

# DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

*Our Mission: Reaching Out to Leaders Who Can Change the World.*

July 2013

## *The Sermon on the Mount*

### **Lesson #1: The Beatitudes**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Who has been your best teacher? Why?

#### **OBSERVATION/INTERPRETATION**

Read Matt 5:1-12

*Note: Since Matthew is written by a Jew to other Jews, the mountainside setting would have reminded them of Moses handing down the Law at Mt Sinai (Deut 18:15). Jewish rabbis sat when they taught, emphasizing Jesus' authoritative position. The Beatitudes are called that because in the Latin Bible, each line starts with beatus. The Greek word for "blessed" refers to people who are to be congratulated, not to those that are glad or thriving. Well-being and spiritual joy is independent of circumstances. The beatitudes define the Christian character (inner values) which leads to Christian activity – the attitudes that ought to be in every Christian's life. The progression of verses shows how a person recognizes their own sin, becomes a child of God and follows with action. Verses 1-6 show attitudes towards God, the rest show the behavior of new life. Some say that the key verse is Matt 5:20, that legal righteousness is not enough for God.*

1. What is wrong with self-sufficiency? Vs 3 2 Cor 3:5; Isa 57:15

*Note: "Poor in spirit" refers to someone who acknowledges their need for God.*

2. How did Peter's **mourning** (Matt 26:75) compare to Judas remorse (Matt 27:3-4)? Isa 6:5

*Note: Mourning is not for the bereaved but for the reality of sin and its consequences.*

3. Why was Moses considered meek (Num 12:3) even though he judged sin? Vs 5

*Note: It's origin implies domesticated strength like a trained stallion.*

4. Why do Christians have an appetite for spiritual things? Vs 6 How do we receive His righteousness? Eph 2:8

5. Why is mercy (having a forgiving spirit and love for others) not legalism? Vs 7 Pr 11:17; Jas 2:13

6. What is the difference between being pure in heart and being sinless? Vs 8 Ps 51:6; 1 Jn 1:8

7. Do you think peacemakers should embrace "peace at any price" or is holiness in conflict with this? Vs 9; Jas 3:17; Heb 12:14

*Note: "Sons of God" was a Hebrew idiom that reflected one's family character.*

8. Why should we expect suffering if we lead Godly lives? What if we're not (suffering)? 2 Tim 3:12 What is the reward for persecution? Vv. 10-12

*Note: Heaven is not just life after death, but experiencing the presence of God.*

9. What are you willing to stand up for even though you will be persecuted for it?

#### **APPLICATION**

- Some say, "If your heart is right; you will do what is right." Is your attitude more in line with "the world" or with God? Is your spiritual life showing a growth towards the Beatitudes? If not, what can change?

*"The Sermon on the Mount is neither an impractical ideal nor a set of fixed legal regulations. It is, instead, a statement of the principles of life essential in a normal society.... Many of the sayings of the Sermon are metaphorical or proverbial statements and are not to be understood in a literal or legal sense. In them, Jesus was illustrating principles in concrete terms." The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia. vol. 4 p. 2735.<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> Utley, R. J. (2000). Vol. Volume 9: The First Christian Primer: Matthew. Study Guide Commentary Series (35). Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International.