



ONE

DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

WEEK 8 - DAY 1

SCRIPTURE: Proverbs 11:25

“A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.”

OBSERVATION:

Solomon, the author of the Book of Proverbs was given the option of riches, power, or anything imaginable, but instead asked for wisdom. God generously gave this to him and through the practice of consistently applying wisdom, Solomon became incredibly wealthy and powerful. In fact, it was a common occurrence that leaders from all over the world would request an audience with Solomon in order to gain insight and get his opinion on the challenges they were facing. Solomon knew the truth of this proverb as his lifestyle of generosity led to prosperity and abundant living.

APPLICATION:

Our capacity for generosity begins to take shape when we use the many gifts God has given us. Some of us encourage others, some of us love others and some of us serve others. God knows what our gifts are and He wants us to discover them so that we can bless others. When you live your life in a generous manner, it refreshes and energizes those around you. The purpose of God giving us gifts is to bless others. If you had unlimited resources, what would you love to give away and be super generous with?

PRAYER:

Heavenly Father, please continue to reveal the gifts You've given me so that I may be generous to others. Thank You for making me unique. Please give me the courage to refresh others. Please give me a generous heart so that I can give away what I have, knowing that You will always resupply me.

ONE

DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

WEEK 8 - DAY 2

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 25:14-25

“Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them. To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. The man who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and gained five bags more. So also, the one with two bags of gold gained two more. But the man who had received one bag went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money.”

OBSERVATION:

This parable demonstrates how people can use their God-given talents. We all are given talent, but how we use it is what makes all the difference. God entrusts us with gifts and expects us to utilize them faithfully. The parable demonstrates how people can either grow and flourish in their gifts or let them fade and atrophy from lack of use and development. God doesn't micromanage our gifts. He gives us gifts and, like the Master in the story, He doesn't hover but steps back hoping we will be faithful enough to use them well.

APPLICATION:

Our gifts are like muscles. If we use and train them regularly, they grow stronger and more capable. If we simply lie in bed, our muscles will atrophy and we will become weaker and weaker. God wants us to train and practice using our gifts. At the beginning we may feel weak and uncoordinated, but as time goes on we will become more comfortable and able to execute our gifts better. God wants us to recognize that He has given us talents and then use those talents to bless others. When we strive to make ourselves better, we can help make others' lives better. What area of your life would you like to get better in? How could you grow in that area? How could you use that growth to make others' lives better?

PRAYER:

Thank You God for making me talented. Please continue to show me how to use my talents. Lord, help me faithfully grow and exercise the talents You have given me so that I can bless others.



ONE

DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

WEEK 8 - DAY 3

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 90:12

“Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.”

OBSERVATION:

This psalm is derived from the words and experiences of Moses as he was leading the Israelites to the promised land. The brevity of life is the most daunting realization second only to the great length of eternity. Without the proper perspective people tend to live in either tremendous fear or unrestrained immorality. Hebrews 9:27 tells us that “...people are destined to die once, and after that to face judgment.” The truth is that even though we have a limited number of days God still has a great purpose for our life and wants us to live it out freed from any chains or crippling fears. To do this we have to submit our fears to God and trust God’s purpose is good for us and glorifies Him.

APPLICATION:

When we are young it is very challenging to measure a lifetime because it seems so far away. As we age, days, months, and years seem shorter and shorter. Learning how to number our days requires complete submission to God’s plan for our lives. What are some of the days or moments you wish you could take back? How can you start today to walk better in the wisdom God has given you?

PRAYER:

Lord, thank You for working in my heart, and helping me gain wisdom. Please show me and continue to guide me in the plans that You have for my life. Show me how to number my days so that I can live each day walking in Your will and not wasting time. God help me to live out the purpose You have for my life.



ONE

DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

WEEK 8 - DAY 4

SCRIPTURE: John 6:9-11

“Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?’ Jesus said, ‘Have the people sit down.’ There was plenty of grass in that place, and they sat down (about five thousand men were there). Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish.”

OBSERVATION:

Jesus had just crossed the Sea of Galilee and crowds of people began to form because they had heard of the many miracles He had performed. Jesus was trying to take His disciples on something similar to a retreat where they could be refreshed after their recent preaching tour (Mark 6:7-13). Yet, the crowds still found them. Jesus used the moment to bless the people and strengthen His disciples. Even though the disciples had been with Jesus for a while, they were still in the habit of only thinking about the immediate physical world and not the bigger spiritual picture. The disciples could not get past the logistics of feeding 5,000 families, and Jesus used a small child and his sack lunch to build up the faith of His followers.

APPLICATION:

Our resources are more than enough when we turn them over to Jesus. He will always provide when we give our resources to Him. It can be easy to think that the gifts and resources we have aren't good enough or even remotely helpful. Something of little value in our eyes can be exactly what another person may need. Jesus takes what we have and uses it to bless others. Think of a time where God used you to bless others. How can you make your gifts and talents more available for God to use?

PRAYER:

Thank You God for all of the many resources You have provided for me. Please align my heart with Yours so I may use these resources to glorify you. Break the barriers I have put in place that keep me from using my resources to bless others. Help me to recognize that every resource, talent, and gift You have given me can be used by You.



ONE

DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

WEEK 8 - DAY 5

SCRIPTURE: 1 Timothy 6:18

“Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share.”

OBSERVATION:

Nearing the end of his letter to Timothy, Paul compares physical riches with spiritual riches. There is great danger in trying to find value and purpose in the material world. Paul explains that chasing riches will never leave us satisfied. If we desire true contentment, we will only find it through the pursuit of God. Earlier, Paul counseled not to be arrogant or put hope in wealth which is uncertain. Rather, he encouraged putting hope in God who richly provides us with everything we need. Paul asked the church to be rich in good deeds because the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil (v.10). The danger is not in money or material possessions, but in the way these items can become an idol in our hearts. God blesses us so we can bless others, but if we focus on the gift and not the Giver, we will never develop a heart of generosity.

APPLICATION:

“Greed is the enemy of the heart” - Andy Stanley. Our generosity should flow out of the truth that God has been extremely generous with us. How can we fight the desire to be greedy in our lives? Think of the most generous person you know. What habits do they have in place to help them stay this way? No one as a child plans on being stingy and known as a miser. Yet somehow scores of people end up living life with a clenched fist instead of an open hand. God wants us to trust Him enough that whatever resource or gift we have, we can gladly give it away knowing this pleases God and He will provide all that we need. What habit can you put in place that will enable you to live more generously and willingly give away what you have?

PRAYER:

Thank You Father for the many resources You have blessed me with. Please continue to work in my heart so I can be generous and serve others with these riches. Help me to know that I am rich because I am a child of God. Help me to store treasure in heaven by being rich in good deeds.