

BEYOND CHARITY: THE CHRISTMAS STORE

Taking people seriously is vital to community development. And though poverty is a cruel and evil reality demanding thoughtful and comprehensive strategies, something *beyond simple charity must inform our mission*.

This is the story of how we turned a Christmas “give away” that focused on the warm feelings of charity givers into a way for people to give gifts to their own children that they had earned. In the process, we learned a foundational principle that has changed the way we do everything at CitySquare.

During the Christmas season 1994, my first at CitySquare, a large, generous, suburban church arranged to provide Christmas gifts for 125 families. Prior to the Christmas “give away” celebration day, families signed up for the assistance and provided the information necessary to be certified as eligible by the donor church’s volunteers who worked in our food pantry during the project. It was not hard to fill the available slots, given the economic condition of the families with whom we worked.

The big distribution day arrived with a biting cold in the air. I’ll never forget the experience. Our building could accommodate only twenty-five families at a time. In essence, we hosted five Christmas parties during the day. People stood outside our front door in a line that snaked down the sidewalk for a block waiting their turn to come inside for refreshments—cookies, punch, coffee, and hot chocolate.

The sponsoring church had everything meticulously organized. Each family’s gifts were packed away in large, black trash bags that made transport out

of the building easy and efficient. The family's name was displayed clearly on each large bag. Every family received a bag generously filled with toys, clothing, and other gift items. Santa Claus even showed up to hear the Christmas wishes of the children.

Actually, it was a good day. But at the end it felt bittersweet to me. Everyone was grateful for the fact that there would be presents on Christmas morning. The children and the adults enjoyed the party. Still, none of the parents had any choice in the matter. They showed up, stood in line, and received gifts of charity. They were not giving their children gifts. They were taking gifts from others who had enjoyed shopping for them and selecting them. I saw a sadness in the eyes of these mothers and fathers and grandparents that I have not yet forgotten. At the end of that day, I vowed that we would not handle Christmas that way ever again.

The Consequences of Charity

What could possibly be wrong with giving people gifts at Christmas? Isn't this a time for us to be charitable? What follows may be counter-intuitive for you, but get ready to hear the dark side of charity.

Charity tends to linger with the negative. Charity leads us to think in terms of projects rather than people. Charity seeks to set limits on our efforts—time, schedules, artificial categories, coming and going. Charity can masquerade as community. But charity is always found out.

Charity can create unhealthy dependency. It can actually rob people of the power they need to escape poverty and to enjoy genuine community. Charity has at times functioned as a rather sophisticated tool for people with most of the power in a system to maintain control of it to their own advantage, all while they appear to be "doing good."

Charity effectively protects the dominant worldview that guides and forms standard assumptions about the nature and causes of poverty, as well as possible solutions to its myriad problems. Charity operates out of a paradigm of resignation and, at times, obligation or duty.

Often charity maintains the status quo. Charity divides the haves from the have-nots while most often ignoring the forces creating the widening gap between those who have the ability to be charitable and those who have no such options. Charity seldom invites those with *the problem* into the mix. Charity is not about solutions, but settles for temporary relief, acting in a

manner that assures the need for its return at a predictable time and in a predetermined manner.

Clearly, real, continuing, unresolved tension exists between our natural impulse to respond to pressing human need with charitable compassion and our desire to *change the system that so often creates and sustains the need we cannot ignore*. This tension is very real, at times palpable, for people concerned about poverty and its impact on inner-city communities. This tension is especially severe for those who live and work among the urban poor.

Most people who act against the *symptoms* of poverty move most naturally toward charity. I think I understand why that is true. Acts of charity and compassion usually seem obvious. If a person is hungry, compassion provides food. If someone is ill, charity calls for a doctor. When the needs are too great to wait, charity is required.

Usually, charity is not too complicated. It can be demanding, maddening, tiring, and overwhelming, but it is seldom all that complex. Providing charity feels good. If I can meet a need, lift a load, or ease some pain, the benefit can flow in two directions.

But charity on its own seldom, if ever, challenges existing power structures, even when these power structures are responsible for much of the poverty being addressed by donor largesse. Ironically, often these same power structures provide resources to fuel the works of charity.

