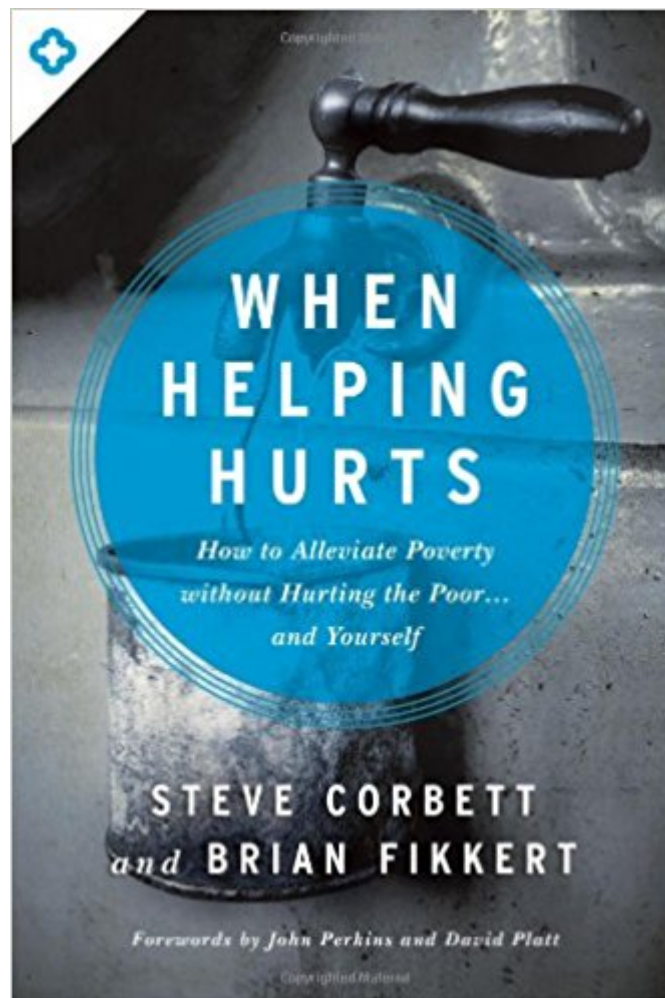




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# When Helping Hurts: How To Alleviate Poverty Without Hurting The Poor . . . And Yourself



## Synopsis

With more than 300,000 copies in print, *When Helping Hurts* is a paradigm-forming contemporary classic on the subject of poverty alleviation. Poverty is much more than simply a lack of material resources, and it takes much more than donations and handouts to solve it. *When Helping Hurts* shows how some alleviation efforts, failing to consider the complexities of poverty, have actually (and unintentionally) done more harm than good. But it looks ahead. It encourages us to see the dignity in everyone, to empower the materially poor, and to know that we are all uniquely needy—and that God in the gospel is reconciling all things to himself. Focusing on both North American and Majority World contexts, *When Helping Hurts* provides proven strategies for effective poverty alleviation, catalyzing the idea that sustainable change comes not from the outside in, but from the inside out.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I can honestly report that *When Helping Hurts* is the single best book I've seen on this topic. Although this book will make many readers uncomfortable, it quickly offers hope in the form of understandable, feasible new strategies that better grasp the dignity and promise of the materially poor. It deserves a #1 spot on the reading list of every Christian who wants to follow Jesus in a genuine, mutually transforming love of neighbor.-Amy L. Sherman, PhD, senior fellow and director, Sagamore Institute Center on Faith in Communities, author, *Restorers of Hope* What an opportunity evangelicals have to make a difference in our world through the church. Corbett and Fikkert build on the growing momentum of holistic witness that's sweeping our country and globe and are eminently

qualified and positioned to take motivated kingdom citizens on a Christ-centered and comprehensive journey that will pay huge dividends for impoverished people and for Christians in our broken world.-Dr. Ronald J. Sider, president, Evangelicals for Social Action, author, Rich Christians in an Age of HungerHow can a local church make a difference, and how do individual Christians meaningfully reflect Christ's grace, when the disparities of wealth and power in our world are so great? When Helping Hurts explores biblical principles in terms of real-life situations to offer real help and grace-filled answers for such questions.-Bryan Chappell, president, Covenant Theological SeminaryWhen Helping Hurts wonderfully combines heavy-duty thinking with practical tools. I appreciate their zeal to root all strategies in the institution God has ordained to bring about His goals. No donor should invest another dollar in any kind of relief effort before digesting the last page of this important book.-Joel Belz, founder and writer, World MagazineChurches in North Americawill find this a helpful way to educate congregations and then motivate them to action, both globally and in their neighborhoods.-Bryant Myers, PhD, professor of International Development, School of Intercultural Studies, Fuller Theological SeminaryA clarion call to rethink how we apply the gospel to a broken world. This book will transform our good intentions into genuine, lasting change.-Stephen J. Baumann, senior vice president, World Relief

