

STUDY GUIDE TO ACCOMPANY THE AUDIO SERIES

*Five  
Things  
Every  
Christian  
Should Know*

**R.C. SPROUL**



LIGONIER MINISTRIES

*The Home of "Renewing Your Mind" with R.C. Sproul*

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# 1

## How to Study the Bible (part 1)

### MESSAGE INTRODUCTION

When we become Christians, God calls us to be the craftmanship of Jesus the Christ. To do this, we are given means of grace that nurture us into a fullness of conformity to the image of Christ. These five things are by no means all of the means of grace, but they are designed to facilitate spiritual maturity, and we must take advantage of them. Many of them are truly difficult to implement in life, but try we must, if we are to increase in faith as we are called to do. In today's lecture, Dr. R.C. Sproul discusses the first of the five things every Christian should know: how to study the Word of God.

### SCRIPTURE READING

2 Timothy 3

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To understand the importance God places on studying His Word.
2. To understand how studying the Bible facilitates spiritual maturity.

### MEMORY VERSES

*Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.*

2 Timothy 3:16–17

### LECTURE OUTLINE

- A. What the Bible says about studying God's Word
  1. 2 Timothy 3:12ff.: Saint Paul warns Timothy about imposters who deceive believers by perverting the truth. Christians need to be firmly grounded in Scripture to resist such deception.

2. Consider the source: what is the source of your information? Is it reliable? The apostle Paul exhorts Timothy to remember from whom he has learned. In like manner, if we are to grow in understanding of the things of God, we must study His Word; we must consider the source.
  3. Knowledge and wisdom: Knowledge alone benefits no one. Wisdom, or in biblical terms, the “fear of God,” is necessary to grow in faith, and it comes from the Scriptures (“able to make you wise,” 2 Tim. 3:15b).
  4. All the *graphe*: At the very least, Saint Paul is claiming that all the writings of the Old Testament are inspired by God. The New Testament writings are, of course, also included in this (see 2 Peter 3:14–16).
  5. “God-breathed”: This refers to God’s breathing out the very words of the Scriptures. The Bible has been “ex-pired” by God Himself, according to the apostle Paul. These divine words have been written by human authors inspired by the Holy Spirit.
- B. For what is the study of Scripture profitable?
1. Doctrine: the teachings of God’s Word. We must be worried about doctrine, for it instructs us, giving us the foundation for living unto God.
  2. Reproof: Even as Christians, we still need to be corrected. If we are to grow in faith, we need our sins revealed to us so that we may confess them. When studying Scripture, we find that we are the ones being subjected to it.
  3. Instruction in righteousness: for what end? So that we may be complete and competent, equipped for every good work.
  4. To be a Christian is to be a disciple, a learner of the teachings of Christ. We must discipline ourselves to study consistently the Word of God. If we are unable to do this on our own, then we must strive to put ourselves under the accountability of others. This will help us grow.

#### **STUDY QUESTIONS**

1. When we become Christians, what one thing from the following list is certain?
  - a. Financial stability
  - b. Mended relationships
  - c. Persecution
  - d. Physical well-being

2. Discerning the deception of imposters is accomplished by \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. waiting for the Holy Spirit to speak to you
  - b. studying God's Word
  - c. reading the right books
  - d. gaining knowledge
3. I can have knowledge without wisdom.
  - a. True
  - b. False
4. Which of the following comes as a result of fearing God?
  - a. Intellectual capacity
  - b. The ability to win theological arguments
  - c. The ability to differentiate between supralapsarianism and infralapsarianism
  - d. Wisdom
5. The words often translated as "inspired by God" in 2 Timothy 3:16 literally mean \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. "breathed in by God"
  - b. "breathed for God"
  - c. "breathed out by God"
  - d. "breathed around God"
6. For which of the following is the study of Scripture not profitable?
  - a. For correction
  - b. For doctrine
  - c. For answers to questions about biology
  - d. For instruction in righteousness

#### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Find and discuss a few of the scriptural texts that speak of its own authority. What kind of authority is described? When Scripture speaks, who speaks? How can ancient stories, psalms, or letters be considered authoritative?
2. What is the prerequisite to attaining godly wisdom, according to Scripture, and what does it entail? What does that godly wisdom look like in our everyday lives?
3. What does it mean to say that the Bible is the authority for our faith and practice?
4. How does science relate to the Bible? What is the proper view of Scripture and tradition? In what ways does the Bible challenge our own tradition?

#### **FOR FURTHER STUDY**

Sproul, R.C., *Dust to Glory*

\_\_\_\_\_, *Five Things Every Christian Needs to Grow*, pp. 1–21

\_\_\_\_\_, *Knowing Scripture*

\_\_\_\_\_, and Robert Wolgemuth, *What's in the Bible*

Strom, Mark, *The Symphony of Scripture*

## NOTES

## 2

# How to Study the Bible (part 2)

### MESSAGE INTRODUCTION

Which of us has read the entire Bible at least once in life? Throughout the Christian church, less than fifty percent have read through it. Why is that? If we claim to be followers of God's Word, how is it that we can go throughout life never reading it in its entirety? In today's lecture, Dr. R.C. Sproul not only answers that question, he also identifies some practical guidelines that will help Christians study God's Word.

### SCRIPTURE READING

Genesis 12–15

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

To recognize and implement some practical guidelines on studying the Bible.

### MEMORY VERSES

*And the tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." But he answered, "It is written,*

*"Man shall not live by bread alone,  
but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."*

Matthew 4:3–4

### LECTURE OUTLINE

- A. What keeps us from reading the Bible in its entirety?
  1. Many people attempt to read the Bible in a straight line — from Genesis 1 to Revelation 22. While Genesis and Exodus read like novels, our comfortability quickly fades when we reach Leviticus. Even though books like Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy are rich with symbols and images of the coming Christ, they nonetheless prove tedious to most readers, and, becoming discouraged, the reading stops.