Community development is all about people and how we regard them. Once we come to regard "the poor" as valued participants in the process, our overall perspective changes in a radical way. When we regard our own assets and resources as gifts placed at our disposal only to be shared and combined with the gifts and the wealth of others, our ability to act in a brand new and amazingly creative fashion kicks in, usually to the surprise of everyone involved. Taken together, these first two steps in community development combine to provide an equally beneficial and necessary component for change and growth. I call this the essential and prerequisite paradigm shift for community development.

It is not hard to see why most of us gravitate toward charitable responses to poverty in inner-city communities. Charity is easier, has more immediate, discernable results, and often returns some sense of immediate gratification for effort and funds invested. You see this most dramatically at Christmas, and this story about how CitySquare moved from Christmas give aways to a

more dignified experience for the urban poor illustrates the two-part paradigm shift that is vital for community development: moving beyond mere charity by taking people seriously and viewing them as gifted with assets to contribute in the neighborhood.

Finding A Better Way

The following August after that first Christmas, we began enrolling parents, mostly mothers, as members of what we called our Community Service Corps (CSC). Modeled after what we observed while watching our AmeriCorps members, our little community service team grew to 109 members when we cut enrollment off before Labor Day that year. Then, between Labor Day and Thanksgiving, the members of our team received community work assignments or performed community work that was validated by a community leader or location sponsor. We sent CSC members all across the neighborhood to do their work. Nursing homes, public schools, parks, and recreation centers, our own food pantry, and many other locations received our willing volunteers, who performed thousands of hours of community work.

We "paid" the CSC members \$10 per hour in what we called "Christmas Store Dollars" that we printed. We approached churches, including the large church that had done so much to help us out in the past, and asked for donations of toys, clothing, household items, and other Christmas gifts. Then, just before the Christmas break from school, we opened our first annual CitySquare Christmas Store. We worked hard to make the store look and feel as much like a Toys R Us as we could. The store was open to CSC members and their families only. These hardworking community leaders came to our store to spend the purchasing power they had earned by their service hours.

The first year turned out to be a smashing success. The CSC members loved the idea that they were shopping for gifts that they could select for their children and loved ones. They liked the selection of items that we had gathered. We even had a gift wrapping station where members could pay to have their gifts wrapped, just like at Dillard's or Macy's.

CSC members also worked in the store assisting their associates, now turned customers. Members of our donor churches also had the joy of helping us out. They loved the experience—and the fact that shoppers had been doing so much good out in the community in the weeks leading up to the holiday season.

One of my favorite examples of how these community workers made a big difference took place during the State Fair of Texas in October. Each year the fair hosts a special day for developmentally disabled adults. They call it Sunshine Day. A local adult nursing and rehabilitation center took a large number of these special-needs adults to the fair each year on this special day.

Two days prior to the special day, we received word from the nursing center that they needed assistance escorting their residents to the fair. Thirty of our CSC team members went to the center. Each paired up with one of the adults, all of whom were confined to wheelchairs. Transported to the fairgrounds by van, everyone enjoyed a tremendous day of fun and laughter. Each of our team members worked for nine hours that contributed to their accounts of hours served. The special adults felt honored by the assignment of one person to spend the day with them.

The second year we repeated the effort. We enrolled 254 CSC members to our team. Realizing that managing the increasingly complex project created a great opportunity for developing skills among team members, we divided the entire corps of volunteers into ten groups. We chose a team leader for each of the groups. These team leaders received training in leadership, team management, the overall process, and service coordination. We paid these leaders a little more than those they supervised due to their increased reporting, coordinating, and management responsibilities.

Our second year was even more effective and successful than the first. The store filled up with a large collection of items for purchase. Our donors were catching on to and understanding our new approach, and they obviously appreciated it. Word about the effective work of the team spread across the community, resulting in requests for the placement of members in various community venues.

One day during business hours for the Christmas Store, a group of Hispanic women approached the store manager to tell her about the situation facing one special twelve-year-old boy. His family had returned to Mexico during the Christmas break due to a serious illness in the family. They had no choice but to leave the boy behind with neighbors. The women appealed to our manager to give the boy a bicycle for Christmas.

"This is a store," the manager explained. "We don't give anything away. What is here is only available for purchase by you and your other team members."