Good Intentions Are Not EnoughUnleashing and equipping people to effectively help the poor requires repentance and the realization of our own brokenness. When Helping Hurts articulates a biblically based framework concerning the root causes of poverty and its alleviation.A path forward is found, not through providing resources to the poor, but by walking with them in humble relationships.Whether you're involved in short-term missions or the long-term empowerment of the poor, this book helps teach you three key areas: Foundational ConceptsWho are the poor? PrinciplesShould we do relief, rehabilitation, or development? StrategiesHow can we help people effectively here and abroad?

Excellent book that cuts straight to the heart of very difficult and complex issues related to help and aid work. It is thorough enough to be studied like a textbook but still very readable and approachable. It is written with great wisdom and backed by decades of experience but maintains and beautiful heart of humility and compassion for those in need.

Corbett does a good job with this complex subject. As a reader and a church leader I would have liked to have more concrete solutions, but the poverty problem is a complex one and every case is unique. Corbett offers lots of different tools and approaches. Addressing poverty is a long, messy, roll-up-your-sleeves effort. My only disappointment with this book is that it spend a LOT of time dealing with the "majority world" (impoverished in other countries). My church struggles to deal with the impoverished right here in the USA. Even then, many of the tools/techniques/suggestions are applicable in the US. A nice read on a subject that very few churches address well.

How many times have we witnessed well intended short term missions off to South America or Africa leave with a fire in the heart and end up causing more harm than anything? Corbett unpacks themes like the Great Reversal, the effects of social dependence of missionaries and proper discipleship when alleviating poverty. The 2nd edition includes more practical ways of going about in applying the principles discussed in the book.

The people who wrote this book know the international development business. I sense they are the children of those of us who went out in the 60's and 70's to either save or convert the world.. My only criticism of the book is that the focus is narrow, but expected. The book is written for the new breed of Christian people in the world who are not there to convert people to a church but to the message of Jesus Christ. They are to be lauded - these people go out for years, become part of their communities, they listen, they love. But a lot of good people who were not Christian based have gone out in sympathy and empathy to help the world, and they have done a lot of good. That cannot be forgotten. Programs of foreign aid, domestic attempts to alleviate poverty -- yes, there have been many failures. But not all of us who tried failed because we did not first convert people to Christ. A lot of progress has been made by non-Christians, but even for them these lessons are good.

This book can help you understand how to be an effective doer of the Word and not just a hearer. It clearly shows you ways to help others without harming them, by not focusing solely on financial quick fixes but by sacrificing our own precious time in getting to know other individuals and communities so that we can understand their capabilities and help them employ those capabilities to alleviate their own communities' needs and problems. This book is not about how to "fix" the materially poor. Its about how we can walk together, asking God to fix us both. It explains how the typical provider-recipient dynamic can harmfully affirm the provider's sense of superiority and the

recipient's sense of inferiority. Its also very encouraging by pointing out things like the explosive growth of christianity in Africa in predominantly poor communities. (I love how this book recognizes that the fall really happened and that it is wreaking havoc in all of our lives.)

Very insightful book on the pros and cons of the traditional methodology for helping the poor. It offers alternatives to 'giving' that are designed to help the community climb out of their hole rather than just letting them dig deeper and become buried. Primary emphasis is on long term organizations and programs both here in the US and abroad. From a short term mission perspective, especially where the local language is not spoken, the book provided great insights into potential problems and perhaps ways in which we might influence the people on the ground but has left me wondering what I can do differently when I go overseas to support a local missionary. Overall a good read. This is a must read for all social workers and politicians involved in helping the poor.

I recommend this book as a requirement for ALL short term and long term teams who's goal and ambition is to care for the 'needy', the 'poor' and those experiencing hardships of any kind. I especially like the way the author has the readers examine their own thoughts and actions at the forefront of each chapter and then reevaluate at the end of each chapter. He not only gives gives very tangible examples through stories of others who have learned from their mistakes, but gives concrete examples of how to move forward in a healthy and more productive way. My singles group studied this book together, making learning and application very interesting and fun.

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