

Week 1: *Be Honest – Admitting that you need God*

ARRIVAL/CONNECTING and SNACK: (15 Minutes) Spend time catching up and socializing with one another. Follow up on prayer requests and any action steps from your last time together.

SHORT OPENING PRAYER FOR YOUR TIME TOGETHER: (2 minutes)

SCRIPTURE READING: (5 minutes)

Have someone read **Matthew 5:1-12** slowly enough for everyone to enjoy. Pause, then read again just **verse 3** and quietly reflect for a few minutes.

Group Leader Notes:

1. Jesus is introducing what His kingdom looks like. It is very different from what the Jewish leaders before him taught. God created humanity to experience His fullness and “blessedness.” Sin came into humanity and ruined that relationship. Jesus, the Son of God, has come into the world to reclaim His kingdom and is teaching the world how to enter that kingdom and how that kingdom enters into us.
2. Jesus uses the word “Blessed.” Blessed is a state being where there is lasting contentment and joy. Every time Jesus uses the word “Blessed” he is talking about a spiritual state of being.
3. To be poor in spirit is to be totally honest about our desperate need for God’s salvation and life.

OBSERVATION and REFLECTIONS: (20 minutes)

- What are the results of becoming “poor in spirit” according to Jesus?
- What is the opposite of “blessed?” What is the opposite of being “poor in spirit?”

Have someone read **Revelation 3:15-18**.

- How does Revelation 3:15-18 help us understand Matthew 5:3?
- How does a person gain the “kingdom of heaven” according to Jesus? How do some of the philosophies of the world differ from what Jesus taught?

Read **Luke 18:9-14** and **Hebrews 4:16**

- Describe how the difference between the Pharisee and the Tax Collector.
- How does Hebrews 4:16 help us understand Matthew 5:3?

DISCUSSION: (20 minutes)

- Describe a time in your life when you became “poor in spirit.” How did you experience God in that moment?
- Has there been a time in your life when you were like the Tax Collector (Lk 18)? Explain.
- How do you experience the grace of God?

SURRENDER: (15 minutes)

- Let’s get personal here - What is one area of your life, related to this discussion, that the rest of the group can pray for?

PRAYER: (10 min) Pray for one another in light of what has been shared.