

## 1 **Ten Biblical principles about money and wealth**

- 1  A survey of Scripture
- 2 
  1. God owns everything and we are His stewards
  2. Worship and trust God rather than money
  3. Beware of the love of money
  4. God cares how we manage our money
  5. Honor God by faithfully giving of our income
  6. Develop a lifestyle which creates margin
  7. Cultivate a generous heart and live sacrificially
  8. Care for the poor, weak, oppressed, and needy
  9. Use wealth to glorify God and build treasure in heaven
  10. Pursue the true riches rather than material wealth

## 2 **The Bible reveals God's deep concern and protective care for the poor and needy**

### 3 **The underlying theme of this seminar**

- 1  God wants our heart
- 2  •The purpose of my instruction is that all believers would be filled with love that comes from a pure heart, a clear conscience, and genuine faith. 1 Timothy 1:5 (NLT)
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### 4 **Principle #8. Care for the poor, the weak, the oppressed, and the needy**

- 1  Outline
- 2  •Key Bible passages
  - The continuum of wealth
  - Who are the needy?
  - 5 biblical truths about poverty
  - God's special relationship with the poor
  - 46 blessings God gives freely to all
  - 6 scriptural warnings against mistreatment of the poor
  - 20 excuses for mistreating the poor
  - 6 responsibilities that Christians have towards the poor
  - 10 responsibilities the poor have towards themselves
  - 17 strategies for achieving poverty ->

### 5 **Key Bible passages**

- 2  •Those who oppress the poor insult their Maker, but helping the poor honors him. Proverbs 14:31
- Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the

world. James 1:27

•Listen, my dear brothers: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him?  
James 2:5

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## 6 **The continuum of wealth**

1  Poverty to riches

2  •Wealth may be thought of as a continuum from poverty to riches

•The wealth of every person on earth falls somewhere on this line

•At the left end of the line is utter destitution or extreme poverty

3B people live on less than \$2.50/day (Rs165). Here we may put a blind beggar or the people to whom Mother Teresa ministered.

•The right end represents unfathomable riches possessed by few Americans Jeff Bezos (\$109B), Bill Gates (\$124B; computers) to name two (2023) ->

## 7 **Who are the needy?**

### 8 **The needy**

1  A partial list

2  •Poor

•Weak

•Hungry

•Homeless

•Abused

•Misused

•Neglected

•Persecuted

•Oppressed

•Sick

•Unjustly imprisoned

•Social outcasts

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## 9 **Five important truths about poverty**

### 10 **1. Realize that it is God who ultimately decides our financial strength**

2  •The LORD makes some poor and others rich; he brings some down and lifts others up.  
1 Samuel 2:7-8 (NLT)

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### 11 **2. God may have a redemptive purpose in visiting poverty on us**

2  •To humble us

- To teach us to trust him for our needs
- To let us bear the consequences of our own decisions and actions
- To teach us gratitude for what we have (or had)
- To test the genuineness of our faith
- To bring him glory through our lives in spite of our circumstances
- There may be other reasons
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12  **3. God's is able to lift us out of dependency on others**

- 2 •The LORD makes some poor and others rich; he brings some down and lifts others up. He lifts the poor from the dust and the needy from the garbage dump. He sets them among princes, placing them in seats of honor. For all the earth is the LORD's, and he has set the world in order. 1 Samuel 2:7-8 (NLT)
- In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers, to keep away from every brother who is idle and does not live according to the teaching you received from us. For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. We were not idle when we were with you, nor did we eat anyone's food without paying for it. On the contrary, we worked night and day, laboring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you. We did this, not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to make ourselves a model for you to follow. For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: "If a man will not work, he shall not eat." We hear that some among you are idle. They are not busy; they are busybodies. Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the bread they eat. 2 Thessalonians 3:6-12

13  **4. God wants his people to care for the poor and needy**

- 2 •"No, this is the kind of fasting I want: Free those who are wrongly imprisoned; lighten the burden of those who work for you. Let the oppressed go free, and remove the chains that bind people. Share your food with the hungry, and give shelter to the homeless. Give clothes to those who need them, and do not hide from relatives who need your help." Isaiah 58:6-7 (NLT)
- If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. 1 Timothy 5:8

14  **5. God may give grace to some to live modestly for the sake of the kingdom**

- 2 • For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich. 2 Corinthians 8:9
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15  **Questions for discussion**

- 2 •Does the biblical worldview regarding poverty differentiate between the believer and

unbeliever? Are they to be treated differently or the same? In what ways are our responsibilities to these two classifications of people similar and in what ways are they different?

