

# Small Group Questions

## Sermon Based Small Groups - January 9, 2011

Adult Education – Woodbury Community Church  
Woodbury, Minnesota

Sermon Title: Good Grief!

Sermon Series: The Sermon on the Mount: Living as Citizens in the Kingdom of Heaven

Notes:

**Pray:** One of the characteristics of true Christians is that we pray for one another. Take some time at the beginning of your small group time to pray for each other. Be real with each other. If you are hurting, take the risk and share how you are feeling with the group. If you have something that God has blessed you with this week, share it. Give Him the glory for what He is doing in your life. Record the prayer requests in the “Notes” section on the right of this page, and make a commitment to pray for the needs of the people in your group throughout the week.

**Read:** Matthew 5:1-12

**Discuss:** Jesus chose to begin His Sermon on the Mount with the Beatitudes. Some people have called these the “beautiful attitudes” of the Christian life. Take a few minutes to talk about what you think that Jesus means by each of the Beatitudes. Which of the Beatitudes resonates most with you? Which one of the Beatitudes is toughest for you to exhibit in your life.

**Read:** Luke 6:17-26

**Discuss:** What are some of the similarities that you see between the Matthew 5:1-12 passage and this teaching of Jesus in Luke 6:17-26? What are some of the differences? How do you reconcile the differences?

Matthew Passage	Luke Passage	Similarities/Differences

**Review:**

Last week Pastor Brian began his series on The Sermon on the Mount with a look at the first Beatitude. “3 Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 5:3). In describing what “poor in spirit” means, Brian quoted from Kent Hughes’ book entitled, *The Sermon on the Mount: The Message of the Kingdom*. Here is what Brian said, “The Greek is helpful

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here. Kent Hughes writes that the Greek word for *poor* is *ptochos*. ‘It comes from a verbal root that denotes, ‘to cower and cringe like a beggar’ . . . In the New Testament it bears something of this idea because it denotes a poverty so deep that the person must obtain his living by begging. He is fully dependent on the giving of others. He cannot survive without help from the outside. Thus an excellent translation is ‘beggarly poor’ . . . The sense is “Blessed are those so desperately poor in their spiritual resources that they realize they must have help from outside sources. Poverty of Spirit, then, is the personal acknowledgement of spiritual bankruptcy.”<sup>1</sup>

How does understanding “poor in spirit” from this perspective make you appreciate what Jesus has done for you?

This week, Pastor Brian spoke about the second Beatitude, which says, “4 Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.” How is this Beatitude a paradox?

Arthur Pink once wrote, “The closer the Christian lives to God, the more he will mourn over all that dishonors Him.”<sup>2</sup> Do you agree or disagree with that statement? How should Pink’s statement on what this Beatitude is about impact our lives?

There is a sense in which this Beatitude has both present and future promise attached to it. How is this Beatitude a present reality in your life?

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**Read:** Split into groups of two and read the following passages: Psalm 119:53, Jeremiah 13:17, Jeremiah 14:17, Ezekiel 9:4, Philippians 4:7, 1 John 1:7-9, 2 Corinthians 6:10. What do they have to say about the comfort that God offers to those who mourn over sin?

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<sup>1</sup> Kent Hughes, *The Sermon on the Mount: The Message of the Kingdom*, (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2001), p. 19.

<sup>2</sup> Arthur Pink, *The Beatitudes, Kindle Edition*, (Public Domain), p. 97.

## **The Sermon on the Mount**

### **Good Grief!**

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**Read:** If it is a present reality that those who mourn are blessed, how much more is it a future reality! Read the following verses and write down how this Beatitude will be fulfilled in eternity for those who are fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ.

- Hebrews 12:11
  
- 2 Corinthians 6:10
  
- Psalm 30:5
  
- Romans 8:17
  
- Isaiah 35:10
  
- Revelation 21:3-4

**Quote:** Throughout our study in the Sermon on the Mount we are going to see that Jesus continually calls His children out to live holy lives. Read this quote by John Stott and share your reaction to it with the group.

“No comment could be more hurtful to the Christian than the words, ‘But you are no different from anybody else.’ For the essential theme of the whole Bible from beginning to end is that God’s historical purpose is to call out a people for himself; that this is a ‘holy’ people, set apart from the world to belong to him and to obey him; and that its vocation is to be true to its identity, that is, to be ‘holy’ or ‘different’ in all its outlook and behavior.”<sup>3</sup>

### **Pray**

We began our time today praying for each other’s needs. Let’s end our time by praying that we will be a holy generation, set apart by God for His purposes. Let’s pray that each one of us will see sin from God’s perspective. Let’s pray that God will break our hearts with the things that break the heart of God.

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<sup>3</sup> John Stott, *The Message of The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7)*, (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1978), p.17.