2. The problem lies in the fact that most first-time readers do not have the framework or outline of all the major events of Scripture that would equip them to wade through the minutiae of the Mosaic code. It is, in short, an information overload.
3. One way to read through the Old Testament Scriptures can be outlined as follows:
  - a. Genesis, Exodus, Joshua, Judges, 1 & 2 Samuel, Ezra and Nehemiah:
    - These books highlight a historical overview of the nation of Israel, giving the reader a contextual framework to use when reading other portions of the Old Testament.
  - b. Amos and Hosea:
    - These are the two most important minor prophets, giving the reader a taste of Old Testament prophetic literature and the prophets' concerns.
  - c. Jeremiah:
    - This book is the easiest major prophetic book to read and comprehend.
  - d. Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon:
    - These two books will give the reader an introduction to the Wisdom literature of the Old Testament, providing a good basis for the reading of the Psalms and Proverbs.
  - e. Psalms and the Proverbs
  - f. Fill in blanks
4. The same can be applied to the reading of the New Testament, and may be structured as follows:
  - a. The gospel of Luke and the Acts of the apostles:
    - Most readers are familiar with the stories of this gospel. Also, Luke's gospel was written for a Gentile audience, which means his narrative does not require us to be as familiar with Old Testament imagery and symbolism as the others.
  - b. Ephesians then 1 Corinthians:
    - Both will serve as good introductions to Saint Paul's theology. The practical issues that Paul addresses will help the reader to see how the apostle expects his theology to produce certain actions and behaviors.
  - c. 1 Peter:
    - This will introduce the reader to the apostle Peter's thoughts and theology.

d. 1 Timothy:

- This letter will introduce Paul's pastoral concerns and theology about ministers in the church.

e. Hebrews:

- This letter gives the most brilliant testimony to the supremacy Christ, His person, and His work.

f. Romans:

- Having already been introduced the apostle's writings, reading Romans at this point will be more enriching.

g. Fill in the blanks

B. Some practical guidelines to keep in mind when studying the Scriptures

1. As a practical method, we may want to combine our reading of both the Old and New Testaments (for example, six chapters from the Old Testament and four chapters from the New Testament). Even veteran Scripture readers ought to read through the Bible from time to time so as to keep the whole of Scripture before them. Scripture is best interpreted by Scripture itself.
2. We must not be afraid to write in the margins and highlight words in our Bibles. There is nothing sacrosanct about the actual paper and binder that makes up the Bibles we own.
3. Using a concordance: A concordance lists every time a single word appears throughout the whole text. Looking up particular words and how they are used throughout the Bible will give us a better understanding of what that word means in its context.
4. Listen to God's Word recited as much as possible.
5. The Bible must be read "existentially." That is, the reader must become involved in the story that he or she is reading. We must put ourselves in the shoes of Abraham, Joseph, Paul, etc., and strive to see how this or that text speaks to us today.

**STUDY QUESTIONS**

1. Reading Leviticus, Numbers, or Deuteronomy can be tedious because \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. they are entirely irrelevant to our lives today
  - b. the Old Testament isn't inspired by the Holy Spirit

- c. it can cause an information overload
  - d. None of the above
2. Amos and Hosea are considered \_\_\_\_\_ prophets.
- a. “major”
  - b. “post-exilic”
  - c. They aren’t prophets; they’re poets.
  - d. “minor”
3. Which of the following is not a category of Old Testament literature?
- a. Wisdom
  - b. Poetry
  - c. History
  - d. Science
4. The best interpreter of Scripture is \_\_\_\_\_.
- a. the reader
  - b. the minister
  - c. the collective voice of the church through history
  - d. Scripture itself
5. The paper upon which Bibles are printed is \_\_\_\_\_.
- a. divine
  - b. breathed out by God
  - c. not sacrosanct
  - d. None of the above

6. Reading Scripture “existentially” means \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. to interpret the stories of the Bible as always applying to mankind in general
  - b. to place ourselves in the story that we are reading
  - c. to read the Bible dressed in the garments of that day and age
  - d. to disregard the immediate context of the passage, thereby enabling a modern day application

#### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Describe briefly the major events in the history of Israel (beginning with Creation) through which God worked to bring about the redemption of His people and the renewal of His creation. Why is understanding this big picture important?
2. What problems have you run into when attempting to read the Bible in its entirety?
3. What does it mean to say that the Scriptures’ best interpreter is Scripture itself? Are there any doctrines you hold that seem consistent with one portion of Scripture and inconsistent with another?
4. What are some of the benefits of listening to the Word of God being read aloud?

#### **FOR FURTHER STUDY**

Sproul, R.C., *Dust to Glory*

\_\_\_\_\_, *Five Things Every Christian Needs to Grow*, pp. 1–21

\_\_\_\_\_, *Knowing Scripture*

\_\_\_\_\_, and Robert Wolgemuth, *What’s in the Bible*

Strom, Mark, *The Symphony of Scripture*

## NOTES

# 3

## How to Pray (part 1)

### MESSAGE INTRODUCTION

The Bible tells us that we now have the ability to come boldly into the presence of God. In a spirit of humility, we must remember when praying to keep in mind who God is and who we are. Having this before us will help to keep us unpretentious. Nevertheless, prayer seems to be one of the hardest disciplines to practice for many Christians. In today's message, Dr. R.C. Sproul discusses the second of the five things every Christian should know: how to pray. In so doing, he will look at what the Scriptures say regarding its importance in growing spiritually mature.

### SCRIPTURE READING

2 Corinthians 11:1–3; Ephesians 5:25–33

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To understand why we should be engaged in a disciplined prayer life.

### MEMORY VERSES

*I wish you would bear with me in a little foolishness. Do bear with me! I feel a divine jealousy for you, for I betrothed you to one husband, to present you as a pure virgin to Christ. But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ.*

2 Corinthians 11:1–3

### LECTURE OUTLINE

- A. The analogy of marriage and the Christian life
  1. English Puritan Edward Pearse wrote *The Best Match, or, The Soul's Espousal to Christ*, in which he explored the relationship believers have with Christ.

