

Scripture	Your Observation & Questions
<p>22:9 A generous man will himself be blessed, for he shares his food with the poor.</p>	
<p>22:16 He who oppresses the poor to increase his wealth and he who gives gifts to the rich—both come to poverty.</p>	
<p>22:22 Do not exploit the poor because they are poor and do not crush the needy in court,</p>	
<p>22:23 for the LORD will take up their case and will plunder those who plunder them.</p>	
<p>28:3 A ruler who oppresses the poor is like a driving rain that leaves no crops.</p>	
<p>28:27 He who gives to the poor will lack nothing, but he who closes his eyes to them receives many curses.</p>	

The Book of Proverbs

Godly Wisdom for Everyday Life

SSBC Proverbs Bible Study # 44

Take this Bible Study home and use it to guide your exploration of the scripture passages that will be the basis of the sermon next week.

Topical Series: Wisdom Lived out in Community

This Week's Key Passage: Proverbs 14:31

Sermon Date: August 17, 2008

Care for the needy.

In 2 Kings 6:1-7 is a story about the great prophet Elisha and a small need. It seems that “the company of the prophets” had grown so large that they needed to go to the Jordan river for poles to build a larger building. The students asked Elisha to come along for support. They began work, cutting down trees to use for the building. As one of them was cutting down a tree, the iron axhead fell into the water. The young man who was using the ax exclaimed “Oh, my lord, it was borrowed!”

The man of God asked, “Where did it fall?” When he showed him the place, Elisha cut a stick, threw it into the water and made the iron axhead float!

This story is placed in 2 Kings between two large scale events: The international incident of Elisha healing Naaman, commander of the Aramean army, and Elisha's single-handed deliverance of Israel's army. God cares for the great concerns of his people as well as the small! This little story, tucked away here in the Bible, also commends Elisha's example of concern for his students. Even though he was a national figure holding court with kings, he never forgot to care about someone's ordinary need. Just as Elisha cared for others in time of need, so too must we.

1. Read this week's Bible passage and use the following charts to note your observations and any questions you have.
The first verse below is the key verse for this study. Keeping this verse in mind, read each of the subsequent verses and note how each provides further insight into the meaning of this key verse.

Scripture	Your Observation & Questions
<p>Key Verse Proverbs 14:31(NIV)</p> <p>14:31 He who oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honors God.</p> <hr/> <p>14:21 He who despises his neighbor sins, but blessed is he who is kind to the needy</p> <p>17:5 He who mocks the poor shows contempt for their Maker; whoever gloats over disaster will not go unpunished.</p> <p>19:17 He who is kind to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will reward him for what he has done.</p> <p>21:13 If a man shuts his ears to the cry of the poor, he too will cry out and not be answered.</p>	

2. Next, use this chart to interpret some key observations.

- a. From the chart on the previous pages, select a few of your observations & questions that you find most interesting or important. Rewrite these below, and then interpret and apply each of them using the columns to the right.
- b. For each observation, begin to interpret by asking yourself these kinds of questions:
 - What does it mean?
 - Why is this important?
 - What does this tell me about the Father? Jesus? The Holy Spirit?
 - Are there other scriptures that could help me understand this?

Observation What does it Say?	Interpretation What does it mean?

8. How do we make the time to care for the needy when our lives are so busy already? Do we have the wrong priorities in our lives?

9. How do you understand Proverbs 28:27? Do you think that this verse can be taken literally? If so, then why don't we practice it? If not, then how do we know when to stop extending care for someone in need?

10. How can you apply what you have learned in this study to your life this week?

Memory Verse

Proverbs 19:17

^{19:17} He who is kind to the poor lends to the LORD,
and he will reward him for what he has done.

3. Now consider how you can **apply** the Word to your life. Look for:

- ◆ **Sins** to avoid
- ◆ **Promises** to believe
- ◆ **Examples** to follow (remember "SPECK")
- ◆ **Commands** to obey
- ◆ **Knowledge** to share

Don't just write things to write them — listen carefully to God's Word and what he seems to be teaching you, and look for relevant things that you're truly stirred to do. Then as you do them, God will help will help you learn, grow, and help others grow.

Application How do I apply what it means?

4. Review this week's verses. Who are the needy and poor that we should be caring for? Consider Exodus 22:22-25, Exodus 23:9, Luke 6:34-35 and I John 3:17.

5. What are some thoughts and considerations that should arouse us to concern for the needy? Consider Matthew 25:31-46.

6. What are some ways people "care" for the needy? How do we determine when and in what way we should provide help or assistance to one in need?

7. How might the degree of blame a person bears for his own needy condition and situation affect how we assist him or her? Consider Proverbs 19:19; Luke 7:35-50

Are you one of the poor—the needy who require special care? Perhaps you have no urgent need for money or material goods. But what about needing a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ?

Many people in today's society are so busy and caught up in today's whirlwind lifestyle that they do not even stop to think about needing God in their lives. They do not realize that our every breath depends on the spirit that God has breathed into us. We not only depend on God for our very life, but he also loves us and wants the best for us.

You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.' But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see.

Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest, and repent. Revelation 3:17-19

Take this moment in time, right now and ask Jesus to come into your heart. Acknowledge your sins and turn to him—he will forgive you and make you truly "rich!"

These studies are produced by South Shore Baptist Church in conjunction with our weekly sermon series. Studies are distributed one week prior to the sermon and can be picked up from the table at the back of the sanctuary and are also posted at <http://sermonhouse.com/SSBC>.

Sermons are also recorded and can be listened to later by visiting that same website. Have feedback or questions? Contact studyeditor@southshorebaptist.com

*South Shore Baptist Church
578 Main Street, Hingham, MA 02043
(781) 749-2592*