- What other purposes may God have in visiting poverty, affliction, and suffering on people besides those we discussed?

- Have you known wealthy people who voluntarily lived a very simple lifestyle so they could use their abundance of resources for the sake of the kingdom?

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16  **God has a special relationship with the poor**

1 10 scriptural teachings which reveal his heart

17  **1. God honors them**

2 •The brother in humble circumstances ought to take pride in his high position. James 1:9

- He raises the poor from the dust and lifts the needy from the ash heap; he seats them with princes, with the princes of their people. Psalm 113:7-8

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18  **2. God defends them and will punish those who rob or crush them**

2 •Do not rob the poor, because he is poor, or crush the afflicted at the gate, for the LORD will plead their cause and rob of life those who rob them. Proverbs 22:22-23 (ESV)

- Those who shut their ears to the cries of the poor will be ignored in their own time of need. Proverbs 21:13 (NLT)

19  **3. God may give the poor believer a treasure of faith and a great inheritance**

2 •Listen, my dear brothers: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him? James 2:5

20  **4. God may give them special discernment**

2 •A rich man may be wise in his own eyes, but a poor man who has discernment sees through him. Proverbs 28:11

21  **5. They may experience deep joy and be very generous**

2 •Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. 2 Corinthians 8:2

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22  **6. God freely gives them all they need to satisfy their souls**

2 •“Is anyone thirsty? Come and drink— even if you have no money! Come, take your choice of wine or milk— it’s all free! Isaiah 55:1 (NLT)

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- 23  **7. Poor believers are also freely given the spiritual gifts of the Holy Spirit**
- 2 •When Simon saw that the Spirit was given when the apostles laid their hands on people, he offered them money to buy this power. "Let me have this power, too," he exclaimed, "so that when I lay my hands on people, they will receive the Holy Spirit!" But Peter replied, "May your money be destroyed with you for thinking God's gift can be bought! Acts 8:18-20 (NLT)
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- 24  **8. They will experience God's deliverance**
- 2 •For he will deliver the needy who cry out, the afflicted who have no one to help Psalm 72:12
- "Because of the oppression of the weak and the groaning of the needy, I will now arise," says the LORD. "I will protect them from those who malign them." Psalm 12:5
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- 25  **9. They are among those given full and free access to the True Riches**
- 2 •For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich. 2 Corinthians 8:9
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- 26  **10. They have all the money needed to inherit eternal life**
- Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift! 2 Corinthians 9:15 (NASB)
- For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith-- and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God--not by works, so that no one can boast. Ephesians 2:8-9
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- 27  **God's wonderful plan of salvation**
- 2 •Recognize that we are sinful and deserving of eternal punishment. Therefore we need God's forgiveness
- for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, Romans 3:23 (NIV)
- Believe that God sent us his only Son Jesus to pay the penalty for our sin through his death on the cross
- Turn from our sin and receive Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, trusting in him to make us righteous in God's sight through his redemptive sacrifice -->
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- 28  **We must place our faith in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior**
- 1 John 3:16
- 2 •"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16 (NIV)
- 29  **Assurance of salvation**
- 2 •\* And this is what God has testified: He has given us eternal life, and this life is in his

Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have God's Son does not have life. I have written this to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know you have eternal life.