2. The apostle Paul employed this analogy in his letter to the Corinthians (see 11:2). Paul, in chapter eleven of 2 Corinthians, speaks of his jealousy for the church there. He is jealous for them because they are “betrothed” to the Messiah.
  3. The apostle develops this further in Ephesians 5. But what does this have to do with prayer? The mystery that Paul speaks of (v. 32) refers to the mystical union that takes place between Christ and His bride, the church.
  4. The essence of this relationship is the relationship of communion. Prayer is the channel of communication between Christ and His bride. It is the way in which the church communicates with her Redeemer.
- B. The image of marriage and our relationship to Jesus
1. Marriage is seen involving a gift — a gift between persons, a gift of themselves. In like manner, Paul says that husbands are to give themselves to their wives just as Jesus gave Himself to the church.
  2. This union between the church and Christ is based upon His gift of Himself to her. Moreover, the Holy Spirit gives the gift of faith, which enables the union between Christ and His bride. The whole basis for our relationship to God is rooted and grounded in grace; it is a donation, a gift.
  3. Despite the modern dismissal of the sanctity of marriage, there is no deeper union between persons who are married under God.
- B. “Into” Christ and “in” Christ
1. To get “in” a room, we first must move “into” the room from outside of it, by passing through the door, or over the threshold, etc.
  2. When the New Testament calls us to believe in Christ, it is calling us to believe “into” Christ, to embrace Him. Once we have believed in Him, the Spirit indwells us and Christ is now “in” us. The mystical union is wrought by the gift of faith, where, having been born by Spirit, we are now “in” Christ and Christ is “in” us.
  3. This is the foundation for all of Christian unity. This is often overlooked. If all believers are all “in” Christ, then we are all spiritually united in Him. Even if we disagree on a whole plethora of peripheral issues, we still enjoy a transcendent unity in Christ.
  4. Furthermore, while we currently face much fragmentation in the church at large, we still are united in Christ. The many are one in the sight of God. Something real has happened so that the two become one. This union is the basis for prayer.

5. The next step in real authentic marriage is communion (“a union with”). The church has the opportunity to commune with Christ Himself through prayer. But does the bride talk to her husband as she ought?
6. Another dimension of genuine marriage is mutual delight in each other and an ongoing, persistent state of affection. So it goes with our relationship to Christ. It is not enough to pray simply out of duty. Beyond this there must be delight. Prayer is a communication of love.

#### **STUDY QUESTIONS**

1. What kind of jealousy is considered holy?
  - a. The kind that envies other’s spiritual maturity
  - b. The kind that envies other’s financial prosperity
  - c. The kind that possessively seeks the protection of those betrothed to Christ
  - d. The kind that envies the gracious gifts given by God to others
2. Prayer is \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. the channel of communication between humans and nature
  - b. the channel of communication between Christ and His bride
  - c. just for us, since prayer doesn’t change the way things are.
  - d. to be spontaneous in every circumstance, for liturgy quiets the Spirit
3. Our union with Christ is based on grace.
  - a. True
  - b. False
4. Being “in” Christ means that \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. we become a part of the divine essence
  - b. we will become sinless before we die
  - c. at the very least, we share the same interests, purposes, and sympathies with Him
  - d. God loves us and has a wonderful plan for our lives



5. What can we say about the fact that the modern church is fragmented?
  - a. We are still united in Christ in God's eyes, but we must work to show it in our relationships with other Christians.
  - b. Obviously, our union with Christ has not yet taken shape.
  - c. We can say that Jesus' High-priestly prayer has failed (John 17:21).
  - d. None of the above
6. Which of the following is the sole reason we pray?
  - a. Duty
  - b. To fill our requests
  - c. Love for others
  - d. None of the above

#### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Starting from 2 Corinthians 11, describe in your own words the church's betrothal to Christ.
2. Find the various passages that speak of our union with Christ (being "in" Christ, etc.) and describe that union. How central is our union with Christ to our salvation? Why?
3. What is prayer and why do we engage in it?
4. Discuss the various difficulties involved in praying regularly and in a disciplined manner. In what ways can these difficulties be resolved?

**FOR FURTHER STUDY**

Luther, Martin, *A Simple Way to Pray*

Parrish, Archie, *Improve Your Prayer Life*

\_\_\_\_\_, *Intercede for and with Your Family*

\_\_\_\_\_, *Invigorate Your Church*

Pearse, Edward, *The Best Match, or, The Soul's Espousal to Christ*

Preston, John, et al., *The Puritans on Prayer*

Ruvolo, Carol J., *Before the Throne of God: Focus on Prayer*

Sproul, R.C., *Five Things Every Christian Needs to Grow*, pp. 22–40

\_\_\_\_\_, *Does Prayer Change Things?*

\_\_\_\_\_, *Lord's Prayer* (radio series)

\_\_\_\_\_, *Prayer* (audio series)

*The Valley of Vision*

## NOTES

# 4

## How to Pray (part 2)

### MESSAGE INTRODUCTION

Merely telling folks that prayer is necessary often sends people away guilt-ridden with no guidance on how to go about implementing a disciplined prayer life. Our lack of prayer is probably the greatest cause of guilt for us. This most likely stems from our general inability to pray effectively. In today's message, Dr. R.C. Sproul explores a few practical methods that will help believers learn how to pray more productively — and biblically.

### SCRIPTURE READING

Psalms 72, 82, 89 ; Luke 11:1–13

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To explore some practical ways to become more deeply engaged in a disciplined prayer life.

### MEMORY VERSES

*Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel,  
who alone does wondrous things.  
Blessed be his glorious name forever;  
may the whole earth be filled with his glory!  
Amen and Amen!  
The prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are ended.*

Psalm 72:18–20

### LECTURE OUTLINE

- A. The Lord's Prayer
  1. Even though the disciples sat at Jesus' feet every day, they still came to their teacher and asked how to pray. The Lord Christ then offered up His prayer as one way for us to follow, whether we recite or model it.
  2. While Jesus was on the cross, the veil in the Temple was torn in two, and those who

have been called by the grace of God now have access into His presence.

3. Kingdom-focused prayer is prayer that focuses on the work of Christ and His kingdom, instead of our own personal grocery lists of wants. We are to seek first the kingdom of God.

