

# Gathering PLANTING SEEDS

## Seek the Truth

### Being a Good Neighbor

You probably know how to be a good neighbor on your block. Maybe you stood up to a bully or rescued a neighbor's cat or organized a litter brigade. The question is, how can you (and those around you) be a good neighbor to those who are hungry? It's a puzzle all right! Let's think about some of the pieces.

### Listening

When people care for neighbors it means helping them in ways they need to be helped, not just in ways **we** want to help them. Caring for neighbors means a lot of listening and learning.

### Peace

Neighbors aren't only people. Nations are neighbors, too. A neighborly way to solve problems is through negotiation, not fighting. Many people are hungry because of war and conflict.

### Education

It's not a surprise that education is important. But you might be surprised to know that if people go to school, they and their kids are less likely to be hungry. Food and books go together.

### Microcredit

Most of the time you have to have money to borrow money. That makes it tough to get a loan if you are poor. Microcredit is a small loan given to people who are poor so they can start businesses and work their way out of being poor.

### Appropriate Technology

What good is a tractor if you have a tiny farm or no way to get gas? Farmers need equipment and seeds that are right for the people who use them. What good is it to plant seeds for food you don't want to eat?

## "Go and do likewise"

We don't need to recast Jesus' directions. They're pretty clear: "Go and do likewise." We are not supposed to walk on by. We are supposed to help. We are to be a neighbor.

**In your parable, who treats the hungry child as a neighbor? Who walks on by?**

**Can you think of times you walked by someone who was hungry or needed help?**

**Can you think of ways the world walks by people who are hungry?**



## Erosion (e-ROH-shun)

Something that erodes is worn away. Rain erodes the earth when it cannot seep into the ground and be absorbed. When that happens, the rain finds its way to streams, rivers, lakes or oceans, taking important topsoil with it. The wind can also erode the earth. When strong winds blow, sand, dirt, and small rocks can be blown away. Over time, water and wind erosion can literally make topsoil vanish. Topsoil is important. It is the fertile ground that farmers need for growing crops.

### Health Care

Hunger and disease go hand-in-hand. Most of the time people who don't have enough food also cannot go to the doctor when they are sick. Hungry people need medicine when they are sick.

### Fair Prices

If you've ever had a lemonade stand, you probably know that you have to charge more than it costs to make a glass of lemonade. Same is true for farmers. If farmers don't get a fair price for their crops, they don't make money. Many farm families go hungry while they grow food for others.

### Protect the Environment

People who are poor don't have many options. Often the only way to cook or get warm is by burning wood...and there go the trees. Trees help hold topsoil so it doesn't erode by blowing or washing away. When topsoil erodes, farmland goes too.

Do you know any groups of people that are mistrusted?

## Samaritan (sah-MEHR-ih-tan)

When Jesus was your age, Samaritans and Jews had different ideas about religion. They also mistrusted each other. When Jesus said it was the Samaritan who was neighborly, everyone would have been surprised and even a little upset. They would have never expected a Samaritan to be more faithful than temple leaders!

## Appropriate Technology (ah-PROH-pree-et tek-NAHL-oh-gee)

"Technology" helps people do their work more easily. Pencils and computers help people write. Hoes and tractors help farmers plant. Pencils, computers, hoes, and tractors are examples of technology. "Appropriate" means that the technology works for the people who use it. Huge tractors are not right for a small field. A sand shovel is not right for digging a well. In order to be useful, technology needs to be right for the job and the people using it. It also needs to last a long time and be able to be repaired when broken.

When would a computer be appropriate technology?

When would a pencil be appropriate technology?

## Microcredit (MI-crow-KREH-dit)

"Micro" means small. A microchip is a small electric circuit. A microscope shows small things. Microcredit is a small loan. Often banks give big loans, like a loan to buy a house or a car. In order to get a house or car loan you have to prove to the bank that you have a way to pay back the money they lend you. Most people who are poor do not have a way to show that they can pay back money, so they can't get regular loans. Some banks, like the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh, give microloans. They lend small amounts of money so that people who are poor can start a small business or go to school. Microcredit has been very successful. Almost all the people who get loans pay back the money. These small loans help people climb out of hunger and poverty.