



### **Learner's Guide**

Each week in this study has 5 main points. Each point is supported by Scripture, explored with questions, and sealed through prayer prompts. This is a SIGNIFICANT amount of content. Our encouragement to you is to review the Scripture and the questions thoroughly in preparation for the group meeting. Also provided in the document are prayer prompts to accompany your study. You, the learner, will grow in contentment and generosity if you commit yourself to prayerful study of this content and engage eagerly with your small group. Enjoy!

## **Week 2 – God prospers me so that I can raise my standard of *giving*, not my standard of *living***

### **1. My heart always 'follows the treasure'.**

\*Scripture to read: Matthew 6:19-21 – Use your own Bible to read these instructions from Jesus.

#### **\*Questions to answer**

- What negative command does Jesus give in this text? What positive command?
- What becomes of treasure 'stored' on earth? Have you experienced similar outcomes with earthly investment?
- What becomes of treasure stored in heaven?
- Examine your 'treasure chest' – Is it overpopulated with short-term (earth-bound) investments? If so, what does that say about your heart's ultimate affection?

### **2. Are you living for the 'Dot' or the 'Line'?**

**Dot** (My life here)



**Line** (My life in eternity)

\*Scripture to read  
James 4:13-14

<sup>13</sup> Now listen, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.” <sup>14</sup> Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes.

**\*Questions to answer**

- According to James, how far into the future does our knowledge take us?
- What are the characteristics of a mist? How can a mist be compared to your life?
- Do you tend to focus more on this ‘mist’ of a life or life in eternity? Is a personal lens adjustment needed?

**3. The proper use of financial resources.**

\*Scripture to read: 2 Corinthians 9:6-15 – Use your own Bible to read this vital instruction from the Apostle Paul.

**\*Questions to answer**

- In verse 6, what does Paul tell us to remember? Explain what this means.
- Fill in the blank as a restatement of v.7: “The giver that God loves is one who has made a \_\_\_\_\_ decision about financial generosity.” The answer? “Heart”. The language of Paul’s writing (Greek) defines ‘heart’ this way: ‘mind, character, inner self, will, intention, center.’ Would you say that your giving decisions are formulated through these ‘Heart’ attributes?
- In verse 8, what does Paul say is the purpose God’s material blessing? Hint: Look for the ‘so that...’.
- In verse 11, find another ‘so that...’. What is God able to do ‘so that’? What responsibilities of ours flow from what God is able to do?
- Now summarize verses 12-15. What are the outcomes of our obedience (v.13) in the use of financial resources?

**4. The trouble with having the most...**

\*Scripture to read: Ecclesiastes 5:10-15 – Use your own Bible to read King Solomon’s (the absolute richest man in the world at the time) description of money woes.

**\*Questions to answer**

- In verse 10, what ‘vanity’, or meaninglessness, does Solomon describe? Do you suffer from this affliction?
- In verse 11, what ‘advantage’ is there in increasing possessions?
- In verse 12, why do you think the rich can’t sleep?
- In verses 13-14, describe what happened to the rich who held tightly to riches.

-A restatement of verse 15: "No matter how hard you work to gain worldly wealth, you won't leave this world with it." If we can't leave with wealth, what can we do with it? One possible answer- "Send riches ahead!"

**5. A case study in 'Affluenza' (Affluenza is the spiritual virus of obsession with wealth and possessions)**

\*Scripture to read: Luke 12:13-21 – Use your own Bible to read Jesus' story of the Rich Fool.

**\*Questions to answer**

- Read through the story of the Rich Fool once. What are some 'big ideas' of the story?
- In verse 15, what does Jesus warn us to 'watch out' for? What does Jesus say is not a valid measuring stick for evaluating our lives?
- In verse 16, can you relate to the 'bigger, more and mine' mindset of the fool? Are you currently in pursuit of 'bigger, more and mine'? If so, why?
- In verses 16-20, is the fool living for the dot or the line? (See day 2 for this week for the 'dot and 'line' illustration). What are the outcomes of the fool's life vision?
- In verse 21 Jesus captures the reason the man is a fool - "This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God." Any personal application here?
- Jesus does not use this story as a warning against having wealth. So, what then is the purpose of the story?

**\*Prayer prompts from Week 2:**

- "Father, give me spiritual eyesight to see the value of eternal investing. Amen."
- "Father, I know this life is a brief mist. Give me the courage to act on that knowledge. Amen."
- "Father, I want to give cheerfully, I want to sow abundantly, I want to be a blessing with the blessings you provide. Thank you for the opportunity to participate in the work of your Kingdom. Amen."
- "Father, remind me that the one who dies with with most toys still dies, and leaves all the toys behind. Amen."
- "Father, examine my heart for the Affluenza virus. Please allow me a growing desire for being rich toward YOU. Amen."