The manager noticed that the women all had bags of gifts, some of which were already wrapped and ready for Christmas morning. She also noted that each of the women held unspent Christmas Store Dollars in their hands.

"Have you finished your shopping?" she asked.

Each woman answered that she had finished her shopping and was ready to leave the store. They had stopped by to bring to our attention the special situation and need of this one little boy.

"Well, if all of you are finished shopping, why don't you pool the dollars you have left and buy the boy the bicycle that he wants?" she suggested.

"We can do that?" they asked.

"Certainly! You have extra purchasing power. You can buy the bike for your little neighbor," the manager explained.

The women huddled up, put their money together, and bought the boy a bike. I'll never forget their faces or their delight!

We believe this is the better form of charity. Community members and neighbors using their hard-earned buying power to provide a special gift for one little boy with a very special need. For us this example shouts, "Mission accomplished!"

The Apostle Paul once quoted Jesus as saying, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). *If that is true, and we believe it certainly is, then the highest good is not to give, but to place another person in a position to give.* Our store manager accomplished exactly that. Our entire CSC/Christmas Store approach accomplished the same for parents, grandparents, and other family members. No longer solely dependent on well-to-do donors, team members earned the ability to be givers and not just receivers. At the same time, we found a beneficial way for donors to be involved in a most significant manner without belittling or undermining the capacity or the dignity of low-income community members. To be sure, our process didn't serve everyone in the community—an impossibility in any case. Rather, we enrolled people who shared our commitment to community improvement and development.

During our third year of operation, we recruited 356 members to join our CSC team. Each year we built our team on the experience of members who had served in past years. In year three we learned a very important lesson in retail sales. Namely, if you have almost a quarter million dollars of purchasing power in the hands of your customers, you need to have an inventory of

merchandise worth three or four times that amount to ensure adequate choice and selection for shoppers.

The third year provided amazing service to the community, great experience for our growing number of managers, and the greatest challenge to date for donors. We made it through and had another great year, but at the end of the experience we realized that we faced some important choices. In order to continue with our model, we knew we could no longer depend on donations "in-kind," as in toys, clothing, household items, recreational and sporting equipment, and other potential gift items. What we needed were cash donations that we could then take to wholesale and retail companies for use in purchasing deeply discounted gift certificates for use by our team members as pay for service performed. Rather than a store, what we envisioned was a celebration banquet attended by team members and donors at which time a huge "pay day" celebration would take place. Team members would be paid in gift certificates, and shopping would be done in the real marketplace. Stores would benefit, the community would be served, and donors would be engaged. It seemed like an obvious three-way win.

As we explored the idea with a number of people, it became clear to us that donors wanted to shop for toys for "poor people," often to provide their children the experience of "helping others," while seeing that not everyone was as fortunate as they were. We also realized that to do the store properly, we would need to devote a full-time staff person to the project year round. In view of these factors, we discontinued the project, joining other non-profit organizations in succeeding years to provide Christmas assistance to those we enrolled. We continued to cooperate with community partners who provide the right to shop in exchange for community service of one kind or another.

Though eventually abandoned as a tactic for CitySquare, the Christmas Store serves as a great example of how moving beyond simple charity results in great benefit to everyone concerned. Our decision to invest our funds in other ways (for example in work force training projects and housing development) should not be seen as a negative judgment on the store concept or its community service in exchange for economic power as a valid approach to helping low-income, under-employed, or unemployed families.

Neither do I want to leave the impression that all charity is negative. We recognize that charity has its place. We are into charity every day that we open our doors, and we depend on the charitable donations of loyal supporters to

help us come to the aid of people in trouble. However, we remain very aware of the limits of its benefit to people who live in poverty.

Philanthropic institutions, such as local, state, and national foundations, both public and private, usually don't think outside the box of charity. For example, large foundations seldom cooperate with one another to develop community-wide strategies for attacking poverty. Foundations normally do not consult with community-based organizations to seek counsel on just how resources could best be allocated. Rather, the community groups usually try to figure out what foundations want to fund and then tailor requests accordingly.

