



Economic Inequality

Quick Facts from *Zealous Love: A Practical Guide to Social Justice*

“Justice means economic structures that check the emergence of extremes of wealth and poverty. It means massive economic sharing among the people of God.” --Ron Sider

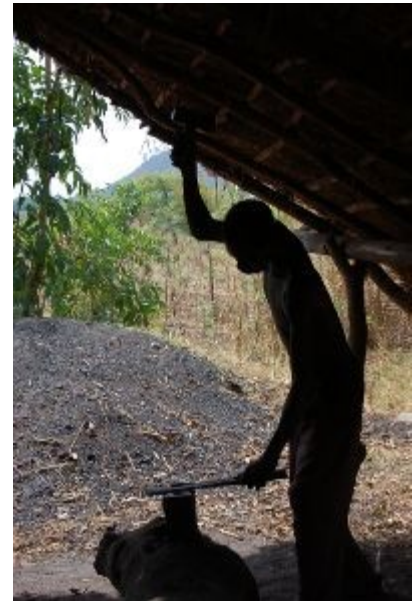
Overview

For most of the people in the world (including you and me), how we’re doing economically has less to do with how hard we work and more to do with the opportunities given to us because of our place of birth. I deserve no credit whatsoever for being born and raised in a developed country. What if I hadn’t been born in the United States, one of the richest countries in the world? What if I was one of the 2.6 billion people trying to eek out an existence on the equivalent of less than \$2 per day? What if unlimited hard work and perseverance earned me a daily income insufficient to buy my family and me enough food to eat?

Isn't there something flawed in a world where some people don't have enough money to feed their families while others burn through cash as though it's no big deal?

Quick Facts:

- 2.6 billion people (40 percent of the population) on our planet live on less than \$2 per day.¹
- Over a billion people survive on less than a dollar a day.²
- The richest 2 percent of the world's population own more than 50 percent of all global wealth, while the poorest 50 percent of the world's population own less than 1 percent of all global wealth.³
- Little things make a big difference. Simply redirecting \$1.50 a day from selfish consumption toward selfless giving equals more than \$25,000 over a lifetime.⁴



For more information, or to join in the conversation, please visit:

www.ZealousLove.org

¹United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report 2007/2008 Fighting Climate Change: Human solidarity in a divided world*, 25. Available from http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR_20072008_EN_Complete.pdf.

² Ibid.

³ James B. Davies, Susanna Sandström, Anthony Shorrocks, and Edward N. Wolff. *The World Distribution of Household Wealth*, United Nations University – World Institute for Development Economics Research, February 2008, 11. Available from http://www.wider.unu.edu/publications/working-papers/discussion-papers/2008/en_GB/dp2008-03/.

⁴ Here's the math: $\$1.50 \times 365 = \$547.50 \times 50 = \$27,375$.