

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

FOR FAITHFULLY FOLLOWING JESUS THROUGH YOUR WEEK

DINNER TIME DISCUSSION:

Where have you witnessed God's generosity in Scripture? Are there stories or parables that come to mind? Share a few from memory and then actually read the passages from Scripture. What does God's generosity tell us about who He is? How should we live in light of that?

DEVELOPING DISCIPLINES:

What does giving and generosity look like in your life? Spend some time looking back on the practice of tithing, giving, and generosity in your life. Ask the Lord to soften your heart and make you obedient and responsive to the Holy Spirit's promptings.

GOSPEL IN EVERYDAY LIFE :

Tend the soil of your heart's love for Jesus. Make a list of some of the riches you have in Christ and let this grow a desire to share the good news of Jesus with people who are part of your daily life.

PRACTICING PRAYER:

As you think about spiritual growth in the coming year, consider using the "Daily Psalm" guide that provides one psalm to read and pray through each day. Printed copies are available at the Information Center.

RESOURCES

[Money and Possessions in Proverbs](#) from TGC



To be a Christ centered community helping people faithfully follow Jesus both locally and globally.

Leader Resource Guide

Date: January 5, 2025

Whose It Is



OPENER QUESTIONS FOR BUILDING COMMUNITY

What's a material possession that you treasure?

What gifts have you received in the past that you thought were the coolest thing possible at the time that you now look back on with a sense of humor of their passing value?

NOTES

STUFF IS NOT PERMANENT

STUFF IS NOT YOURS

STUFF HAS A PURPOSE

STUFF'S PURPOSE IS HIS PURPOSE, NOT OURS

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR FOSTERING CHRIST CENTERED COMMUNITY

1. Think back on the year and your interaction with Scripture. While holding the gentle and gracious nature of our God alongside a desire to grow in His image through His Word, what worked? What didn't work? What would you like this year to look like in terms of your engagement in the Word?
2. Orient your hearts toward God at the beginning of this year and this time together by reading Psalm 90. "So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom." v. 12 Consider 2025 as a "talent" given to you to steward. Where do you need wisdom to make the most of the days that the Lord has entrusted to you? What work is God establishing for you in the year ahead?

Help guide your group to see that "work" is not simply a job that occupies our time, but the work that God does to transform us into the image of Jesus. This may lead into a fruitful discussion about spiritual habits and practices that are helpful in forming us into the image of Christ.

Use this time to listen well to one another and encourage one another to make the most of this year, for God's glory, His purposes, and to bring blessing to the people and places that make up your days.

3. Look to Scripture for wisdom about stuff. Use your concordance and/or reference Bible to visit some passages that address money and possessions. Take your time to search out God's heart and generosity found in Scripture. Use what you've found in Scripture to draw out a group consensus for how to wisely handle our "stuff".

Words to look for: generous, rich(es), poor, gain, wealth, give, profit, contentment... let these words lead you to passages that you can then find more words to chase!

Some NT passages to consider: Matthew 6:19-24; 1 Timothy 6:6-11, 17-19; Luke 12:13-48.

[This article](#) from the Gospel Coalition helps navigate and synthesize some of what you'll find in Proverbs.

4. Read Matthew 25:14-30, the parable of the talents. In broad terms, what is happening in this parable? What is the response of the three servants? What is the master's response to each servant? What adjectives are used to describe each servant? Is there a 'main idea' you can draw from this quick study of the passage? How does this inform how you will live today? Everyday?

Notes from the ESV Study Bible:

v. 20-23 "The master's identical statements of praise to both servants show that what was important was not the total amount earned but faithfulness in utilizing their gifts and potential."

v.29 "Using one's God-given abilities wisely and productively is a vital aspect of discipleship and will be rewarded with additional opportunities to serve God faithfully and fruitfully."

5. Consider 2025 a talent entrusted to you. How do you plan to invest this gift?

If you have not yet had conversations about bringing intentionality to your spiritual walk, this may be a time to resource your group or have those conversations. Below, you'll find resources for you to consider:

- [Here is the resource](#) used at the end of 2024 that serves as an archive of past years' spiritual growth planning resources.

*[This Rule of Life Builder](#) from *Practicing the Way* is a resource some from our lead team have been using and appreciating.*

-Another option is to sign up to take the "Faithful Habits" class together (the next core class at Woodlands; watch for more information on this class next week).

6. A new quarter of Woodlands in the Word is ready! You can pick up a printed copy at the Information Center or find it published online here. We're starting this year in the gospel of Matthew: read Matthew 1-5 next week. The sermon passage is yet to be determined.