B. Martin Luther's simple way to pray:

1. Having witnessed the effects of the Reformer's prayer life, Luther's barber was encouraged to ask him for help on how to pray. What follows are a few of the tips Luther gave him:
  - Find time every day to pray and keep to it consistently. Our daily tasks will easily push it aside otherwise. Being alone in prayer helps us to focus on who God is and who we are.
  - Pray aloud. Articulating our communication to God aloud has a way of helping us to concentrate on what we are saying.
  - Pray through these three things: The Lord's prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostle's Creed. When praying these, we are to expand on each phrase.
2. We are to speak the "Amen" at the end of our prayers deliberately, for it is a word that commits us to the truth being spoken.
3. What this structure does is help prevent a willy-nilly, ad hoc prayer by keeping our minds on biblical themes.
4. Also, the Psalms are given to us so that we may pray through them. Why not pray to God using His own inspired words?

**STUDY QUESTIONS**

1. Reciting the Lord's Prayer with the intent to pray it is \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. not to be done
  - b. perfectly okay
  - c. to be done every time we pray
  - d. None of the above

2. The tearing of the Temple veil meant that \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. every person in the world has access into God's presence
  - b. there is no more distinction between clergy and laymen
  - c. all people, not just the high priests, now have access into God's presence by grace through faith
  - d. God was not at all pleased with the way the veil was made
3. "Kingdom-focused prayer" simply means that our prayers are to be filled with personal requests.
  - a. True
  - b. False
4. What is likely to get pushed aside if we do not deliberately make time to do it?
  - a. Laundry
  - b. Career
  - c. Dinner
  - d. Prayer
5. Praying aloud is \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. explicitly forbidden in Scripture
  - b. explicitly commanded in Scripture
  - c. done only by charismatics
  - d. a way to help us concentrate on what we are saying
6. What does the word *amen* mean?
  - a. "Finished"
  - b. "Hallelujah"
  - c. "So be it"
  - d. "So let it be written"

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Go through and discuss what every phrase of Lord's Prayer means.
2. In what ways does "Kingdom-focused prayer" differ from the many prayers uttered in both churches and homes? What steps can you take to ensure your prayer will be more kingdom-focused? Is it possible (not in every circumstance, of course) to prepare for prayer intellectually with reasoned petitions, etc.? Why should we, or why shouldn't we?
3. If you or anyone you know has followed Luther's suggestions in *A Simple Way to Pray*, describe (or ask them to describe) the benefits so that others may be encouraged to follow suit.
4. Why are the Psalms a great place to find prayers to pray? Where in Scripture are other prayers found that may be recited fruitfully? Read and pray through them.

#### FOR FURTHER STUDY

Luther, Martin, *A Simple Way to Pray*

Parrish, Archie, *Improve Your Prayer Life*

\_\_\_\_\_, *Intercede for and with Your Family*

\_\_\_\_\_, *Invigorate Your Church*

Pearse, Edward, *The Best Match, or, The Soul's Espousal to Christ*

Preston, John, et al., *The Puritans on Prayer*

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\_\_\_\_\_, *Does Prayer Change Things?*

\_\_\_\_\_, *Lord's Prayer* (radio series)

\_\_\_\_\_, *Prayer* (audio series)

*The Valley of Vision*

## NOTES



# 5

## How to Worship (part 1)

### MESSAGE INTRODUCTION

We live in a time of great confusion regarding Christian worship, yet perhaps it is also the most creative time. For this reason, we must be diligent to discern when creativity supersedes the ways in which God has commanded us to worship Him. Our standard is God's Word. This was the underlying issue of the Protestant Reformation as well. So it is that we too are concerned with reforming our worship in order to bring God the greatest glory. In this lecture, Dr. R.C. Sproul explores the third thing every Christian needs to know in order to grow: how to worship.

### SCRIPTURE READING

Exodus 20:1–21; 32; Deuteronomy 5

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To study what portions of God's Word teach about worshipping Him.

### MEMORY VERSES

*And the Lord said to me, 'I have heard the words of this people, which they have spoken to you. They are right in all that they have spoken. Oh that they had such a mind as this always, to fear me and to keep all my commandments, that it might go well with them and with their descendants forever!*

Deuteronomy 5:28–29

### LECTURE OUTLINE

- A. The Decalogue and Christian Worship
  1. "You shall have no other gods before me." This commandment comes first because it is of supreme importance. It is not polytheistic; rather, it is about Israel's God not tolerating any idolatry in His presence (which is everywhere).

2. According to Paul in his letter to the Roman church, the fundamental sin of humanity is idolatry (see Rom. 1). He argues that while God is revealed in nature, including in us (since we are made in His image), we exchange this truth for a lie (see vv. 18ff.).
  3. Throughout His Word, God commands us to worship Him according to His standards — not according to our whims, which will always gravitate toward idolatry
  4. “You shall not make for yourself a carved image . . . .” This second command is given to bolster the first. And both of them are intended to protect the worship of God’s people.
- B. The Holiness of God
1. In Exodus 20:18ff., we see God giving His people the Law at Sinai. This He does in thunder and lightning. The people then distance themselves from His presence (v. 21).
  2. Indeed, to enter into the presence of God is to enter into holy terror. So it is that we humans shrink from God for fear of His holiness (see also Heb. 12:18–24).
  3. Exodus 32 possibly describes the first “seeker-sensitive” worship service. Moses came down the mountain with the tablets that God had written on, and the people are worshipping a golden calf. Mistaking their cries for the sound of war, Joshua and Moses see upon a closer look that the people are actually singing and dancing — worshipping God according to their fancy, not according to God’s own standards.
  4. At this point, Israel degenerates into the very sin of Adam. We too must beware of this tendency of humanity. We must beware of idols, however sophisticated they have become. Sometimes we might disregard or even outright deny certain attributes of God with which we do not feel comfortable. If we do this, then we too have substituted the creature for the Creator.