In fairness and with gratitude, I want to quickly add that this long-established pattern of standard operating procedure is beginning to shift among the more progressive and effective foundations. In Dallas, the Rees-Jones Foundation, the Meadows Foundation, the Embrey Family Foundation, the James and Elizabeth Sowell Foundation, the Communities Foundation of Texas, the Caruth Foundation, the Boone Family Foundation, the McCune Foundation, the Terry Family Foundation, the Dallas Foundation, and the United Way of Metropolitan Dallas, to name a few, are developing new ways of working together to achieve agreed-upon community impact and fundamental change for those who live in poverty. The trend is most exciting. Further, these foundations consult with community-based organizations and leaders as they establish this new way of doing business. In traveling to other cities to study successful approaches to providing permanent housing for the homeless, I have noticed this same new commitment to cooperation and alignment of resources on the part of the foundation community.

Still, the unintended consequence of a good deal of our charitable activity is the creation of an unhealthy dependence among "the poor" on services that do not lead people out of their pressing need, but provide temporary relief that ironically may delay much-needed systemic change that would cut into the perpetual need for charitable assistance.

Paternalism can become a cruel structural reality when charity continues in a thoughtless manner. CitySquare team members whose work embeds them in very low-income communities must deal with this tension continually. Generous donors tend to want to swoop in, deliver lots of gifts and "stuff," and move on to their next project of dispensing largesse among "the poor."

Our staff manages with great creativity the good-hearted, charitable impulses of good people who simply want to help. We have found that our best success is realized when the recipients of such benefits enter a process during which they earn what is donated. Earning and responsible ownership go hand in hand. The expectation that donors from the outside can be expected to provide and meet all of one's needs is one that we work hard to overcome. Furthermore, we often must deal with the fact that what donors offer to a community may not be appropriate or in line with the true needs or wishes of a community. Balancing the expectations, needs, desires, and goals of each side of this equation presents a real challenge.

Paradigm: Positive

The new paradigm of community development believes in people, especially those who are defined as "the poor." The community development model I have in mind not only recognizes the power, purpose, and value of people, it also likes, enjoys, and cherishes relationships among all kinds of people, no matter their class, race, culture, gender, or side of town.

One sure sign of the presence of this new paradigm is when "the poor" are enjoyed, not because they are poor, but without regard to their economic status and simply because of shared humanity. It is out of this "paradigm: positive" that creative new approaches emerge for the good of the whole, for the community. From this new starting place, we can operate out of our faith in what is possible. We can respond to huge problems with big, surprising initiatives. We do not need to feel confined or limited in any way. The past may be a useful teacher, but we refuse its advances as our master.

We believe that change is not only possible, but is mandated by our view of one another and by our belief that change must occur for the good of everyone. What affects one in a negative manner, affects all in a way that brings harm and not good.

Funding is no object here.

Traditional roles and strategies do not bind us.

The limitations of religion or politics or culture or history or expertise—none of these factors restrict us. Rather, each opens up new possibilities for consideration, partnership, and action. We firmly believe that change can occur and that together we will see it through. This is the essence of

genuine community development. I appreciate Julia Moulden's opinion on this matter:

In recent weeks, I've worked with and interviewed some remarkable people who have chosen careers in the non-profit sector. And from each of them I heard—perhaps for the first time, really heard—how they spend much of their time. Not, as we might imagine, helping people in need. Instead, they constantly do a desperate dance designed to attract the attention of people like you and me. So that they can raise awareness of their work. And the money they need to keep going.

Something is wrong with this picture. . . . What if, I wondered, non-profits weren't charities at all—what if they didn't have to depend on catching our eye in order to continue their work? What if the world's poor didn't have to wonder if those of us fortunate enough to have been born into a place of privilege on this shared planet would ever turn our hearts and minds in their direction? What if the act of giving didn't have to please us first? Or what if we didn't think of it as "giving" in the first place? Might "sharing" be a better word?

Important steps in this direction are being taken, of course. Social entrepreneurs are a prime example. They've discovered that it's better to use what they know to help the world's poor start businesses than it is to give them hand-outs. . . .

Charity isn't really dead, of course, but I think it's on its last legs. And I'm looking for a path that will lead us out of our cramped habit of self-preoccupation and into a greater world of fellowship with all human beings. One that embeds helping others into all of our institutions and our daily lives. And I know that I'm not alone.¹

In practical terms and when compared to more traditional, charitable approaches, this emerging view of how communities can be transformed in

sustainable and scalable ways leads us into surprising new arenas of thought and action, not just in non-profits but also in business, politics or public policy, and social enterprise.

