





DAILY DEVOTIONALWHAT ARE ALMS?

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"Alms" are not some kind of tree, but something you should know about -- and do.

The Greek word translated alms in the New Testament originally meant mercy or kindness, then came to represent the kind deeds caused by mercy and kindness. So it came to mean charitable giving to the poor -- or giving motivated by love.

Many times this word is translated as "charitable deed."

LUKE 12:33 NKJ 33 "Sell what you have and give alms; provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor moth destroys.

Jesus often spoke of giving alms. But He made it clear that our motives are important.

MATTHEW 6:2-4 NRSV 2 "So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. 3 But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

The Bible tells of Cornelius, "a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, who gave alms generously to the people, and prayed to God always" (Acts 10:2), who had an angel deliver this message:

ACTS 10:4 NKJ 4 . . . he said to him, "Your prayers and your alms have come up for a memorial before God.

God was impressed with this Roman soldier's giving to meet the needs of the poor. What he did got God's attention.

Alms are not offerings to worship God, or support His ministers. Alms are charitable deeds -- gifts to the poor and needy. Helping people who are in trouble.

Alms are important to God. They are an act of love. We are not made right with God by giving, or any works we do, but only through what Jesus did for us. But as children of God we should help care for others who God also loves.

PRAYER: Alms are gifts of love to help people in trouble, O Lord give me grace to give alms in Jesus name.