#### **STUDY QUESTIONS**

1. What, among other things, does the first commandment teach?
  - a. That God’s people are not to dance
  - b. That the God of Israel is to be given greater glory than all other gods
  - c. That Israel’s God does not tolerate any idolatry in His presence
  - d. None of the above

2. The fundamental sin of humanity is \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. homosexuality
  - b. idolatry
  - c. lust
  - d. greed
3. God prefers worship that is spontaneous and free, according to our own standards.
  - a. True; He wants us to be unhindered in all that we do.
  - b. False; While He wants us to be free in worship, He wants us to worship Him in His way.
4. The second commandment forbids \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. the making of any images whatsoever
  - b. the making of any images of Jesus
  - c. the making of any images with the intent to worship them
  - d. art (sculptures, paintings, etc.) in the sanctuary
5. In Scripture, God is described as \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. “just, just, just”
  - b. “faithful, faithful, faithful”
  - c. “holy, holy, holy”
  - d. “big, big, big”
6. If we deny an attribute of God that is clearly taught in Scripture, then we are guilty of what?
  - a. Lying
  - b. Forgetting
  - c. Idolatry
  - d. Murder

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. If our most basic, sinful tendency is to create idols in our mind, what idols today are we in danger of worshipping?
2. Does your church tend toward God-centered or man-centered worship? How can you tell the differences between the two?
3. In what way does the golden calf incident at the foot of Mount Sinai re-enact the fall in the garden? How does that incident reflect the history of Israel's idolatry? How does it reflect our own tendencies toward idolatry?
4. How does (or how should) God's holiness affect our worship of Him? What does it mean to say that God is holy?

#### FOR FURTHER STUDY

Burroughs, Jeremiah, *Gospel Worship*

Clowney, Edmund P., *The Church*

Sproul, R.C., *Five Things Every Christian Needs to Grow*, pp. 41–54

\_\_\_\_\_, *The Holiness of God*

\_\_\_\_\_, *Worship* (CD series)

\_\_\_\_\_, *Into the Sanctuary: Worshiping God in Spirit and in Truth* (audio series)

\_\_\_\_\_, *The God We Worship* (audio series)

\_\_\_\_\_, et al., *Overcoming the Eclipse of God*

## NOTES

# 6

## How to Worship (part 2)

### MESSAGE INTRODUCTION

Having seen that the most fundamental tendency within each of us is to worship idols instead of the one, true God, we now turn to discuss how we Christians are to engage in God-pleasing worship. Possibly one of the most informative lessons on true worship recorded from Jesus' ministry, the story of the woman at the well provides us today with something that we ignore at our peril. In today's message, Dr. R.C. Sproul discusses what kind of worship most honors God.

### SCRIPTURE READING

John 4; Acts 17:16–34; Hebrews 11

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To understand what kind of worship, and what kind of worshipers, God is seeking.

### MEMORY VERSES

*Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."*

John 4:21–24

### LECTURE OUTLINE

- A. The Woman at the Well
  1. The Samaritan woman makes mention of the basic disagreement between her ethnic group and the Jews. Samaritans worshiped at Mount Gerizim, while Israelites worshiped on Mount Zion, the city of Jerusalem.

2. Perceiving Jesus to be a prophet, she asks Him His opinion about the age-old dispute. Jesus, however, is more concerned with the “how?” question as opposed to the “where?” question.
  3. In so doing, He rebukes the Samaritan way of worship, for they worship in ignorance, while the Jews do not (compare with Acts 17:16–34). However, Jesus goes on to say that both groups will soon find their respective holy sites improper places of worship, for “true worshipers” will worship the Father in spirit and in truth.
  4. Now is the time, Jesus says, for true worship. Why did he qualify it as “true”? Simply because there is a difference between worshipers. Some worship truly, while others worship falsely. The Father, too, is seeking out those who will worship Him truly. And if we are to worship God, we must worship Him in spirit and in truth.
- B. Worshiping God in the Spirit
1. In verse 24, we are told that God is spirit, that His being cannot be confined. Now, worshiping in the “spirit” is not to be seen in opposition to the “body.” Rather, it is the difference between our inward will (or mind, volition, etc.) and our outward acts.
  2. So what Jesus is saying here is that the Father wants people who worship Him with their hearts fully enthralled and engaged in accord with their outward acts of worship.
  3. Yet, worship cannot be driven by a mere sense of duty; it must be motivated by a soul that delights in the presence of God. The Westminster Confession, chapter 21, discusses the contours of true worship. Not only is the preaching of the Word to be sound, but there must also be a diligent hearing of it. Saints are those who enter in the presence of God with souls aflame (see Heb. 11).
- C. Worshiping God in the Truth
1. Does doctrine matter in worship? Some would say no. But what truth is getting at is who God is. Who is the one, true God? How can we worship one about whom we know nothing?
  2. Jesus Himself is truth incarnate. To seek to worship without truth, then, is to worship with something or someone other than Jesus as our focus. We must strive after the truth.
  3. Also, we must prepare ourselves for worship, so that our attention is fully absorbed with what lies ahead — the worshiping of God through Word and sacrament.

**STUDY QUESTIONS**

1. Which two worship sites were involved in the age-old dispute between the Samaritans and the Jews?
  - a. Mount Gerizim and Mount Olives
  - b. Mount Zion and Mount Hermon
  - c. Mount Jearim and Mount Ephraim
  - d. Mount Gerizim and Mount Zion
2. Jesus rebukes the woman at the well, saying that the Samaritans \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. worship what they do know
  - b. worship at the right place, but do not worship correctly
  - c. worship what they do not know
  - d. are low-class people, not worthy of God's kingdom
3. True worshipers are those who worship how they please, as long as they love Jesus.
  - a. True
  - b. False
4. Does God actually seek those who will worship Him in spirit and in truth?
  - a. God seeks no one.
  - b. Yes, God truly desires a people who will worship Him according to His Word.
  - c. God seeks only those who have their theology systematized to worship Him.
  - d. None of the above
5. We ought to worship purely out of \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. duty to God
  - b. delight in God
  - c. both a and b
  - d. fear of God



6. Preparing for worship has what advantage?
  - a. It helps us to focus entirely on what lies ahead.
  - b. It makes us more acceptable to God.
  - c. It makes us able to receive Holy Communion.
  - d. It helps us to see that we aren't as bad as most folks.

#### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. When Jesus spoke to the woman at the well about the age-old dispute between the Samaritans and the Jews, on which side did he come down? Why?
2. What does it mean to worship God in spirit?
3. What does it mean to worship God in truth?
4. Is there a significant difference between clapping and jumping versus reciting liturgy during a worship service? Is one better than the other? Why or why not? What are the dangers of informal worship? What are the dangers in a more formal worship service? In what ways are these dangers similar?