PRINCIPLE 3

Communities have adequate assets to initiate renewal.

Based on our continuing experience, we believe the resources within a community are adequate to *initiate* genuine renewal and redevelopment of that community. As a result, we devote ourselves to the discovery and mobilization of individual and community resources that can be brought to the task at hand as defined by the community itself.

Then comes a huge leap that takes courage and some risk. Give the people with the problem what they need to work. Then get out of their way!

One day as I walked out of the Resource Center building, four strong men—three African American, one Hispanic—were walking in. All serve as leaders in our organization. All are from the community. Three serve as paid staff. There is prison time in their backgrounds. And drug addiction. And homelessness. These guys know. We want them with us. Better, I want to be with them. They will provide the guidance and leadership we need to do effective work.

Once you learn the benefit of taking the power of people—all people—seriously, it is a short step then to reevaluating how you regard your various resources, relationships, and opportunities across the entire community. Interestingly, the ability to take seriously the power and ability of the people closest to the challenges of poverty opens your efforts up to prize the benefits of open-handed partnerships that will allow you to leverage benefits and resources from outside the community into the community, but under the watchful eye of those on the ground.

Do This and You Will Live

Churches often think of only one level when it comes to doing good works in the world: charity. And charity is essential, but it is only one level of loving neighbor. At CitySquare we believe there are three major levels of engagement,

1. Julia Moulden, "Charity Is Dead," *The Huffington Post*, June 18, 2009 at http://www.huffingtonpost.com/julia-moulden/charity-is-dead_b_194392.html. See Moulden's book, *We Are the New Radicals: A Manifesto for Reinventing Yourself and Saving the World* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2008).

and the following is a way your church or organization can think through ways to go beyond charity.

We have a metaphor for the three ways to engage poverty. The metaphor runs like this. We imagine poverty like a raging river that is sweeping people away and casting them against the rocks and killing them and their children. At times our community work with individuals and families feels a great deal like a life-saving station along that wild river. We organize and begin to respond by pulling as many people out of the deadly torrent as we possibly can.

After an extended period of time, someone asks the essential question, "Wonder how all these people are ending up in the river?" We call that "upstream" thinking. So, we find ourselves more and more often, on more and more issues, moving back upstream to ask why so many people are falling in the wild river we call Poverty. We don't abandon those in the water, not for a moment. But upstream we are found asking tough questions and pressing for new ways of doing things.

First, we do a lot of Good Samaritan activities. That's the pulling people out of the river part—we just throw out lifelines where and when they yell for help or we find them drowning. Jesus reveals in Luke 10 what it meant to be a true neighbor. On a daily basis, we find ourselves in the Samaritan position. If we find you stretched out on an East or South Dallas sidewalk, as we have found so many over the years, we will reach out to you, stay with you, and address your needs as best we can for as long as we need to. Your only responsibility at that point in our neighborly relationship is to keep breathing! While much of this work *feels* like charity (because it is!), we intend for it to go further for your benefit and for that of your community, if we can stay connected to one another.

Everyone likes us when we occupy ourselves with pulling people out of the river! Charity is a feel-good deal. Lots of volunteers show up, and lots of people are helped *temporarily*. Again, we have learned the benefit of mixing this function up by bringing those who use our charitable services into the leadership and delivery mix. Almost everyone likes this unique dimension of our approach and philosophy. So good so far!

Second, we focus on your talents. Once you are up on your feet, we will remind you that you have something to contribute to the community—to our community. You are a person of talent, ability, and potential. We want

to impress upon you your obligation to the community. This is the parallel-of-the-talents stage of what we do (Matthew 25:14–30).

Here you will be offered training and anything else you need to "get your house in order" so that you can begin to make your contribution to the good of the whole. You will be taught how to play "the game of Dallas" by the current rules. If you indicate that you would rather take your talents and bury them in a local crack house or in some other counter-productive activity or behavior, we will challenge you to re-think your plans. If you don't, and if you persist in self-destructive decisions and behaviors, we will show you to the door; but we will leave it open for your return if you so choose. There is too much to do and too many people ready to move forward for us to waste your place, if you aren't ready to work at life change.

