare persist in ungrace.....

Whether...do...or don't do

**In the light** of the amazing Grace.....that God the Father.....has bestowed on us ?????

**Our challenge this morning is a little more positive**

**In light of** our responsibility to care for those who have so little

**In recognition** of the joy that comes through giving

**And in an awareness** of the Grace of God freely given

**What one thing can we do....or begin to do this week**

That will pour grace into the life of another person ?????

