

[ A Devotional Study *on* Growing in Character  
from the Beatitudes ]

LORD,  
Only YOU  
Can  
Change Me



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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

# Chapter 1

1. As you read the Sermon on the Mount, what made the most significant impression on your mind?
2. What did you learn about righteousness?
3. What did you learn about the kingdom of heaven?
4. According to the Sermon on the Mount, who is going to heaven? What are the four basic requirements of those who will enter the kingdom of heaven?
5. What is the meaning of the word hypocrite? How does hypocrisy manifest itself?
6. Is hypocrisy in any form demonstrated in your life? What would others see if they really knew you? Try to be honest, vulnerable, and willing to grow.
7. Is your Christianity working? If not, in which areas are you failing?
8. What, if anything, needs to change in order for your life to become a true mirror image of what is inside?
9. Review the outline of the Sermon on the Mount with its chapter and verse divisions, as given on page 15.

## CHAPTER 2

1. Define the word blessed. How does blessedness relate to happiness?
  
2. From where does the world think happiness comes? Why? From where does true happiness come?
  
3. What does it mean to be poor in spirit? What do the poor in spirit receive?
  - a. Give an illustration from the Scriptures
  
  - b. How can a person come to see his poverty of spirit
  
4. Why is it necessary to see and acknowledge your poverty of spirit? If you don't, what are you like? Can God bless that? Why?
  
5. Do you have attitudes or influences in your life that may keep you from recognizing your own poverty of spirit? How would your life be different if you made a decision to leave pride, self-assurance, and self-reliance behind?
  
6. In what ways can you relate to Paul's experience in Romans 7?
  
7. How do the poor in spirit live on a daily basis? How is Jesus our example?

## CHAPTER 3

1. Have the class quote Matthew 5:4. How would you explain this second beatitude to someone?
2. Why are those who mourn blessed?
3. Over what things are we to mourn?
4. How are you personally affected by your own sins? Discuss the two kinds of sorrow mentioned in 2 Corinthians 7. Have you experienced these two kinds of sorrow? What was the effect of each one?
5. How does sin in the church impact members of the body? What insights have you gained from 1 Corinthians 5 and Matthew 18:15-20?
6. How are you to respond to sin in the lives of others? What is the benefit of following the directive of Matthew 18:15-20?
7. What are your thoughts as you consider what is happening in our society and in our world? How does Ezekiel 9 relate to today's world?
8. What happens to discernment when God's people do not confront sin?
9. What place did mourning have in the life of Jesus?
10. What impressed you the most about this week's study?

11. Have the class share anything God is doing in their lives ?as a result of this study.

## **CHAPTER 4**

1. How would you explain the sovereignty of God?
  - a. Define sovereignty.
  - b. Over what things is God sovereign?
  - c. Is God's sovereignty a concept we can fully grasp? Why or why not?
2. How does knowing the character of God help you to understand His sovereignty?
3. What did you learn about the attributes of God? How would you define them? What practical implications do they have for your life?
4. How do sovereignty and the character of God relate to meekness?
5. Have the class recite Matthew 5:5.
6. How would you define meekness? In what ways does your definition of meekness differ from the world's definition?
7. If God is not sovereign, what then?
8. Do you trust God's character and His love for you? If not, what will it take for you to make the decision to trust Him?
9. How has God spoken to you this week? Is there anything you are struggling with?
10. Close with a prayer for one another.



## CHAPTER 5

1. What new insights have you gained concerning meekness?
2. How did Jesus display meekness? Is meekness really just weakness?
3. Have the class recite this week's memory verses: Matthew 11:28-30.
4. From where does meekness come? What is the source?
5. How is meekness toward God demonstrated in a person's behavior? How is meekness toward men demonstrated?
6. What is the relationship of meekness to humility?
7. Does the thought of accepting and submitting to God's authority in your life scare you? What causes this fear? How can you handle it?
8. How is meekness related to righteous indignation? Can the meek experience anger? Explain.
9. What is the relationship of meekness to weakness? If we are meek, are we doormats? Explain.
10. Explain the relationship of bitterness to meekness.
11. What effect does bitterness have? What must you do with bitterness? If you don't, what will bitterness do to you?

