

Growing Deeper
Making Rainbows

Week Two: Recognizing the Rainmaker
Ecclesiastes 5:10-20

Spend FIFTEEN – Day One

1. Would you describe yourself as someone who sees the world with a glass half-empty or a glass half-full lens? Where do you think that mindset started?
2. Read Ecclesiastes 5:10-12. Solomon, whose wisdom was a gift from God, wrote about wealth and contentedness based on his observations of life around him. Do his observations found in these verses match your experiences? Why or why not?
3. Read Matthew 6:25-34. What does God provide for his people?
4. Reread Ecclesiastes 5:12. Are you the laborer or the rich? What do you find yourself dwelling on: the abundance that you have or the knowledge that your needs are being provided for?
5. As you end your FIFTEEN, ask God to provide what you need today. At the end of this day (if you are studying in the morning) or the beginning of the next (if you are studying in the evening), list out what God has provided for you physically. Thank him for providing those things.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Two

6. Think about your most treasured possession(s). How did you acquire it, and how did it acquire its value to you?
7. Read Ecclesiastes 5:13-20. What can happen to wealth (read: money or possessions)? Where does wealth come from? Is everyone given the same amount? What is the same about the gifts to the laborers and the rich?
8. Is this how you view wealth? Why do you agree or disagree?
9. Read Matthew 6:19-21. What does Jesus teach about valuing possessions?
10. What can you treasure that will be stored up for you in heaven? (Read Galatians 5:22-23, Proverbs 2:1-15, Philippians 3:7-9.)
11. Finish your FIFTEEN in a time of silent reflection; ask God to reveal to you what you treasure most. Thank him for

this revelation and ask him to become your most treasured possession.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Three

12. Do you see God as a Giver or a Taker? Why do you feel that way?
13. Read Ephesians 1. How would Paul describe God: A Giver or a Taker? What things did God give us through Christ? What things did God take from us through Christ?
14. Read 2 Peter 1:3-4. According to Peter, what does God give to us?
15. Look at the lists above. What do you need to remember that God gives to you? What do you need to remember that God takes from you?
16. To finish your FIFTEEN, write down the keywords on a notecard to put in a prominent place for you or write them in dry-erase marker on a mirror. Reflect on God the Giver and his gifts to you.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Four

17. What is your first reaction when someone gives you an unexpected gift? Do you see them as thoughtful? Do you see them as generous? Do you feel like they wouldn't give you a gift if they knew who you really were? Why do you think you react this way?
18. God has given us an indescribable gift in Jesus. Would you attribute any of the previous statements written about receiving a gift to God? Why or why not?
19. Read 1 John 4:7-18. What is the describing word for God in this passage? Does God's love for you have to do with anything you have done?
20. Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. Read it a second time but replace "love," which is the subject of all the sentences, with "God." How do you see God's characteristic of love in your life?
21. Take the rest of your FIFTEEN to make God's Word personal today. Reread 1 John 4 and replace "us" with "me" and "we" with "I"/your name. Make it personal. Reread 1 Corinthians 13 and add the phrase "with me" to each sentence. Make it personal. Thank God for how he loves you personally and deeply.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Five

22. Where do you see yourself on the generosity journey? <https://pathfinderstl.org/ways-to-give/generosity/>
23. Read Luke 19:1-10. Zacchaeus was described as wealthy (vs. 3). How did he acquire such wealth?
24. Why would Zacchaeus go to great lengths (like climbing a tree) to see Jesus? What might he have heard about Jesus before Jesus entered Jericho? (See Luke 18:35-42 for an event that happened outside of Jericho.)
25. What gift do you think the Giver (Jesus) gave to Zacchaeus?
26. What was Zacchaeus' response to the Giver?
27. How do you respond when you recognize the activity of the Giver (God) in your life?
28. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cgpvCVkrV6M> Listen to *Better* by Pat Barrett. Thank God for Jesus, who really is better than anything we can have in this life.