WHAT'S RIGHT WITH THE CHURCH? Heart of Benevolence  
Matthew 25:42-45

"Considering all the good work done by all of God's people, in all the ages, Jesus has caused far more people to give far more help to far-more needy than any other humanitarian person in the world." ~ Author Unknown

A METHOD THAT CHANGED AN EMPIRE: The Wesley Brothers
Two brothers, John and Charles Wesley started the Methodist Church. The Anglican Church in Clapham Crossing was deeply influenced by the brothers. Four members of this church happened to belong to Parliament and, inspired by their Pastor, they changed an empire:
- William Wilberforce: authored the “Foreign Slave Trade Bill” of 1806, banning slavery from British ships. 60 years later President Lincoln issued the “Emancipation Proclamation” in 1862.
- Granville Sharp: advocate for improved the working conditions and for the ending of the slave trade.
- Lord Ashley Cooper and Michael Sadler: authored the “Factory Act” of 1833, making it illegal for children under age nine to work in textile factories; Children between 9 and 13 could work 8 hours per day.
- Lord Ashley authored “Coal Miners Act” of 1840, resulting in the ban of women and children working underground.

What’s right with the church? The church speaking out against social injustice!

NOT JUST BEING A GOOD NEIGHBOR: Matthew 25:35-40
When a church reaches out to a community to do something without anything expected in return, it's not just being a good neighbor, nor is it a pre-evangelism endeavor. They follow the example of Jesus who said, "Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:28).

Matthew 25:35-40

The King described six needy conditions—hunger, thirst, alienation, nakedness, sickness, and imprisonment. This is representative of all needs that a person might have. Each of these needs is central to survival and quality of life.

Jesus defined clearly we are doing the kingdom work if we care for the needs of those around us.

What’s right with the church? Acts of charity.

CONCLUSION: Charity/Benevolence
The word 'charity' is used frequently in the King James Version of the Bible to translate the Greek word Agape into love. There is a Biblical ideal of caring for the neediest members of society and the church. Charity and Benevolence are interchangeable terms.

Benevolence: (1) Well-meaning and kindly; (2) The voluntary giving of money to those in need; (3) Love of humankind, typically in a Christian context. ~ Concise Oxford English Dictionary

First Baptist Church of Rancho Cordova has an active benevolence ministry and that ministry is administrated though our Deacons. The church has a clearly defined benevolence policy to assist the Deacons in determining who we can or cannot help. The Deacons have a responsibility to balance what the Lord said in Matthew 25:35-40 and at the same time exercise good stewardship practices in determining who will get help.

100% of benevolent resources come through charity (a.k.a., the love offering) at the conclusion of our communion services, or on an “as needed” basis.

What’s right with the church? Helping those in need through acts of charity and benevolence.