The Problem of the Poor
Mark 14:6-7

Introduction:
A. Jesus taught three great principles about the poor.
   1. They will always be with us.
   2. They give us opportunity to do good.
   3. They are not our most important concern.
      a. Jesus did not declare a “war on poverty,” but a war on sin.
      b. Jesus did not seek economic and social equality, but spiritual equality.
B. Let’s notice three areas of New Testament teaching concerning the poor.
   1. The Place of the Poor in our priorities.
   2. The Individual Christians duty to the poor.
   3. The Church’s duty to the poor.

Discussion:
I. The Poor and Our Priorities.
   A. The poor get top priority with the social gospel — feed, relieve, then teach.
II. The Poor and Personal Duty.
   A. Work to avoid personal poverty (1 Tim. 5:8,13; 2 Thess. 3:8-11).
   B. Work to have the means to help the poor (Eph. 4:28; cf. Jas 2:15,16)
   C. Find time for personal service besides mere gifts (cf. Gal 6:10; Jas 1:27)
III. The Poor and the Church’s Duty.
   A. NT churches relieved poor saints. (Acts 2:42; 4:34; 6:1; Rom. 15:26; 1 Cor. 16:1; 2 Cor 8:4).
       1. A difference in church and individual action (1 Tim. 5:16; cf. Matt. 18:15-17).
       2. No authority in 2 Cor. 9:13 for church aid to sinners — “all” same as Acts 2:44,45.
   B. NT churches cooperated in relieving poor saints (Acts 11:30; Rom. 15:25-28; 1 Cor. 16:1 2 Cor 8 & 9).
       1. Sent it directly the church in need.
       2. Did not sent it through a “sponsoring church.”
       3. Did send it to or through a human organization (cf. Acts 11:27-30)
          a. Human organizations displace God’s organization — the church.
          b. Human organizations do what church could and should do in the first place.

Conclusion:
A. Let us be concerned about poor, but more so about the lost.
B. Let us help the personally poor as we have ability and opportunity — saint or sinner.
C. Let us let the church relieve only those with whom it has been charged.