#### **FOR FURTHER STUDY**

Burroughs, Jeremiah, *Gospel Worship*

Clowney, Edmund P., *The Church*

Piper, John, *Desiring God*

Sproul, R.C., *Five Things Every Christian Needs to Grow*, pp. 41–54

\_\_\_\_\_, *The Holiness of God*

\_\_\_\_\_, *Worship* (CD series)

\_\_\_\_\_, *Into the Sanctuary: Worshiping God in Spirit and in Truth* (audio series)

\_\_\_\_\_, *The God We Worship* (audio series)

\_\_\_\_\_, et al., *Overcoming the Eclipse of God*

## NOTES

# 7

## How to Serve (part 1)

### MESSAGE INTRODUCTION

These five things that every Christian needs to grow ought to be seen as means of grace. That is to say, they are used by God to strengthen, sustain, and increase the faith of His people. They are, in the end, the very means through which God conforms us into the image of the Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. In today's lecture, Dr. R.C. Sproul will explore the fourth of the five things every Christian needs to grow: the act of service and its place in the kingdom of God.

### SCRIPTURE READING

Joshua 24; Matthew 20:20–28

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To see the importance of service for our spiritual growth.
2. To understand what kind of people will be honored in the kingdom of God.

### QUOTATIONS

*Now therefore fear the Lord and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness. Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."*

Joshua 24:14–15

### LECTURE OUTLINE

- A. We Grow as We Serve
  1. The more we serve, the more we grow in conformity to the will of God. We are all called to be servants of God, whether we are paid servants or not.

2. This is done largely by giving service first to the people of God and then to our surrounding culture.

B. The Exodus and Servanthood

1. The Exodus event is a picture of a transference of service. The oppressed people of Israel are liberated from Egypt and Pharaoh, and are then brought into the service of Yahweh, Israel's covenant Lord.
2. This event prepares us for the penultimate exodus led by Jesus Christ. He delivers His people out of the oppressive service or bondage to sin and death, the kingdom of Satan, and He transfers them into the service of God's kingdom, bondservants of the One who has redeemed them.
3. In Joshua 24, we see a gathering of God's people at Shechem intending to renew the covenant that God had made with them. In that portion of Scripture, Joshua utters what is perhaps the quintessential renewal statement: "And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (v. 15).
4. Joshua exhorts them to not serve idols but to serve God in sincerity and truth. Recall our discussion about true worship. Even in the old covenant, the heart of the matter was the heart itself. This is the Christian's motto too. We are to serve the Lord in sincerity and truth.

C. The Popularity of Service

1. Jesus' message of servitude was not popular. His kind of kingdom, the kind that does not resist the evil person and walks the extra mile (see Matt. 5:38–42), was in fact so unpopular that He was murdered for spreading it.
2. We modern folk think servitude is beneath us. But Jesus Himself said, "The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Matt. 20:28). And if we consider ourselves to be in Him, to share His desires, sympathies, and purposes, then we must follow in this legacy.
3. Those who would follow Him in this way are those who will have honor in God's kingdom. When His disciples ask for places of honor, Jesus directs them to follow Him in His service.
4. We all have been given various gifts with which we must serve the church. Churches are not merely buildings where people come to watch the show; churches are communities of believers using their various gifts in service to the kingdom of God.

**STUDY QUESTIONS**

1. What happens the more we serve others?
  - a. We lose money
  - b. We lose time
  - c. We grow spiritually
  - d. All of the above
2. The tribes of Israel were liberated from Egyptian bondage into the service of \_\_\_\_.
  - a. no one
  - b. the Edomites
  - c. Yahweh, Israel's covenant Lord
  - d. the Philistines
3. When the Gospel frees believers, it frees them from all servitude.
  - a. True
  - b. False
4. Who is the greatest in the kingdom of God?
  - a. Those who put themselves first
  - b. Those who put themselves last some of the time
  - c. Those who put themselves last
  - d. None of the above
5. The kingdom that Jesus proclaimed was a kingdom \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. of military might
  - b. of financial prosperity
  - c. where putting others first was its second greatest command (the first being, love God)
  - d. filled with all the important, aristocratic people of the world

6. Which of the following best describes a church?
  - a. A building
  - b. A place where people come just on Sundays to watch the service
  - c. A community of believers using their various gifts in service to the kingdom
  - d. A place of worship that is sensitive to those seeking Christ

#### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Discuss and describe the Exodus event as a picture of a transferal of service.
2. How does the Exodus event serve as a picture of the new covenant exodus of Jesus?
3. How may our observance of the Lord's Day parallel the covenant renewal we see described in Joshua 24?
4. As laypeople in the church of Christ, what function do we serve?

#### **FOR FURTHER STUDY**

Sproul, R.C., *Five Things Every Christian Needs to Grow*, pp. 55–72  
\_\_\_\_\_, *Church Leadership* (audio series)

## NOTES

# 8

## How to Serve (part 2)

### MESSAGE INTRODUCTION

During our last lecture, we discussed the importance of service for the Christian life. We also saw how our liberation from sin and death freed us up for service to God. We are to serve the Lord with gladness, taking our cue from the Son of God Himself. In today's study, Dr. R.C. Sproul will explore the call every Christian has to serve with the gifts they have been given.

### SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 17:7–10; 19:11–27; 1 Corinthians 4; Ephesians 6:5–9

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To recognize the duty and joy of serving the church with our gifts.

### MEMORY VERSES

*“Will any one of you who has a servant plowing or keeping sheep say to him when he has come in from the field, ‘Come at once and recline at table?’ Will he not rather say to him, ‘Prepare supper for me, and dress properly, and serve me while I eat and drink, and afterward you will eat and drink?’ Does he thank the servant because he did what was commanded? So you also, when you have done all that you were commanded, say, ‘We are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty.’”*

Luke 17:7–10

### LECTURE OUTLINE

#### A. The Disciples' Request

1. “Increase our faith!” was the disciples' desire. They ask Jesus to show them how to increase their faith. Jesus responds somewhat enigmatically: “Are servants thanked when they do what is expected of them, when they serve?” No, they are merely doing what it is their duty to do.



