

POVERTY,
RICHES
and
WEALTH
LEADER'S GUIDE

MOVING FROM A LIFE OF LACK

— *into* —

TRUE KINGDOM ABUNDANCE

KRIS VALLOTTON



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Launching a *Poverty, Riches and Wealth* Group

Once you have decided to launch a group study of *Poverty, Riches and Wealth*, you can approach it in a number of ways. Whatever approach you choose, I trust the end result will be the same—a better understanding of true Kingdom wealth and how to grow in your capacity for it, both stewarding it well now and also leaving a legacy for future generations. The *Poverty, Riches and Wealth Curriculum Kit* contains everything you need to make these end results a reality, with one exception. You and your group members will need that power from on high Jesus talked about when He told His disciples, “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth” (Acts 1:8). To lead your participants out of a poverty mindset and into the wealth of the Kingdom, you will need the presence of the Holy Spirit in attendance at your group meetings. Make sure to invite Him in and give Him room to work in you and through you as you lead your group through this *Poverty, Riches and Wealth (PRW)* study.

Let’s take a look at the different ways that you could launch and lead a *PRW* study. If you have used any of my other curriculum kits, the pages just ahead may seem familiar to you. But in case this is your first time leading a group or using my materials, I want to go over these important details for you. As you choose your approach and formulate a plan in the days ahead, consider your situation, seek the Lord’s direction, take stock of the resources you have available and ask Him for His creativity.

Church Life Group or Small Group Approach

Many churches offer life groups or small groups that meet regularly outside the church, usually in someone’s home. Such a group provides an ideal setting for studying *Poverty, Riches and Wealth*. Your church may already have such groups in place. If not, you may want to suggest forming them, at least temporarily, for the purpose of this study. Each group would meet for six or seven sessions (usually once a week) specifically to focus on the material presented in the *PRW* book, workbook and video teachings.

Each study group that forms should include at least four or five people, which facilitates discussion, with a maximum of ten or twelve people. Groups larger than a dozen make it difficult for everyone to give and receive feedback effectively. Larger groups can divide into more numerous, smaller groups or move toward a church class approach (which I will discuss next). Here are the essentials for leading a group study:

- A consistent meeting place, either in the leader's home, another home or a space the church provides.
- Adequate technology in the form of a DVD player/TV/computer large enough and loud enough for all the group members to see and hear. (A small laptop playing at the far end of a room may make it difficult for a dozen people to get the most out of the video teachings.)
- A committed leader/facilitator who is familiar with the material well ahead of time and who is willing to follow the lead of the Holy Spirit as the group moves through the teachings. This could be an individual, or it could be a team, perhaps husband/wife hosts or two church leaders working together. The leader(s) will direct the sessions from beginning to end and perhaps call ahead to group members or send them online reminders about the meetings.
- A plan or schedule for the group meetings to keep them flowing smoothly through the various elements that will occupy the group's time together—fellowship, worship, prayer, a video teaching, discussion and ministry time. (In "Formatting Your Group Sessions" ahead, I provide a sample schedule that works well for group meetings.)

Once you have these leadership essentials in place, you are ready to set a date for your first session and sign people up to take part in your group. At the end of this guide, I have provided a syllabus that you can copy, fill in and hand out to each participant so that they will have a schedule of your meetings and will know what to cover in their book and workbook in preparation for each meeting.

Church Class/Midweek Meeting/Sunday School Approach

In addition to weekend services, most churches offer some kind of church classes to disciple members and help them grow. These classes often cover a wide variety of topics that change from time to time, and meeting times may range from midweek services to Sunday school classes to some other agreed-upon time like a Saturday morning Bible study. Any of these models could lend itself to a study of *Poverty, Riches and Wealth*.

Since a large number of people are usually involved in such classes, the discussion element of a *PRW* study (or any other study) may become more of a challenge than it would be in a smaller group, but leaders can still encourage some dialogue. Also, because of time constraints, it may be necessary to extend the

number of weeks to allow sufficient time for the class to work its way through the study. For example, a class could take two weeks to cover each session. One week could be devoted to watching the video teaching for a particular session of the *PRW* study and talking about the principles I present in the video and in the book readings. The following week could be devoted to going over the leader's guide "Discussion Questions" and the workbook "Life Application" involved in that session.

Although small groups are an ideal approach to this study and are the model I had in mind as I put together this curriculum kit, you can certainly adapt a class approach as an effective model to get these principles across to a larger group already accustomed to meeting at a regular time. The ability to increase people's understanding of true Kingdom wealth does not change based on the size of the group or the setting. If you will give the Holy Spirit room to work, you can effectively teach *Poverty, Riches and Wealth* in a variety of settings. Do not feel that the effects of this study will be limited if you need to adopt more of a classroom approach.