•1 John 5:11-13 (NLT)

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30  **Quiz**

1 True or false

2 •We are to view the underclass as being under God's judgement and deserving of their circumstances

•No where in Scripture do we find instances of the poor being generous but in constant need of the help of others

•A type of fasting that God honors is when we relieve the suffering of the oppressed

•It is not possible for a poor person to experience true joy

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31  **46 Blessings God gives freely to all**

1 There are countless others

2 •His care for us

•Our health

•Ability to do good for others and share our lives

•Joy

•Contentment

•Trust in God

•A thankful heart

•Reading and meditating on God's word

•Righteous behavior

•Fruits of the spirit (love, joy, peace, etc)-->

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32  **46 Blessings (cont'd)**

2 •The joy of sharing the gospel

•Learning something new from teachers of God's truth

•Salvation

•Love for God

•God's love for us

•Love of others, including our parents, spouse children, and relatives

•Friends

•Warmth of the sun, the rain, fresh air

•The seasons

•Ability to dream, to plan, to create >

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33  **46 Blessings (cont'd)**

- 2  •Forgiveness, to forgive and be forgiven
- Hope for the future
- Gifts of the spirit
- Gift of the senses, such sight, smell, hearing, taste and feeling
- The ability to share with feeling, compassion, sorrow, and the pain of others
- The air we breath
- A pure conscience
- A good night's sleep
- The ability to walk, run >
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34  **46 Blessings (cont'd)**

- 2  •The ability to appreciate beautiful things
- Laughter
- The ability to bring joy to someone
- Inner peace
- The sound of children at play
- Watching a sunrise or sunset
- The aroma of fresh baked cookies
- The taste of fresh corn on the cob
- The smell of the forest after a rain
- The love of a spouse
- The sound of a waterfall >
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35  **46 Blessings (cont'd)**

- 2  •Strength of conviction
- Passion to excel
- Commitment
- Faithfulness
- Patience
- Integrity of heart
- Eternal life with Christ to all who trust him
- Others?
- ??? >
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36  **6 Scriptural warnings against mistreatment of the poor**37  **1. Discriminating against the poor is wrong**

- 2  •Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a

poor man in shabby clothes also comes in. If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, "Here's a good seat for you," but say to the poor man, "You stand there" or "Sit on the floor by my feet," have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? James 2:2-4

38  **2. The rich have the power to cause great harm to the poor and defenseless**

- But you have dishonored the poor man. Are not the rich the ones who oppress you, and the ones who drag you into court? Are they not the ones who blaspheme the honorable name by which you were called?

James 2:6-7 (ESV)

39  **3. To oppress the poor is to insult God**

- Whoever oppresses a poor man insults his Maker, but he who is generous to the needy honors him. Proverbs 14:31 (ESV)

40  **4. Withholding justice from the poor and needy is a great sin**

- Now listen, you rich people, weep and wail because of the misery that is coming upon you. Your wealth has rotted, and moths have eaten your clothes. Your gold and silver are corroded. Their corrosion will testify against you and eat your flesh like fire. You have hoarded wealth in the last days. Look! The wages you failed to pay the workmen who mowed your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord Almighty. James 5:1-4

41  **4. Withholding justice from the poor and needy is a great sin (cont'd)**

- "You shall not oppress a hired worker who is poor and needy, whether he is one of your brothers or one of the sojourners who are in your land within your towns. You shall give him his wages on the same day, before the sun sets (for he is poor and counts on it), lest he cry against you to the LORD, and you be guilty of sin. Deuteronomy 24:14-15 (ESV)

•"Do not twist justice in legal matters by favoring the poor or being partial to the rich and powerful. Always judge people fairly. Leviticus 19:15 (NLT)

42  **5. Ignoring, persecuting and shaming those who are suffering is wrong**

- You know how I am scorned, disgraced and shamed; all my enemies are before you. Scorn has broken my heart and has left me helpless; I looked for sympathy, but there was none, for comforters, but I found none. They put gall in my food and gave me vinegar for my thirst. May the table set before them become a snare; may it become retribution and a trap.