Number two is harder, but again, people love it, especially those who are learning to identify and maximize their talents. We witness movement to better lives and hope for improved futures. Business people love us at this point. We have connected with business partners in meaningful ways that include our WorkPaths initiative where we train employees with both ready-to-work life skills and specific, hard skills for a particular job. This can be very exciting for everyone involved. Our neighbors land better, higher-paying jobs, and the employers (also our neighbors!) find more stable employees, especially for their entry level positions with a built in support system.

Third, we challenge unfair rules. We know from experience and observation that the current rules of the game aren't fair for everyone. Life works that way. So, like Jesus, we have been known to turn over a few tables, make an angry speech or two, and call rule-makers to task for their inattentiveness to the needs, rights, and conditions of the poorest of our fellow citizens who live among us (John 2:12–17). We take these steps in concert with the community, among the community, and at the bidding of the community. Not possessing or claiming the authority of Jesus, we seldom act alone. In this space, we spend time training leaders and organizing neighbors. Again, we are engaging people who know the problem best to step up to the challenge and to change the status quo for the good of the whole.

When we begin to move into function number three, people get nervous. Some folks tell us that we should leave this alone, that it is not the work of non-profits to get involved in public policy decisions. Beyond the concerns of supporters, working in this arena is hard, complicated, tedious, and

time-consuming. The payoff is slow coming. On some matters, movement seldom occurs.

One of the reasons why those of us who care about attacking poverty are talking more and more about public policy, politics, and economics is because we know that *charity alone will never change the cities of America*. Temporary charitable acts will always be necessary. But what is most needed is social change at the systemic level. Cities serious about providing opportunity for everyone, including low-income people, will work hard to encourage more corporations to move toward the city. Cities with a vision for making things work for everyone will find ways to encourage housing development and diversity in the heart of the city. Moving beyond charity to real, sustainable change for urban areas means we need to be more than nice. We need to be smart, and we need to be willing to take and to encourage creative risks.

Often the best we can do is raise questions and educate the people involved. Even so, we spend more and more time and energy in the third stage. More examples and stories describing this third stage come in following chapters.

HUNGER IS EVERY BODY'S BUSINESS

Hunger is a huge challenge in cities. Attacking hunger is where we started in 1988. We've been trying to address hunger, nutrition, and food security issues for more than two decades. Why? Food is important. It is especially important if you find yourself in a situation where it is not available to you or your loved ones.

These days more and more people are coming to us for help with their nutrition needs. Most are from working families. All attempt to make it on very low, inadequate income. Some work at more than one job. Many are elderly neighbors and children, beautiful children.

Food quality and health go hand in hand. The situation in the inner city is bleak. Texas leads the nation in bad health and nutrition outcomes. One in five Texas children is medically obese, and each year the data continues the wrong way. Many other children are significantly overweight. As these children age, they will raise the number of obese Texas adults to 46.8 percent, contributing to a statewide annual cost to employers of \$3.3 billion. Unfortunately, our state is not alone. If you live outside Texas, your state is likely facing similar problems.

Thirty-one percent of low-income Texans report being unable to feed their children balanced meals sometimes or often. Without the means to purchase enough food, families adopt coping mechanisms, like reducing the quality of food purchased. This strategy makes financial sense: nutritious, fresh, unprocessed foods cost more than ten times the price of energy-dense