Church-Wide Group Study Approach

In this approach, the pastor and senior leadership of a church decide to take the entire church through a study of *Poverty, Riches and Wealth* together. Weekend sermons would focus on the principles presented in the book and video teachings (and some video clips might be shown in services). Sunday school/mid-week classes/small groups would all focus on some aspect of the study, perhaps watching the videos together and discussing the questions and life applications.

The church-wide approach could be presented as *30 Days of Moving from Lack into True Kingdom Abundance* (reflecting the six sessions of five daily studies each in the workbook). Each congregant could be encouraged to make the most of the church-wide focus by reading the *PRW* book, going through the workbook and participating in group sessions.

This approach is a great way to get everyone in a church body moving in the same direction, toward understanding and growing in their capacity for true Kingdom wealth. It is especially effective if a small group component is added to the overall church focus.

Individual Study Approach

As I said, I had group studies in mind when I designed the curriculum kits that go along with my books, including this one. Where there is no group study or church focus available to take part in, however, individuals can use the *PRW* book, workbook and video teachings on their own to explore with me some ways to leave behind a poverty mindset and set sail on the sea of possibility that opens up for people who develop a healthy wealth mindset.

With the Holy Spirit as teacher and guide in an individual study of these materials, everyone can learn how to step out of poverty thinking and into

possibility thinking, where their creativity, imagination and capacity can grow. Again, the Holy Spirit's effectiveness is not limited to a certain size group or a particular setting, but if there is a group study to join, I do recommend that approach because of the fellowship, encouragement and discussion opportunities it can provide.

Preparing to Lead

While I always emphasize to group leaders that format should never replace flexibility when it comes to following the lead of the Holy Spirit, in a group setting the presence of the Lord is stewarded best in the midst of organization. Someone has to oversee the practical preparations for a group study, watch over the time schedule, facilitate the flow of the meeting and the ministry, and pray for the group ahead of time. That *someone* will be *you* as the group leader or class facilitator. Let me give you some guidelines that will help you prepare to lead this *PRW* study and minister to the participants.

Prepare with Prayer

I am sure it goes without saying that your first step in preparing to lead a *PRW* group is prayer. You have already prayed for the Lord's direction and determined that you are supposed to lead a group through this study. Continue to pray for increased insight on your part into everything involved in having a healthy wealth mindset and moving into a life of Kingdom abundance. Also pray for a deeper understanding of the spiritual and financial principles you will be covering as you lead the group. Spend some time with the Holy Spirit, asking Him to give you vision for what this study can accomplish in your life and the lives of your participants.

Session by session, pray for your group or class meetings ahead of time, and pray for the individuals who will attend. Be ready and willing to entertain questions, and be patient and persistent as you guide the group through these materials. For many, the idea of *riches* and *wealth* being two entirely different things will be novel to them. Beyond that, the idea that all believers should be wealthy—though not necessarily rich—will become clear to them for the first time. There is much to learn, and the Lord is about to do a marvelous work in the life of each person in your group as you walk through these sessions together.

Prepare with Study

Prepare to lead your *PRW* group by studying the material yourself *ahead of time*. Your first exposure to the principles contained in *Poverty, Riches and*

Wealth should not take place in the middle of leading your group. By the time you meet for a session, you should have completed the assigned Scripture and book readings yourself, watched the video teaching, tackled the workbook's "Questions to Consider," and made some life application in your daily walk. You should also have read through the session in this guide.

In fact, I think it is a wise idea to work through the entire curriculum in this kit before taking on a leadership role, so that you are familiar with what is coming in each of the sessions. That will better prepare you to answer questions that may arise or direct the group to put a certain topic on hold until you reach the particular session that covers it. You will gain confidence and assurance to lead when you study ahead of time, so that you will know where you are going with the group and how you will get there.

You do not need to be a brilliant academic scholar or hermeneutical expert to understand the material I present in *Poverty, Riches and Wealth*. While I was extremely careful with the scriptural scholarship required to put these truths on the printed page, they are truths understood more with the spirit than with the mind. All the same, a little diligent scholarship can go a long way toward increasing the net spiritual effect of a study like this. As Jesus told us in Luke 6:39–40, "A blind man cannot guide a blind man, can he? Will they not both fall into a pit? A pupil is not above his teacher; but everyone, after he has been fully trained, will be like his teacher." If you will be diligent in your study to search out the truths contained in the book, your group participants will see your familiarity with the material and the skill with which you handle it, and it will motivate them to be like you.

Prepare on a Practical Level

You have probably heard the saying that some Christians are so heavenly minded that they are no earthly good. It is true that you cannot take much territory for the Kingdom of God if you are so focused on heaven that you cannot walk out your faith powerfully here on earth. As I say in chapter 7 of *Poverty, Riches and Wealth*, however, the truth is that we are so heavenly minded that we are *full of earthly goods*. How does that apply to leading this study? Simply put, in addition to your preparation time in prayer and study, you need to prepare to lead on a practical level. If you will attend to the practical details, things will go much more smoothly in your group.

