



WWYD: Poor | October 10, 2018

Discussion Guide

The Scoop

Have you ever been in a fight or flight situation? Can you remember how you felt or acted and could you explain why you acted the way you did?

Key Verses

Proverbs 14:31 (NIV)

"Whoever oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honors God."

Discussion

Imagine losing control of your vehicle in the winter. No doubt a very scary situation. Then think about the moments immediately following. The truth is, many of us would be too frozen in fear or thought to pick up the phone and make a call for help. If you've ever been in a fight or flight situation, like this, you may empathize with the fact that it's almost impossible to make a decision under these circumstances. It's actually proven that we lose the ability to think rationally.

1. When was the last time you were in a fight or flight situation? Do you remember how you felt when the dust settled?
2. Why do you think we lose the ability to think rationally under these circumstances?

While many of us sit in homes that are well furnished and heated, with refrigerators full of fresh food and cars full of gas, it can be difficult for us to understand why a homeless person would spend hours on the corner asking for money. To us, the rational thought would be "Why don't they just look for a job?" But the reality is, most poor people live in a constant state of instability or fear. Every day is a fight. So it's not a matter of ambition or trying harder that makes it difficult for these people to lead "normal" lives, but a matter of losing the ability to think rationally under intense stress.

3. Do you think your privilege makes it hard for you to understand why a poor person might make certain decisions? Why or why not?
4. How does this truth encourage you to think differently about homeless and poor people? How does it change your perception of the decisions they make?

In Proverbs 14:31, we read about how our faith should encourage us to engage with people who have less than we do, to lean into instead of away from them. These people are made in the image of God, and we are called to love and empower them. When we are kind to the poor, the Bible says, we honor God. As we put ourselves in other's shoes, it becomes impossible to ignore people who have less than we do.

5. When you think about poor people being made in the image of God, just like you, how does it shift your perspective?
6. Why do you think it honors God when we are kind to the poor? Have you felt God's grace as you've engaged with the poor?

What's Next?

If you're not already, try getting involved in a community program, where you are giving of your time, money or resources to benefit those who have less than you. When we help provide even a little stability or security for people who live in a constant state of worry, it can make a huge difference.

This week, as you live out your faith, do something different so that you can in turn provide security for someone in need. Engage your faith with the way that you see or think about poor people. Ask God to reveal how He'd like you to lean into your community or the homeless community at large. Think about how you might be the hands and feet of Jesus to the poor this week.