

PASTOR'S PATCH



The Face of Poverty

On Compassion Sunday, our visiting preacher Diane Hobson gave us an insight into poverty and how Compassion are helping 2.8 million children and their families who are living in “extreme poverty” (less than £1.65 per day). Compassion always does that by working through local churches meaning that not only is practical, medical and educational assistance given to the child, but that there is a Christian message shared with the child at the same time. As Charles Spurgeon once said “If you give a beggar a sandwich, wrap it in a tract” (a leaflet that simply explains the gospel).

That’s one way of helping poverty, here’s another. It can be done as you shop in store or online. There are many products now that are branded “Fairtrade” and by buying these we can be sure that the growers and producers get a fair price for their labour and produce, thus helping them build a sustainable future. Where possible in BBC, we buy Fairtrade coffee and tea. You may be surprised to know that the Fairtrade label was started 30 years ago and globally that has meant a £1.7bn benefit to local two-thirds world farmers.



This year, the Fairtrade organisation are encouraging us to contact our local MP to ask that they pledge their support to Fairtrade and stand with farmers worst affected by unfair trade rules and climate change (see www.fairtrade.org.uk).

All these actions can help those in extreme poverty (globally that’s 1 in 11 people). The Lord says in Micah chapter 6 verse 8 :

*O people, the Lord has told you what is good, and this is what he requires of you:
to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.*

We are staring into the face of poverty all around the world, even though we might not immediately see it. But the Lord has told us how to live, so let’s listen to see what that means for us in our context, and resolve to take action.

Darrell