

Ancient wisdom that works today

Proverbs 14:31 Compassion for life

1. Luke 4: 18-19

- God cares for the poor
- Wisdom is discovering God's heart. Caring about what he cares about; speaking out for what he speaks out about

2. Compassion and action

- Proverbs 14:21 'He who despises his neighbour sins, but blessed is he who is kind to the needy
- Proverbs 14:31 'He who oppresses the poor shows contempt for their maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honours God.'
- Proverbs 19:7 'He who is kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will reward him for what he has done.'
- Proverbs 21: 13 'If a man shuts his ears to the cry of the poor, he too will cry out and not be answered'

3. Developing compassion

- Open your eyes; Proverbs 28:27 'He who gives to the poor will lack nothing, but he who closes his eyes to them receives many curses'
- Do something; Proverbs 31:20 'She opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy.'
- Proverbs 3:27 'Do not withhold good from those who deserve it, when it is in your power to act.'

4. Wisdom's jigsaw

- Heart for people
- Careful care – Proverbs 6:1 – 5, Proverbs 20:4, Proverbs 21:25
- Wealth and possessions. Proverbs 3:9 'Honour the Lord with your, with the firstfruits of your crops.'
- Work: Proverbs 12:11 'He who works his land will have abundant food, but he who chases fantasies lacks judgment.' Proverbs 14: 23 'All hard work brings a profit, but mere talk leads only to poverty'

Digging Deeper

1. In many places Proverbs suggests that God has a special concern for the poor. Why do you think this is so?
2. What are some of the ways that we can open our eyes to the poor?
3. What contact have you had with those who are poor or who are disabled or who live on the edge of society for one reason or another?
4. We can often feel overwhelmed by the needs around us. What small individual acts could you take that would help demonstrate compassion for someone.
5. Careful care is never easy. What from the previous two weeks on friends and speech could help us develop more careful care both within the church and the people around us?
6. Take a look through the gospels and see how Jesus demonstrated compassion and careful care.