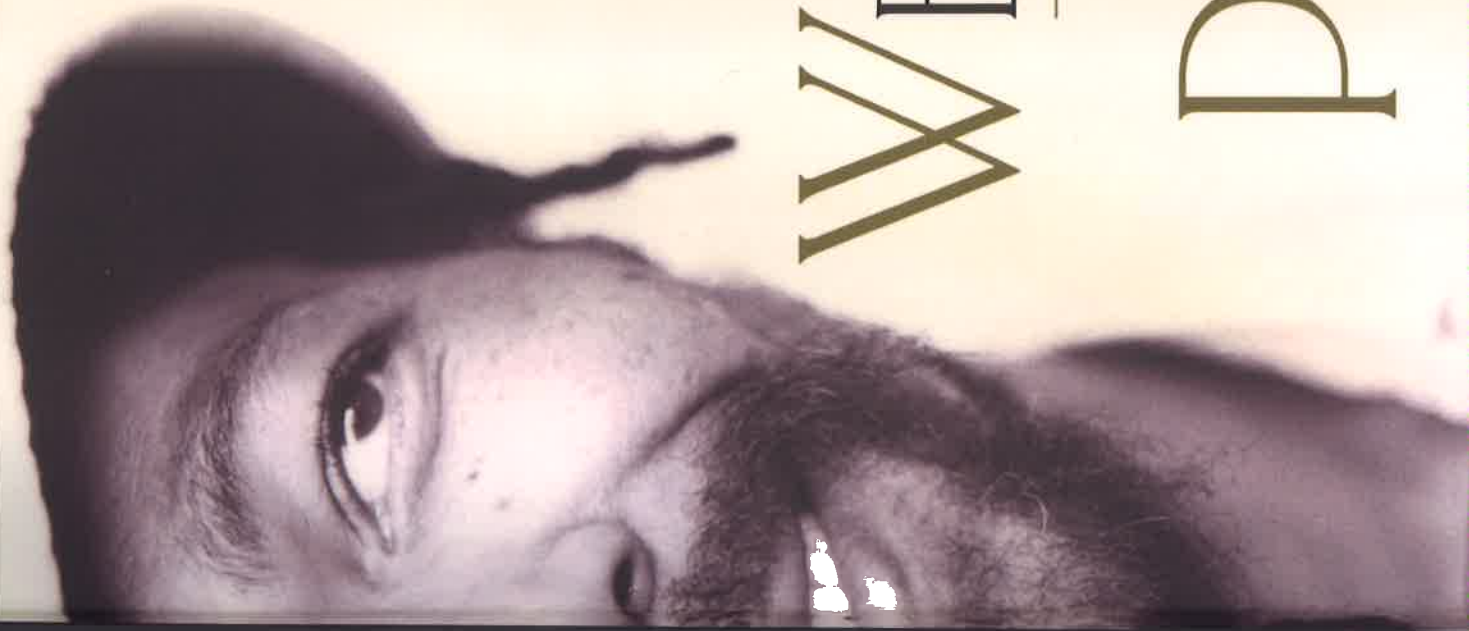
AMES

THE WEALTH OF THE POOR



HUNGER • HEALTH • HOUSING • HOPE

How Valuing
Every Neighbor
Restores Hope
in Our Cities



THE WEALTH OF THE POOR

... is an inspiration to my life. Each time he speaks, I learn
... May God use this book to do for many what Larry has done for
... and us of the value of every single human being."

Lucado, bestselling author

appeared to be exactly where he was supposed to be—ministering
... suburban Dallas church. So why would he accept an invitation to
... ntry in one of the poorest neighborhoods in Dallas? What sealed
... something his wife, Brenda, said: "Larry, if you really believe all
... e been, telling us all these years, you need to take the job." So after
... f preaching, he did.

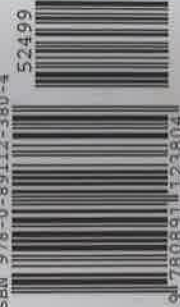
food pantry. Larry asked a woman named Josefina to help translate
... ad come for assistance, but Josefina ended up helping Larry that
... t. Josefina came back the next day for nine years.

wo decades ago, Larry has been asking neighbors like Josefina to help
... problems, and this new way of serving side by side has transformed
... antry into one of the largest non-profit food distributors in the
... nization—now called CitySquare—also develops housing for the
... ess and manages health clinics and community medical outreach
... depressed and under-served places like East and South Dallas.

izational success story you expect to see in the *Wall Street Journal*,
... e no other. Larry's journey provides the platform from which he
... ical, theological, market-savvy manual written for those who serve
... e work of urban transformation.

Larry James has provided executive leadership for CitySquare (formerly Central Dallas
Ministries) since August 1994. CitySquare, a faith-based, human and community
development corporation, serves several inner-city neighborhoods in Dallas, Texas, as
well as in San Antonio, Austin, Fort Worth, and Houston. CitySquare attacks poverty
through its work in four focus areas: housing, hunger relief, health, and the creation of
hope. Since 1999, Larry and his wife Brenda have lived in inner-city Dallas.

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