43  **5. Ignoring, persecuting and shaming those who are suffering is wrong (cont'd)**

- May their eyes be darkened so they cannot see, and their backs be bent forever. Pour out your wrath on them; let your fierce anger overtake them. May their place be



deserted; let there be no one to dwell in their tents. For they persecute those you wound and talk about the pain of those you hurt. Charge them with crime upon crime; do not let them share in your salvation. May they be blotted out of the book of life and not be listed with the righteous. Psa 69:19-28

44  **6. Mistreating the needy is condemned in Scripture**

- 2
- Profiting at their expense: Don't charge interest when you lend money to any of my people who are in need. Exodus 22:25 (CEV)
  - Compromising their dignity: "When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Do not go over your vineyard a second time or pick up the grapes that have fallen. Leave them for the poor and the alien. I am the LORD your God. Leviticus 19:9-10
  - Exploiting them: Do not exploit the poor because they are poor and do not crush the needy in court, Proverbs 22:22

45  **20 excuses for not helping the poor**

- 2
- They are lazy and despicable people who deserve poverty
  - They didn't properly manage what they had
  - I have no time to help them
  - I don't want them to become dependent on me
  - Government will take care of them
  - God will take care of them himself if they will just be patient
  - God has willed their poverty
  - If God is punishing them, I dare not interfere
  - If I help someone, he will just keep coming back for more handouts
  - If I help one, others will find out and I will be overwhelmed with appeals >

46  **Excuses, excuses**

- 2
- Everyone should earn their own living so I owe them nothing
  - I'm too busy today--maybe tomorrow
  - I have more important priorities for my money
  - They are responsible for taking care of themselves
  - Let them ask someone with more money than
  - It is not socially acceptable to help people who won't help themselves
  - We only have enough to care for ourselves
  - Their problems are not my concern
  - I earned my money and so should they
  - They didn't ask for help!
  - They are responsible for taking care of themselves

47  **Class discussion**

- 2 •Which of the preceding excuses will God accept for neglecting the poor and needy?  
 •How should we balance the needs of ourselves, our family, our church and our other priorities with helping the poor and needy?  
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48  **Quiz**

- 1 Multiple choice

- 2 •Three of the following statements are true of the poor. Which one is false?  
 •A. God has chosen some of the poor to be rich in faith  
 •B. The poor have all that's needed to truly enjoy life  
 •C. God despises the poor  
 •D. They are often oppressed by rich people  
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49  **6 responsibilities Christian's have to the poor**

- 1 The basic concept: Come alongside and help our neighbor in his time of need
- 2 •The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." Mark 12:31 (ESV)  
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50  **1. Treat the poor with respect**

- 2 •My brothers, as believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ, don't show favoritism. Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in shabby clothes also comes in. If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, "Here's a good seat for you," but say to the poor man, "You stand there" or "Sit on the floor by my feet," have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?

51  **2. Do not neglect them**

- 2 •There was a rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. And at his gate was laid a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man's table. Moreover, even the dogs came and licked his sores. Luke 16:19-21 (ESV)  
 •Don't let it be said of us that the dogs care more for the poor than we do.  
 •

52  **3. Care for them**

- 2 •"Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you

clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.' Matthew 25:34-36->

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### 53 **The church is to be a model of caring for the needy**

1 Especially widows and orphans

2 •Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world  
James 1:27

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### 54 **4. Be kind and generous to them**

2 •When you help the poor you are lending to the Lord--and he pays wonderful interest on your loan! Prov. 19:17 NLT

▪"When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Leave them for the poor and the alien. I am the LORD your God." Leviticus 23:22

▪Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. 1 Timothy 6:18

▪And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased. Hebrews 13:16

▪If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? 1 John 3:17 >

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### 55 **5. Lift them up and brighten their day**

1 As God does with us, make them feel special

2 •Then Jesus said to his host, "When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or relatives, or your rich neighbors; if you do, they may invite you back and so you will be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous." Luke 14:12-14

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### 56 **6. Rescue and defend them**

