

12 neighbors Discussion Guide

Week Three : Do Development

Pre-Film Question

Read *Leviticus 23:22*

*"When you reap the harvest of your land,
do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest.
Leave them for the poor and for the foreigner residing among you.
I am the Lord your God."
Leviticus 23:22 (NIV)*

Why does God ask that the farmer to leave a portion of their harvest (gleanings) in the field for the poor and foreigner to gather for themselves, rather than asking the farmer to donate a portion of their harvest to the poor?

Watch the "Do Development" episodes 3A + 3B

Discussion Questions

1. Any initial thoughts, impressions, or takeaways from the film?
2. Why do you think Del Seymour makes these contrasting points about his community's need for food vs their need for **hope**, **dignity** and **opportunity**?
 - (a) Del says, "Don't bring us food – we got enough food"
 - (b) Del says, "There are two things we don't have in this neighborhood. We don't have **hope**, and we don't have **dignity**. If you want to give people **hope** and **dignity** you have to give them opportunity, to improve their situation."
3. How do you help create opportunity? How did they do that in these films?

Pastor Sean repeats a similar idea when he says, "If you only do that (give them food), they'll always be returning for that. We need to teach them how to fish."

*Del and Sean are both speaking to the differences between **relief** work and **development** work.*

***Relief** is defined as the immediate and temporary provision of emergency aid to help victims of a natural or man-made disaster. According to the Chalmer's Group, "Relief is the first response that comes to most people's minds when they see the suffering of others."*

***Development** is "a slow, ongoing process of change. It involves addressing large, foundational problems that are not quickly or easily fixed" with the goal of long, lasting change. While relief is often done to and for those in crisis, development is done with those who are in a longer term situation of need.*

4. Read the table below, and discuss any impressions you have about the difference between **relief** and **development**:

	Relief	Development
<i>What are they?</i>	Immediate and temporary provision of emergency aid to help victims of a natural or man-made disaster.	A slow, ongoing process of change that addresses large, foundational problems with the goal of lasting change.
<i>When are they applied?</i>	Immediately in response to emergency situations such as natural or manmade disasters. Only applied when the local people/government/aid cannot take the work on themselves.	Can take place after recovery from a disaster, or during any normal circumstance.
<i>How long do they last?</i>	Should only be temporary, during crisis. Should not be applied repeatedly or over-extended.	An ongoing process.
<i>Where do the resources come from?</i>	Resources typically come from the outside.	Resources and assets from within are identified and activated.
<i>Who leads the work?</i>	Typically, people from the outside.	The individual or community experiencing poverty or marginalization are in the best position to lead and come up with their own goals. Outside helpers can accompany them on their path towards their goals, not prescribe solutions.
<i>What are the goals?</i>	Immediate relief from disaster; to ensure that people survive the disaster.	Long lasting change that addresses foundational problems.
<i>What are the outcomes?</i>	The community gets through the disaster until they are able to return to their normal way of life. When overextended, relief can result in dependency. Over-extended, outside help, can damage local capacity and economy.	Foundational problems are addressed and fixed, the community continues the process of development and can continue and carry out the projected started on their own. The community is independant and the project is sustainable.

5. According to Jobs for Life's research, the church spends the majority of its **love your neighbor** efforts by doing relief work or providing financial aid. Why do you think that is? What do you think of the Jobs For Life idea of **"flipping the list"** and starting with the ideas at the bottom of the list (below)?



6. Discuss the relative impact that relief vs development has on the different aspects of poverty: material, spiritual, social, mental, and also poverty of circumstance vs poverty of identity.

Impacts of Over-extending Relief

- (a) Families/communities become accustomed to receiving relief.
- (b) They do not learn to meet their own needs.
- (c) They become dependant on outside help.
- (d) Relief teams may feel they can fix/solve problems.
- (e) Relief teams may offer solutions that are not helpful or are perhaps harmful.
- (f) Individuals/families/communities may feel obligated to accept this "unhelpful help" as they fear losing the help and support they have become dependant on.
- (g) Rather than feel empowered, individuals/families/communities feel as though they have no gifts, skills, assets to offer and that they are not able to help themselves, negatively impacting their sense of self.

7. Can you think of a situation in the past, where you've responded to a need with relief, and try to think of how you could have responded with a more development mindset?

For example, giving a hungry person a sandwich and walking away vs. sitting down with them, asking their name and learning about them first to get to know them.

Assessment

Assess in your own life and your church or community: is the work that you are doing to help the poor and marginalized in your community primarily relief or development based? What can you, and/or your church do to take steps towards doing development work that can result in lasting change in your community?

Action

Pick a well known or well established initiative or charity in your community i.e. a food bank, a hot meal service, outreach center, etc. Go observe and try to identify areas where perhaps relief is being over extended and/or opportunities for development exist. Come back next week ready to discuss it.

¹ <https://www.chalmers.org/news/entry/relief-and-development-the-distinction-is-more-than-academic>

² Same as above

³ McKnight, John; Kretzmann, John (1996). *Mapping Community Capacity (PDF) (Report) (Revised ed.)*.