12. Do you see God changing you?

## **CHAPTER 6**

1. Quote the beatitude for the week.
2. What does it mean to hunger and thirst after righteousness?
3. How would you define and illustrate righteousness?
4. What admonition did Jesus give to guard us against judging others hypocritically?
5. What analogies did Jesus use to illustrate the two responses to His invitation to enter the kingdom of heaven?
6. How is God's righteousness demonstrated in your life?
7. Do you have any areas of self-righteousness you need to let go? What happens to your heart when you judge others by self-righteous standards?
8. What seven things can you do to increase your hunger and thirst for righteousness?
9. Which of these seven is the most difficult for you to do? Why?



## CHAPTER 7

1. How would you define mercy?
2. How does God display His mercy?
3. How did the tabernacle show God's mercy? What function did the Ark of the Covenant and the Mercy Seat have on the Day of Atonement? What did these foreshadow?
4. Look again at Matthew 18:21-35.
  - a. How did the debts of the two men compare?
  - b. What was Jesus' purpose in telling this story?
  - c. What significance does this story have for our lives?
  - d. How did God speak to you personally?
5. Is there anyone you are having a hard time forgiving? If so, take time to pray for that person. Is there someone who could pray with you, perhaps someone who has been in a similar situation?
6. What does it mean to be pure in heart?
7. How does a person get a pure heart?
8. What practical things can we do to keep our hearts pure?
9. What does Ezekiel 33:14-16 tell us will keep a man from dying as a result of God's judgment?
10. Ask the class, "Do any of you need to make restitution for something? If so, can we pray for you or help you in the process?"
11. If you make any necessary restitution, how do you think it will affect your relationship with your heavenly Father? When were you reconciled to God, and what changes have you seen in your life as a result?

## CHAPTER 8

1. What is the true meaning of peace?
2. According to Genesis 8:21 and Jeremiah 17:9, why is there no peace among human beings?
3. How do we get a new heart? Have some of the class share how their hearts changed when God saved them.
4. How can people be at peace with each other? Explain the words enmity and reconcile.
5. How can man be reconciled to God? Look once again at Colossians 1:20-22; Romans 5:10-11, and 2 Corinthians 5:18-21. What do these say about reconciliation?
6. What brings disharmony between believers? What practical things can Christians do to make peace?
7. What part does persecution play in the life of a Christian? Explain your answer using Scripture.
8. What forms can persecution take?
9. What purpose does persecution have?
10. How are we to handle it when persecution comes? What do we learn from Jesus' example in 1 Peter 2:21-25?
11. Ask if anyone is suffering persecution now and how the class can pray for him or her.
12. Have the class review Matthew 5:9-12 or whatever portion they have memorized.

## CHAPTER 9

1. Have the class quote the memory verse for the week.
2. Why did Jesus use the metaphors of salt and light to describe a Christian?
3. Discuss the varied uses of salt in biblical days.
4. What did you learn about salt that relates to our lives as children of God?
5. Can you see some ways that you act as salt? Could you be saltier? Have you lost your savor?
6. Discuss what you learned about Lot. What was his ambition? His situation? What was Lot's impact on his society?
7. Compare Lot's life to your own. In what ways have you failed to impact your society? Why?
8. What did you learn about light and the Christian's relationship to it?
9. What is the message of John 5:5-7? How does it compare with John 8:12; 9:5; 12:46? Read these passages and discuss them.
10. What about those who claim to know Christ but walk in darkness as a habit of life? What does the Word of God say? Where?
11. Talk about specific ways in which our light shines.
12. What has happened in your life in these past weeks? What has changed? How? What do you want to happen?

Have the class close by praying for one another. Then discuss the benefits of finishing the study of the Sermon on the Mount by doing Lord, I'm Torn Between Two Masters.

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