2. Jesus is teaching them (and us) that we who are His servants are unprofitable servants. Now, this does not mean that the service is of no value or that it is unproductive; rather, it means that we servants are unworthy in the sense that our actions as servants of God are a fulfillment of the purpose for which we were created in Christ. In other words, we can claim no merit of our own.
  3. The motivation for Christian service is gratitude for salvation by grace alone, not a desire to earn any special standing in God's kingdom.
- B. The Parable of the Minas
1. Seeing that Jesus' travels were closing in on Jerusalem, many thought that He was going to set up a magnificent earthly kingdom there. The King, of course, was indeed returning, but in such a way that involved judgment, not just salvation. In response, He spoke the parable of the minas.
  2. In the parable, when the king returns to his land, he checks to see who has used his gracious gift for profit. The servant who did not use it at all was judged by being stripped of his gift.
  3. Ignoring the call to serve God with the free gifts he has given is a wicked thing indeed. This is most explicitly revealed in the judgment that befell Jerusalem when it was destroyed by Rome (A.D. 70). Israel had been entrusted with the gracious revelation of God and had not used it fruitfully. Instead, they refused the rule of Jesus and therefore paid the consequences reserved for faithless servants.
- C. The Apostle Paul on Servitude
1. In 1 Corinthians 4:1ff., we read the apostle's admonition to the Corinthians to see him and his fellow ministers as faithful servants and stewards of God's Gospel.
  2. He goes on to write that human courts have no jurisdiction over his service to God. That is, others could not judge his service and whether or not it qualified. Paul's service will be judged by God Himself.
  3. In Ephesians 6:5–9, Paul encourages Christian bondservants to be utterly obedient to their masters. Not just with their outward actions, he says, but with their whole selves. That is to say, they are to obey not just for the approval of men, but, by obeying internally, they are to primarily seek the approval of God.
  4. This analogy taken from the everyday lives of first-century bondservants applies to our Christian service in the church. The church today is in desperate need to hear this lesson. Man is not our judge; we must be about our Lord's business, for it is He who will judge us.

**STUDY QUESTIONS**

1. Being an “unprofitable” servant means what?
  - a. Being unproductive
  - b. Having no value; worthless
  - c. Having no merit in our action; for those actions are a fulfillment of our duty
  - d. None of the above
2. The main motivation to serve in God’s kingdom is \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. the prospect of earning God’s favor
  - b. gratitude for so great a salvation
  - c. the prospect of gaining a higher place in the kingdom
  - d. love for one another
3. Most of the Israelites that surrounded Jesus’ ministry understood the kingdom of God.
  - a. True
  - b. False
4. The parable of the minas is basically about what?
  - a. The second coming of Christ
  - b. How to invest money
  - c. The misuse of gracious gifts and the ensuing judgment
  - d. All of the above
5. The king’s slaughtering those who refused him at the end of the parable is most likely a warning about what event?
  - a. Purgatory
  - b. The destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70

- c. The persecution of Nero
  - d. The fall of Rome
6. According to the apostle Paul, who is the judge of a Christian's service?
- a. His fellow peers
  - b. His parents
  - c. God
  - d. His brothers and sisters

#### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. How are we to understand the disciples' request to increase their faith? How are we to understand Jesus' response to them? What does this mean for us today?
2. How are we to understand the parable of the minas in its immediate, biblical context? How, then, are we to understand that parable as the church?
3. What significant judgment of the first century may have been alluded to by Jesus in this parable?
4. Read 1 Corinthians 4:1ff. What does this tell us about our service and the servitude of our ministers?

#### **FOR FURTHER STUDY**

Sproul, R.C., *Five Things Every Christian Needs to Grow*, pp. 55–72  
\_\_\_\_\_, *Church Leadership* (audio series)

## NOTES

## 9

# How to be a Good Steward (part 1)

### MESSAGE INTRODUCTION

In learning about these five things every Christian needs to grow spiritually, we are also learning how to grab hold of them, these means of grace that God uses to increase the faith of His people. As we pursue this final subject, we shall see that the other four subjects are connected to this last one. For each of them require from us a wise stewardship of our time and resources. In this lecture, Dr. R.C. Sproul explores the Scriptures in search of a biblical understanding of godly stewardship.

### SCRIPTURE READING

Genesis 1 and 2; Luke 15

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To understand the importance of practicing wise stewardship in the Christian life.

### MEMORY VERSE

*And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."*

Genesis 1:28

### LECTURE OUTLINE

- A. Stewardship Begins with Creation
  1. Just as the Psalms celebrate God's ownership and governance of all things, so too must we see that what we own comes by God's grace. Thus, we are stewards of these gifts, and we must manage what we own to the glory of God.

2. The origin of the word *stewardship* is taken from the Greek word *oikonomia*. We get the English word *economy* from it. The Greek word consists of two nouns smashed together: house (*oikos*) and law (*nomos*). Basically, stewards in the ancient Near East, while not owners of property, were managers of property and all household affairs.
  3. This concept finds its origin in the garden of Eden. God gives Adam and Eve dominion — not ownership — over the entire creation. They are to manage it wisely. What God required of them was a wise allocation of resources. We too are to exercise this God-honoring stewardship — not only with nature but with all of our resources.
- B. The Parable of the Prodigal Son
1. In this parable, we see that the son was a poor steward of his inheritance. He wastes his life, but is given a new one when he returns home. He will not just be a servant; he will be a fully-renewed son.
  2. In like manner, we must make wise use of our inheritance in Christ Jesus. We are to work for and serve the kingdom of God, not wasting our lives on shallow pursuits.
- C. The Tithe in the New Covenant
1. If we are to be wise stewards of what God has given us, how does the old covenant tithe relate to the new covenant practice of giving?
  2. This rule from the old covenant was so manifestly fair in that each family gave a tenth of what they produced — no matter what. The rich gave a tenth and the poor gave a tenth. It was instituted so that those whose work it was to minister in the Temple would be taken care of. God placed great value on the Levites, so He made provision for them by establishing the tithe.