2 •"Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy." Proverbs 31:8-9

▪"Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke?  
Isaiah 58:6-7

▪Job was a friend to the needy >

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57  **Job rescued and defended the oppressed**

- 2  •Whoever heard me spoke well of me, and those who saw me commended me, because I rescued the poor who cried for help, and the fatherless who had none to assist him. The man who was dying blessed me; I made the widow's heart sing. I put on righteousness as my clothing; justice was my robe and my turban. I was eyes to the blind and feet to the lame. I was a father to the needy; I took up the case of the stranger. I broke the fangs of the wicked and snatched the victims from their teeth. Job 29:11-17
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58  **Our relationship to the underclass**

- 1  Summary
- 2  •Christians are admonished to
- Treat them with dignity and respect
  - Refrain from neglecting them; care for them instead
  - Rebuke those who are oppressing them
  - Rescue those who are being persecuted
  - Defend those who are being unfairly treated
  - Come alongside to love and help them as we have opportunity
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59  **Questions for discussion**

- 2  •In what ways is Job a model for us today? In what ways is he not a model for us?
- What are some simple and practical ways we can care for the needy beginning with our neighbor and extending globally?
  - What do you think of the idea of treating the needy to a special blessing, over and above what is expected?
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60  **Essay (15 minutes)**

- 2  • Compare and contrast the responsibilities the poor have for themselves with the responsibilities of the rich to care for them
- From a biblical perspective
  - From a societal perspective
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61  **Quiz**

- 1  True or false
- 2  •If we lend money to the poor brother in Christ, we should charge them a fair interest rate
- The poor have God as their defender
  - We should not neglect the needy if we can be of help

- Since God may be visiting poverty on him, we should not interfere by offering him help
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62  **Quiz**

1 True or false

- 2 • Three of the following statements are true of poor people. Which one is false?
- a. They may be given special discernment by God
  - b. They are admired and respected by wicked and ungodly people in the world
  - c. They may become rich in faith
  - d. God has blessed them with all that's needed to satisfy their soul

63  **10 responsibilities the poor have to themselves**

- 2 • Trust God as their protector and provider
- Practice Godly contentment
  - Take advantage of every opportunity to support themselves
  - Work hard
  - Honor God with their first-fruits
  - Learn to live sustainably with what they have
  - Avoid borrowing, gambling, or stealing
  - Seek godly counsel to try to improve their situation
  - Pray for God's wisdom
  - Seek the True Riches rather than monetary wealth

64  **17 strategies for achieving poverty**

1 Lifestyles which lead to poverty

65  **1. Be lazy**

- 2 • But you, lazybones, how long will you sleep? When will you wake up? A little extra sleep, a little more slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest— then poverty will pounce on you like a bandit; scarcity will attack you like an armed robber. Proverbs 6:9-11 (NLT)

66  **2. Chase fantasies and pursue worthless dreams**

- 2 • Whoever works his land will have plenty of bread, but he who follows worthless pursuits will have plenty of poverty. Proverbs 28:19 (ESV)

67  **3. Talk, talk, talk**

- 2 • Work brings profit, but mere talk leads to poverty! Proverbs 14:23 (NLT)

68  **4. Party, party, party**

- 2 •Work your garden—you'll end up with plenty of food; play and party—you'll end up with an empty plate. Proverbs 28:19 (MSG)

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69  **5. Be a drunkard or a glutton**

- 2 •Don't be a heavy drinker or stuff yourself with food. It will make you feel drowsy, and you will end up poor with only rags to wear. Proverbs 23:20-21 (CEV)

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70  **6. Live a life devoted to pleasure**

- 2 •Whoever loves pleasure will be a poor man; he who loves wine and oil will not be rich. Proverbs 21:17 (ESV)

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71  **7. Make hasty or reckless decisions**

- 2 •Good planning and hard work lead to prosperity, but hasty shortcuts lead to poverty. Proverbs 21:5 (NLT)

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72  **8. Ignore discipline and correction**

- 2 •He who ignores discipline comes to poverty and shame, but whoever heeds correction is honored. Proverbs 13:18

