

Title: Wisdom for Life: The Book of Proverbs, Pt 7: "Receive, Scatter, and Gather" – Proverbs 11:23-31

Big Idea: RECEIVE from God, SCATTER to others, and GATHER souls!

What in the message stood out to you?

What questions do you have?

1. Wisdom for Possessions – Proverbs 11:23-31

Read Proverbs 11:23-31. This section of Proverbs is about wisdom for possessions. Pastor Greg defined "possessions" as "all of our time, talents, resources, and belongings."

What are some of the contrasts in the outcome of the wise and foolish use of possessions in these verses?

2. The wise use of possessions begins with DESIRES – Proverbs 11:23

Read Proverbs 11:23 and Matthew 6:21. How does our use of possessions reflect our heart's desires?

Based on passages like the above and passages like Romans 14:23 ("For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin"), Pastor Greg defined "sin" as seeking happiness in someone or something other than God, and he defined "faith" as seeking happiness in God. In what ways have you seen this play out in your life or the lives of others?

3. The wise use of possessions TRUSTS IN and SERVES God – Proverbs 11:28

Read Proverbs 11:28 and Matthew 6:24. What do you think it means to "trust in riches" or to "serve money" instead of God?

Money is only one possible master other than God. What are some other "masters" that we can serve instead of God?

Read Matthew 6:19-20. What do you think it means to store up treasures on earth? What do you think it means to store up treasures in heaven? Why is one foolish and the other wise?

4. The wise use of possessions RECEIVES everything from God – Proverbs 11:30

Read Proverbs 11:30. Why do you think the wise use of possessions is called "fruit?"

Read John 15:5. Based on this verse, where does spiritual fruit come from? What do you think this fruit looks like?

What does it mean to "abide" in Jesus? What does it mean that apart from Him we can do nothing?

Read James 1:17. Where do all of our good possessions come from? What does this mean for how we should use them?

5. The wise use of possessions SCATTERS God's gifts to others – Proverbs 11:30

Read Proverbs 11:30 again. What does it mean that our fruit becomes a tree of life for others?

Read Proverbs 11:24. The word translated "give freely" is a single Hebrew word that literally means "to scatter." It carries the idea of spreading something far and wide. What does this suggest about how God wants us to use our possessions?

What does God promise in 11:24 to those who use their possessions to bear fruit for Him like this? How does 2 Corinthians 9:6-9 fill out your answer?

The point of God's blessing on those who scatter His gifts is made over and over again in Proverbs 11. Read 11:25, 11:26, 11:27, and 11:29. Share some thoughts and reactions to the promises of blessing or cursing in these verses.

Read John 15:5-6. What happens through those who abide in Jesus? What happens to those who do not abide in Him? Share some thoughts or reactions to this.

6. The wise use of possessions GATHERS souls! – Proverbs 11:30

Read Proverbs 11:30 again. What does it mean to "capture" a soul? Why is the person who does this wise?

Read John 10:15-16. How did Jesus use His possessions? What does this mean for those who follow Him?

"Next Steps" Takeaways – Discuss and pray through the following:

- With God:
 - Will you be honest with God about who or what you are trusting in for happiness?
 - Ask His forgiveness for trusting in anyone or anything other than Him.
 - Ask Him to prune any portions of your life that are unfruitful for Him.
 - Read Proverbs 11:31 and John 15:1-2.
- With Others:
 - Will you give regularly, cheerfully, and sacrificially to support the work of God through our church.
 - Read 2 Corinthians 9:6-8, Malachi 3:10, and Proverbs 11:28
- On Mission:
 - Will you scatter your time, talents, resources, and belongings to win souls for God?
 - Pray for lost people.
 - Serve lost people (hospitality & generosity).
 - Witness to lost people.