After you know which approach you are using for your group, determine a meeting location that has sufficient space for everyone and appropriate audio-visual equipment to play the video teachings. The more comfortable you can make the setting, the more people will look forward to the meetings, without being distracted by issues like not enough seating or inadequate, uncooperative equipment. When you take care of the practical things up front, you minimize distractions and give yourself credibility as a leader.

Once your location is ready, set a schedule for your meetings. Pick a time period when your church calendar is not already filled with special events that

will require large amounts of people's time. They will be more apt to commit to your group when they are not overcommitted in other areas. Check with other church leadership and the pastor(s) to make sure your proposed study does not conflict with anything major on the agenda, and then set a starting date. You should plan to follow the six-session curriculum consistently and consecutively to make the best use of your group's time together.

Once you establish a time period for your study, pick a day of the week and a time to meet (unless those are already determined in a church class or the like). It can be hard to accommodate everyone's work schedules and home life, but choose a day and time that will work best for the majority. Perhaps you can consider offering an alternate study at a future date for those who are unable to attend your current group.

Decide ahead of time about other practical matters such as whether your group will include refreshments or will make provision for childcare. Again, planning ahead in these areas can eliminate a host of distractions once your group begins. (I talk more about the specifics of planning your group time together in the section just ahead.)

Prepare to Get the Word Out

For a church-connected group study to succeed, church leadership must endorse it. Make sure your pastor and church leaders are aware of your proposed *PRW* study and are behind it. They can position themselves to help you with the launch by getting the word out.

Use multiple means, if possible, to let people at your church know a study group is forming and that they are invited to participate. See if an announcement can be made from the pulpit. Advertise the group on your church's website. Post a sign-up sheet and print flyers. Send out emails and post the event on your church's social media outlets. Make personal phone calls to individuals you sense should be involved in your group.

Prepare Potential Co-leaders or Assistants

Often, there will be people right in your group who are good candidates for co-leaders or assistants. You may need them. Once you have a list of participant names, prayerfully consider whether there is someone on the list who is spiritually solid and mature, who could back you up during group ministry time or take your place leading the group in the event that you must miss a session.

Also think about which people on the list could assist with the practical side of things. Is there someone who enjoys working in the kitchen? Could that person oversee refreshments session to session or circulate a sign-up sheet so that you would not have to? Is there someone who enjoys children? Would that person be willing to plan activities for the group's children and make sure to enlist teens or other helpers to come in and do childcare for the couple of hours that you meet? Is there someone on the list who enjoys showing hospitality? Might that

person open his or her home to the group meetings and take care of the physical environment for you so that you can attend to the spiritual atmosphere?

You do not need to do everything yourself to lead a successful group. In fact, it might be better if you did not. Let the participants invest in the group by contributing to its welfare. There may be some who simply want to come, listen and learn, and go home, but there may be others who are more than willing to help out if asked. They may even offer before you ask. Take them up on their offer!

Prepare Your Participants

As participants sign up for your group, let them know ahead of time what they are getting into. It might be a good idea to fill in and copy the syllabus at the back of this guide, which is designed to serve as an information sheet that participants can take home as soon as they sign up. Listed on the syllabus should be the dates, time and location of your meetings, along with the materials everyone involved in the group will need. Participants should each have a copy of the *Poverty, Riches and Wealth* book and the *Poverty, Riches and Wealth Workbook*. They will not need the *Poverty, Riches and Wealth Leader's Guide* or the video teachings/DVDs unless they plan to lead a group in the future. You, however, will need the book, workbook, leader's guide and videos to lead the group. You can purchase all the necessary materials together in one place in the *Poverty, Riches and Wealth Curriculum Kit*.

If your church has a bookstore, inquire about whether it can stock the *PRW* curriculum materials, as well as copies of the book, during the course of your group study (and beyond). You could also make the materials available for purchase at your sign-up table, or at least have copies on hand for participants to look at so they can find and order the book and workbook online. If you are able, it might also be good to have a few extra copies of both the book and workbook available for purchase at your first meeting, in case any latecomers join you and still need the materials. Your group will get off to a good start if you let everyone know how to obtain the *PRW* book and workbook quickly and easily so that they can get started with the study.

As participants sign up, also let them know that *before* the group has its first meeting, they should work through Session 1 in the workbook, which includes readings from the *PRW* book and from Scripture. That way, everyone will be on the same page, having completed the assignments in Session 1 so that you can jump right in at that first meeting. The participants would then continue to work through one session per meeting, studying the material for the session under discussion *prior to each meeting*.