



Life Group Guide

A GUIDE FOR LIFE GROUPS, FAMILIES OR INDIVIDUAL STUDY



SCAN TO
ACCESS LG
VIDEOS

THOUGHTS WHEN READING PROVERBS

1. *No one saying in Proverbs gives a complete picture. "Only all together do the proverbs bring us a wise, nuanced, theologically-rich, many-faceted view of the world." (Tim Keller)*
2. *Read Proverbs in light of Christ and His character.*
3. *Questions to ask yourself:*
 - ▶ *Where in my life or the life of another have I seen this illustrated?*
 - ▶ *How can I put what I've read into practice – in thought, attitude, word or deed?*
4. *How can this passage shape my prayer back to God?*

PROVERBS SERMON SERIES | SUNDAY, NOV. 14

KNOWING WHAT'S TRULY IMPORTANT

BASED ON THESE READINGS

Proverbs 1:19, 3:27, 11:25, 12:11, 13:11, 14:21, 22:9, 22:26-27, 27:23-24 | Luke 12:27-34

*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.
Proverbs 9:10*

WATCH VIDEO

OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we seek to be on a never-ending journey to knowing what is truly important to you. By your grace and through the power of the Holy Spirit, we ask that you produce generosity in us through "this kind of Fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control." We "belong to Christ Jesus and [want to nail] the passions and desires of [our] sinful natures to his cross and crucify them there. ... let us follow the Spirit's leading in every part of our lives" (Galatians 5:23-24,25b). In your Son's name, we pray. Amen.

CONNECTING QUESTION

If the Lord gave you a million dollars to distribute anonymously, to whom would you give it and why?

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. Define generosity. What is the opposite of generosity? Why is it important to understand both definitions?
2. How would you describe a generous person? What makes them generous? Are there some differences in your group as to how others describe this?
3. What role does the amount of money, wealth, and possessions play in being generous? Could a person

substitute donating time or skills for monetary gifts? Why or why not?

4. Paul wrote a letter to Philemon, who likely was a wealthy member of the Colossian church, requesting he show kindness to his runaway slave, Onesimus – to forgive him and restore their relationship in Christian brotherhood. "...I am praying that you will put into action the generosity that comes from your faith as you understand and experience all the good things we have in Christ" (vs. 7). There is no record of a response from Philemon. What were some of the options he had in responding? What do you think his response might have been?
5. Read 2 Corinthians 9:1-5. Why did Paul tell them to be ready? How do those verses encourage us to be more cheerful givers that demonstrate God's generous provisions?
6. Jesus said, "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Luke 12:34). What do you think Jesus' definition of treasure is? What is the impact on your heart if you consider yourself a steward of the treasure the Lord has given you rather than the owner?
7. The Proverbs are meant to be a guide for living real-life in a wise and godly way. Eugene Peterson, when introducing this book in *The Message* said, "'Wisdom' is the biblical term for this on-earth-as-it-is-in-heaven everyday living. Wisdom is the art of living skillfully in whatever actual conditions we find ourselves." What attributes did Proverbs emphasize as truly important? What examples of wisdom will you pay more attention to in your daily walk with Jesus?

FOLLOWING JESUS

"A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed" (Proverbs 11:25 NIV). (Read related verses: Isaiah 32:2, John 3:5, 4:10, 7:38, Revelation 7:17, 21:6.)

Generosity is a state of mind, the condition of the heart, an authentic desire to live in community, and a faithful investment to be more like Jesus. It can be demonstrated through emotional-relational support, giving of gifts or presents, extending hospitality in showing kindness and acceptance, volunteering, and/or financially donating to help others. Write a personal generosity plan on how you want to serve others using your S.H.A.P.E. (spiritual gifts, heart, abilities, personality, experiences), all for God's glory. Make a commitment to initiate it and follow through.

CLOSING PRAYER

"Even at the level of common sense, we feel the most rich when we most love and are loved. Radical generosity is an act of love toward God and toward others that exponentially increases love. ... The more we give away, the more like our God we become. And that is blessed" (Timothy Keller). Ask the Lord through the power of his Spirit to transform your heart into a radically generous heart that tenaciously and tangibly loves Jesus and his flock in amazing ways.

Our Father...

THE FIVE EXPRESSIONS OF GENEROSITY

- **Monetary Giving:** Donating or giving financial resources
- **Service/Volunteering:** The act of helping another through volunteerism
- **Hospitality:** Openness, welcome, unqualified acceptance, kindness towards another
- **Gifts:** Non-financial presents (e.g. giving a book, purchasing a meal)
- **Emotional-Relational Support:** "Being there" for someone

FIVE WISE BIBLICAL FINANCIAL PRINCIPLES

1. **Spend Less Than You Earn.** Money is not the master; money is simply stored to service or love.
2. **Be Wise with Debt.** Debt is dangerous because it can make you its master and it limits future options.
3. **Build Margin and Protect Yourself Against Setbacks.** Building financial margin is the key to meeting long-term goals and financial freedom.
4. **Have Long-Term Goals.** Long-term goals give you direction and are key to identifying short-term priorities.
5. **Live Generously.** You can't afford not to tithe. Tithing is a test of your trust.

ORDER OF SPENDING

THE CULTURAL ORDER OF SPENDING TENDS TO BE:

1. **Live** – lifestyle spending
2. **Owe** – pay down debt & taxes
3. **Grow** – save for the future
4. **Give** – if there is anything left

THE BIBLICAL ORDER OF SPENDING IS MORE LIKE:

1. **Give** – give your first fruits (Proverbs 3:9)
2. **Grow** – save for future expenditures (build financial margin)
3. **Owe** – pay off debt and taxes
4. **Live** – live on the rest

THREE-FOLD CHALLENGE FOR YOU TO CONSIDER

1. Align your finances with the 5 Biblical Financial Principles.
2. Reorder how you spend money through a Spending Plan.
3. Document a giving plan...
 - ▶ in spousal/family unity.
 - ▶ stretch your imagination – you serve a big God, one that will meet all your needs.
 - ▶ give first to your church as the bible says, and then go from there.