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73  **9. Don't make appropriate plans**

- 1 Take the road to nowhere

- 2 •"Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it? For if he lays the foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule him, saying, 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.' Luke 14:28-30

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74  **10. Live a sinful lifestyle**

- 2 •Therefore, I have begun to destroy you, to ruin you because of your sins. Micah 6:13

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75  **11. Commit fraud and deception**

- 2 •Therefore I will give their wives to other men and their fields to new owners. From the least to the greatest, all are greedy for gain; prophets and priests alike, all practice deceit. Jeremiah 8:10

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76  **12. Choose the wrong friends**

- 2 •He who walks with wise *men* will be wise, But the companion of fools will be destroyed. Proverbs 13:20 (NKJV)
- How well God must like you— you don't hang out at Sin Saloon, you don't slink along Dead-End Road, you don't go to Smart-Mouth College. Instead you thrill to GOD's Word, you chew on Scripture day and night. You're a tree replanted in Eden, bearing fresh fruit every month, Never dropping a leaf, always in blossom. You're not at all like the wicked, who are mere windblown dust— Without defense in court, unfit company for innocent people. GOD charts the road you take. The road *they* take is Skid Row. Psalm 1:1-6 (MSG)

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77  **13. Be stingy**

- 2 •One man gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty. A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed. Proverbs 11:24-25

78  **14. Dabble in get-rich-quick schemes**

- 2 •Greedy people try to get rich quick but don't realize they're headed for poverty. Proverbs 28:22 (NLT)

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79  **15. Obtain wealth by unjust means**

- 2 •Like a partridge that hatches eggs she has not laid, so are those who get their wealth by unjust means. At midlife they will lose their riches; in the end, they will become poor old fools. Jeremiah 17:11 (NLT)

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80  **16. Oppress the poor**

- 2 •A person who gets ahead by oppressing the poor or by showering gifts on the rich will end in poverty. Proverbs 22:16 (NLT)

81  **17. Bribe the rich**

- 2 •A person who gets ahead by oppressing the poor or by showering gifts on the rich will end in poverty. Proverbs 22:16 (NLT)

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82  **God's special relationship with the poor**

- 1 Summary

- 2 •God is the one who ultimately determines our financial status.
- God cares deeply about the poor, the needy, the abused, the oppressed, and the neglected.
- The underclass should be treated with dignity and respect. Christians have a responsibility to be kind and compassionate towards them, and to help them in their time of need.

- God has given the poor special gifts. Some have great wisdom and discernment. Some are very generous, some have great faith, and some have deep insight into people. Get to know them and, if possible, teach them to improve their lifestyle.

- Be sure to avoid strategies that lead to poverty, such as laziness or mistreating the poor.

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### 83 **God's special relationship with the poor**

1 Summary (cont'd)

2 ▪We should rebuke those who mistreat them and defend them against their oppressors.

- Don't let it be said that the dogs care more about the poor than we do.

- We should especially care for and defend our brothers and sisters who are widows and orphans, lifting them up.

- The poor have certain responsibilities to lift themselves out of poverty as much as they are able; we should help them become as independent as possible.

- We should not blame God if we fall into poverty through wrong choices and evil behavior.

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### 84 **Class discussion**

2 ▪What are some ways people become poor through no fault of their own?

- Can you tell the story of someone who chose poverty for the sake of the kingdom?

- Do you know someone who was poor but overcame their poverty? How did they do that?

- Describe some other ways Scripture warns us of how to become poor.

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### 85 **Ten Biblical principles about money and wealth**

1 A survey of Scripture

2 1. God owns everything and we are His stewards

2. Worship and trust God rather than money

3. Beware of the love of money

4. God cares how we manage our money

5. Honor God by faithfully giving of our income

6. Develop a lifestyle which creates margin

7. Cultivate a generous heart and live sacrificially

8. Care for the poor, weak, oppressed, and needy

9. Use wealth to glorify God and build treasure in heaven

10. Pursue the true riches rather than material wealth