

Get Smart: A Study in Proverbs

Growth Group Leader's Supplement

Study 2: Dollars and Sense

Growth Point Insights

Questions are always guidelines. Never feel obligated to cover every one. Always put a stress on participation. If someone has a different question, by all means pursue it.

Devotional Seed:

The devotional seed is intended to stimulate conversation as an introduction to the discussion.

Deeper Roots

These questions are intended to promote study and deepen understanding.

1. Would you say that Proverbs has a mostly positive or mostly negative perspective about wealth and prosperity? What about its perspective on poverty?

Wealth does seem to be preferred to poverty, but wealth is not better than everything. There is also a definite suspicion towards wealth in that it can be a distraction to deeper values.

Consider comparing mark 10:17-31 which reveals Jesus' teaching on wealth.

2. What do you think is meant by Proverbs 10:22; "The blessing of the LORD brings wealth, and he adds no trouble to it." (Compare this verse to Proverbs 15:6)

The implication is that wealth gained in improper ways will come mixed with trouble. For instance gambling may produce addiction, theft may bring punishment, greed and stinginess may turn off friends. There are many ways to get wealthy, but some ways will bring other troubles. I like Proverbs 11:16.

3. Should wise living lead to wealth?

Proverbs makes a definite connection between wise living and prosperity. At the same time remember that Proverbs are not guarantees or promises. They speak about the way life usually works, but there will be exceptions.

4. According to Proverbs what things are more valuable than wealth

This can be answered by surveying the Proverbs listed in the notes.

5. Does Proverbs say anything about gambling? Is gambling dishonest gain?

This may create a lively debate, because nothing is directly said about gambling in Proverbs. There is no clear connection that this is dishonest gain. Of course gambling may say something about our attitude to wealth. It may reveal misplaced priority or the love of money. Proverbs 13:11 does give an indication that Proverbs favors working for our money. Proverbs 15:16 may cast a light on this subject.

6. Is there a connection between God blessing us with wealth and the way in which we use that wealth? What kind of person does God trust with wealth.

Proverbs 8:18-21 suggests that wealth is associated with wisdom

Proverbs 19:17, 22:9 and 22:16 make a connection between generosity and wealth suggesting that God will trust wealth to those who use it wisely.

Consider looking also at Luke 19:11-27 where God commends those who make wise use the resources in which God entrusted them.

Consider also 2 Corinthians 9:6-15, where generosity is an investment to God's glory.

Bearing Fruit

These questions are designed to be a little more personal and application oriented. Use these questions to focus more on sharing. It helps if as a leader, you are willing to share your life with the group.

Branching Out

Each month your group will be asked to focus some time on outreach and service. Plan to spend some time planning and thinking about how your group can reach out together. We will use this space to help your group integrate with the larger outreach efforts of the church.