

THE TRUE CAUSES OF POVERTY

Bryan Matthew Dockens

Politicians blame poverty on a lack of taxes and bureaucracy, as if one more government agency will finally make the problem go away. The Word of God points to other causes.

Laziness causes poverty (Proverbs 14:23; 20:13; 24:30-34; 28:19). In nearly half the proverbs that teach poverty as the consequence of sin, the sin named is laziness. To the prudent, it should be self-evident that prosperity is generally withheld from those unwilling to put in the effort and hard work to get ahead. *“A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep — So shall your poverty come on you like a prowler, and your need like an armed man”* (Proverbs 6:6-11).

Drunkenness and gluttony cause poverty. If laziness leads to poverty, then it is predictable that behaviors promoting laziness will have the same outcome. *“For the drunkard and the glutton will come to poverty, and drowsiness will clothe a man with rags”* (Proverbs 23:21).

One’s own greediness causes poverty. Trying too hard to get rich might just have the opposite effect. *“He who oppresses the poor to increase his riches, and he who gives to the rich, will surely come to poverty”* (Proverbs 22:16).

Scheming to get rich quick causes poverty. If laziness and greediness both result in poverty, then it must be true that people who are lazy about their greed will end up poor. *“A man with an evil eye hastens after riches, and does not consider that poverty will come upon him”* (Proverbs 28:22). And, *“The plans of the diligent lead surely to plenty, but those of everyone who is hasty, surely to poverty”* (21:5).

Stinginess causes poverty. It may seem paradoxical, but giving to the needy actually prevents one’s own poverty because God rewards generosity while He withholds blessings from misers. *“There is one who scatters, yet increases more; and there is one who withholds more than is right, but it leads to poverty. The generous soul will be made rich, and he who waters will also be watered himself. The people will curse him who withholds grain, but blessing will be on the head of him who sells it”* (Proverbs 11:24-26).

Resisting correction causes poverty. Solomon’s wisdom had a lot to say against those who refuse to be told they’re wrong. One

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DOES READING THE BIBLE CONSISTENTLY MATTER?

Kyle Campbell

I received an email this morning from YouVersion, the creator of Bible App. I use it to listen to the Bible during different times of the day.

It started by saying that reading Scripture isn’t just something to check off of your new year’s list — God’s Word will actually transform your life. I’ve definitely said the same publicly (and thought the same privately) all my adult life.

But then the email said something remarkable. YouVersion declared that research revealed that destructive habits decrease and positive habits increase when people are in God’s Word at least four days a week.

Someone who reads the Bible four or more times a week is:

- 59% less likely to view pornography.
- 74% less likely to gamble.
- 407% more likely to memorize Scripture.
- 228% more likely to talk about their faith with others.
- 231% more likely to help others become better disciples.

Additionally, these same people are 30% less likely to struggle with loneliness.

That’s pretty amazing, isn’t it? And it’s verification that the Word is *“a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path”* (Psalm 119:105).

Get into the Word today. Start a year-long reading program for the entire Bible or the New Testament. If you didn’t get started on New Year’s Day, don’t worry about it. You can start your plan today. It’s not a big deal.

The real deal is immersing yourself in God’s communication to you. It’ll make you a different person.

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punishment for stubbornness and pride is getting poor because people who cannot be told they’re wrong cannot learn and learning disabilities inhibit progress, especially the deliberate ones. *“Poverty and shame will come to him who disdains correction, but he who regards a rebuke will be honored”* (Proverbs 13:18).

**"WHAT MUST I DO
TO BE SAVED?"**

ACTS 16:30

LEARN THE GOSPEL

John 6:45; Romans 10:17

BELIEVE IN CHRIST

Hebrews 11:6; John 3:16

CONFESS CHRIST

Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 3:19; 17:30

BE BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST

Mark 16:16; Romans 6:3-6

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

**"THE ASSEMBLING OF
OURSELVES TOGETHER"**

HEBREWS 10:24-25

SUNDAY

Worship @ 10:00 a.m.

Studies @ 11:45 a.m.

WEDNESDAY

Studies & Worship @ 7:00 p.m.

75 Sherrod Boulevard

Belén, New Mexico

Seekers Welcome.

Members Expected.

**"IF A MAN IS OVERTAKEN IN
ANY TRESPASS...
RESTORE SUCH A ONE"**

GALATIANS 6:1

CONFESS TRESPASSES

James 5:16; 1st John 1:9

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 8:22

PRAY FOR FORGIVENESS

Acts 8:22

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

**"A WORD FITLY SPOKEN IS
LIKE APPLES OF GOLD IN
SETTINGS OF SILVER"**

PROVERBS 25:11

"Sometimes, God says, 'Yes.'
Sometimes, God says, 'No.'
Sometimes, God says, 'Wait.'

But God is always in control,
always faithful, always on time."

– Shane Pruitt

"WHOLE COUNSEL"

ACTS 20:27

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CONDITIONS FOR JOSHUA'S SUCCESS

Chadwick Brewer, adapted

God gave the leadership of His people to Joshua (Joshua 1), promising him success, but these promises came with conditions. He gave Joshua four conditions and also four promises if He meets the conditions.

Conditions:

1. "This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth" (8),
2. "Do according to all the law" (7),
3. "Be strong" (6),
4. "Be... of good courage" (6).

Promises:

1. "I will be with you" (5),
2. "You may prosper wherever you go" (7),
3. "No man shall be able to stand before you" (5),
4. "You shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore" (6).

How great would it be for us to commit ourselves to these conditions? What if we made sure the book of God's law never departed from our mouths and what we spoke to others in encouragement, advice, rebuke, and guidance was always derived from God's truth? What if we were careful to keep God's commandments above our own desires in all things? What if we were people of moral strength and fortitude? What if we were bold and courageous with how we lived our lives, striving to please God and not man? Make this your commitment! Consider the promises of God for those who live this way!

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