#### **STUDY QUESTIONS**

1. Which of the following people have ownership of the earth?
  - a. Humans
  - b. Satan
  - c. God
  - d. All of the above

2. The Greek word *oikonomia* means \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. “allocation”
  - b. “economy”
  - c. “house-law”
  - d. “icon”
3. To have “dominion” is to have “ownership.”
  - a. True
  - b. False
4. Which of the following people is disgruntled at the end of the parable of the prodigal son?
  - a. The son who returned home
  - b. The daughter who stayed at home and prepared the feast
  - c. The father who watched his son squander the inheritance
  - d. The son who stayed at home with his father
5. “Tithe” literally means \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. “twentieth”
  - b. “sacrifice”
  - c. “tenth”
  - d. “one half”
6. The tithe was instituted for what purpose?
  - a. To make provision for the poor
  - b. To make provision for the Temple priests
  - c. To make provision for the lepers
  - d. To make provision for the prophets

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. What does Psalm 47 tell us about God's ownership of creation?
2. What does "dominion" mean? What kind of "dominion" did God give Adam and Eve? How do we (or ought we) exercise that wise stewardship today?
3. In what ways did the parable of the prodigal son judge and comfort those who were listening to Jesus? In what ways does this parable warn people today against wasting and abusing what God has given to them?
4. Why is the tithe considered by Dr. Sproul to be a manifestly fair law in the economy of the nation of Israel?

**FOR FURTHER STUDY**

Sproul, R.C., *Five Things Every Christian Needs to Grow*, pp. 73–88

Sproul Jr., R.C., *Biblical Economics: A Commonsense Guide to Our Daily Bread*



## NOTES

# 10

## How to be a Good Steward (part 2)

### MESSAGE INTRODUCTION

As we come to our concluding study about these five things that God uses to strengthen and sustain our faith, we have hopefully begun to understand the importance of each of them to the Christian life. Moreover, godly stewardship itself becomes the subject that includes all the other subjects combined. That is to say, if we are generally poor stewards, then we most likely are in need of consistent Bible study, prayer, worship, and service, because those are the very things we Christians neglect. In today's final lecture, Dr. R.C. Sproul expounds upon true Christian stewardship as an outward expression of an inward faith.

### SCRIPTURE READING

Colossians 1; Titus 1; 1 Peter 4

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To understand and affirm the necessity of Christian giving to the cause of the Gospel

### MEMORY VERSES

*Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church, of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known, the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints. To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.*

Colossians 1:24–27

### LECTURE OUTLINE

- A. The Common Complaint
  1. Asking for money to support the Christian ministry has become a distasteful thing in our culture — certainly because it has been abused — but also because financing the work of the kingdom is not a high priority for most people.

2. Recall the reason previously discussed about why God instituted the tithe — it was to ensure the provision of the Temple ministers, the Levites, whose sole duty was to serve the Lord where His presence dwelt.
3. It goes without saying that we Americans deem the ministry as largely irrelevant to everyday life. The value we place on ministers is proof enough — they are lowest paid in our economy.
4. The exploitation of Christian workers is a major plight in our day. Many ministries offer their ministry-status as reason for underpaying their employees. But this is never an excuse. We have no right to presume or impose a sacrifice upon others.

#### B. Gifts and Offerings

1. A small minority of Christians, according to most polls, give what they are actually able to give to the work of the kingdom. God, through the prophet Malachi, made it clear that He considers this stealing (see Mal. 3:8).
2. While this was a constant problem among the people of Israel in the old covenant, we new covenant Christians must strive to give joyfully and dutifully to Christ's church. Early on in its history, the Christian church gave of its resources for the work of the kingdom.
3. Yet we are to be wise in our giving. We ought to discern where our gifts go, for we are the stewards of those gifts given to us by God's grace. We are responsible for the wise allocation of them.
4. Practically speaking, this means that not all of our gifts and offerings must go to the local church; they can go to other ministries as well (though the majority should go to our churches). Since we are all called to invest in kingdom work, we must give of our time, talents, and money, and work toward a return. Investing in the kingdom means working toward its growth.
5. This is one way to follow Jesus' command: "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you" (Matt. 6:33). The charge to us is to actively seek the wisest way to allocate our resources — especially those resources we intend to give to God's kingdom.

#### STUDY QUESTIONS

1. One of the most common complaints people have against the church is \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. that it always speaks the truth
  - b. that it always takes care of widows and orphans

- c. that it is into weird things — like eating the body and blood of Jesus
  - d. that it always has its hand out, wanting your money
2. Which of the following professions is the least valued in America?
- a. Doctors
  - b. Lawyers
  - c. Entertainers
  - d. Ministers
3. We're a ministry" is a good reason for paying employees substandard wages.
- a. True
  - b. False
4. The majority of Christians \_\_\_\_\_.
- a. give all that they are able to give to the work of the kingdom
  - b. give all that they are able to give to their own personal pleasures
  - c. do not give all that they are able to give to the work of the kingdom
  - d. None of the above
5. Using discernment in our giving means what?
- a. It means that we give to the biggest charities in existence.
  - b. It means that we must give all of our resources to the local church.
  - c. It means that we seek out the wisest allocation of our resources.
  - d. It means that we give to the lesser of two evils.
6. God thinks that those who do not give joyfully to Him what they can \_\_\_\_\_.
- a. need not worry about it
  - b. must have not had any help from Him in securing their prosperity

- c. are stealing from Him
- d. None of the above

#### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. What is wrong with the idea of a “professional” pastor as opposed to a pastor who sees his role as a definitive fulfillment of his vocation or calling?
2. Why has the church been accused of greed? Are the accusations justified? Why or why not?
3. If we know that everything we have comes from God, how will (or ought) this affect the way we handle our possessions?
4. Describe some practical ways “seeking first the kingdom of God” can be lived out in today’s modern world.

#### **FOR FURTHER STUDY**

Sproul, R.C., *Five Things Every Christian Needs to Grow*, pp. 73–88

Sproul Jr., R.C., *Biblical Economics: A Commonsense Guide to Our Daily Bread*

## NOTES

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Chosen by God

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Dealing with Difficult Problems

Face to Face with Jesus

Giants of the Christian Faith

Great Men and Women of the Bible

Handout Apologetics

Handout Church History

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Hath God Said?: The Supreme Authority of Scripture

The Holiness of God

The Majesty of Christ

Objections Answered

One Holy Passion: The Attributes of God

Pleasing God

The Providence of God

A Shattered Image: Facing Our Human Condition

Silencing the Devil: A Fundamentals Debate

Surprised by Suffering

Ultimate Issues: Right Answers to Wrong Thinking