

### **How did Jesus respond to the poor and children?**

Just as Jesus did, Christians should have a large heart for children. Christ told his disciples to “let the little children come to [him]” (Matthew 19:14). He also told his followers on many occasions that they must trust him in the way that a child trusts or else they wouldn’t be able to enter into God’s kingdom (Matthew 18:3). We also see throughout scripture that Jesus had a heart for the hungry and the poor, regardless of their age. He often times told his disciples to give to the poor and meet their needs (Matthew 19:21; Mark 10:21; Luke 14:13; Luke 14:21; Luke 18:22). The apostles and early Christians also thought it important to give to the poor and we see many occasions where they did just that (Acts 2:45, 4:25; Romans 15:26; Galatians 2:10). So we can determine from these verses that Jesus cared deeply for the poor and hungry children and therefore Christians should do the same. In fact Christ says that if we even give just a small cup of cold water to a child, in His name, we will be rewarded (Matthew 10:42).

Scripture even goes so far as to say that taking care of the poor and those who are not able to provide for themselves is the essence of Christian service. In James 1:27, James says that pure religion consists of looking after orphans and widows in their distress. In Bible times widows and orphans were often poor and hungry because they had no one to provide for them.

In regards to Matthew 25:35-37 we can see that how someone treats the poor is indicative of whether or not that person will enter into God’s kingdom. This is not saying that we have to work to get into Heaven. However, it is telling us that those who are truly Christians will be characterized by a selfless spirit that gives to those in need, including hungry children.

So, we can see that the poor and hungry are very important to God and it is a Christian’s responsibility to take care of those individuals.