

## **Blessings and Curses**

### **Read Prov 21.13 and/or Prov 28.27**

13. What warning is given in these verses and what do you think it means? (We find a similar warning in some of Jesus' parables such as Lk 16.20-29.)

### **Read Prov 3.9-10 and/or Prov 19.17**

14. What promise is given in these verses and what do you think it means? Is it saying that giving is a good way to get rich in this life? (See also 2 Cor 9.6-7)

## **Pray**

- Pray for the CAP course and the work of Christians Against Poverty.
- Pray for St James school and for the work done with children and families where for various reasons there is need at home.
- Pray about the stresses and strains of our welfare system and for those caught out by recent changes. Pray that money would not be wasted or given to those who not in need and that those in genuine need would not miss out.
- Pray or the Summer Fair coming up (and Walking Day if it is not already past when you do this study).

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June 2015

## **Get Wisdom**

### **Week 6**



## **The Bountiful Eye**

*Traditionally Christian giving has been described as alms (given to the poor and needy) and oblations (for Christian ministry etc).*

*In the Old Testament there with commands to give and details about what should be given (a tithe, or a certain items to be offered). There are other commands to give without specifics (caring for poor etc). And there are freewill offerings which by their nature were given freely - though there is encouragement to give them, and not to be miserly.*

*Deuteronomy 12.6 lists some of giving that went on in the Tabernacle and later the Temple.*

*The New Testament does tell people to give both for Christian ministry (oblations) and the poor (alms) but there are no definite rules. In a way all Christian giving is therefore like the OT freewill offerings.*

### **Read Prov 3.9 (we will come back to verses 10 later).**

1. What sort of giving does this verse describe? How would someone in those days have honoured the Lord in this way?
2. Are there particular things we can do to honour the Lord in the same way?
3. Take a look at following two passages. What two things are the Scribes and Pharisees being criticised for? (There is possibly a third.)

### **Lk 18.11-14**

### **Mtt 23.23**

4. Is there any danger of us of falling into the same traps?

5. Does Jesus tell them they shouldn't tithe?

### **Read Prov 28.27**

6. How might people in those days have honoured the Lord in this way? What are the equivalents for us today?

### **Read James 2.15-16**

7. Do you think we are good as a church fellowship of being aware of those in need (whether of the sort of need described here or not)?

*In Britain today much of the care for the poor and needy is organised through taxes and the welfare state. In the past however, prior to the 1830s, it was mostly the responsibility of the local parish through alms giving and some local taxes. The change is partly the result of the shift from rural to urban life.*

8. At least a ninth of all government spending is on care for the poor and needy. Should we therefore see taxation as part of giving, or is that an excuse not to give as we should?

9. If you see taxes as part about giving then do you pay your taxes and fill out your tax return cheerfully? (See 2 Cor 9.7.)

10. Without getting too politically heated, do you think it is better to have higher taxes and more state organised care of the needy or lower taxes with more focus on voluntary giving and charities?

### **Read 2 Thess 3.10-11**

11. Is it fair to say from this passage, and what we saw when we looked at the sluggard in a previous study, that we should not give to those who refuse to help themselves?

12. Would you give money to someone who was in need but who you thought might use it to fuel a drink or drugs problem?