

Study Guide for June 24th, 2012: Cultivating a CHEERFUL Heart. (Selected Proverbs)

Introduction: Who would you describe as being genuinely cheerful and thankful?
Spend time reflecting on each proverb then answer the questions. Note fresh insights.

I. A Cheerful Heart: What can you do to develop a more cheerful heart?

(Prov. 15:15) All the days of the oppressed are wretched,
but the cheerful heart has a continual feast

(Prov. 15:13) A happy heart makes the face cheerful, but heartache crushes the spirit.

(Prov. 18:14) A man's spirit sustains him in sickness, but a crushed spirit who can bear?

(Prov. 12:25) An anxious heart weighs a man down, but a kind word cheers him up.

(Prov. 14:30) A heart at peace gives life to the body, but envy rots the bones.

(Prov. 17:22) A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.

- 1) Thoughts and attitudes, not circumstances, determine emotional well being. How has that truth been brought home for you?
- 2) Life is hard. What helps you sustain internal equilibrium? When have you feasted emotionally despite trying outward circumstances?

II. A Grateful Heart: What can you do to develop a more grateful heart?

(Prov. 10:22) The blessing of the Lord brings wealth, and he adds no trouble to it.

(Prov. 15:16) Better a little with the fear of the Lord than great wealth with turmoil.

(Prov. 16:8) Better a little with righteousness than much gain with injustice.

(Prov. 19:23) The fear of the Lord leads to life:
Then one rests content, untouched by trouble.

(Prov. 14:10) Each heart knows its own bitterness, and no one else can share its joy.

- 1) How has God's blessing enriched your life? Give thanks for some of the ways.
- 2) When has envy or discontent controlled? What helped you break through to joy?