

# Southwest Life Groups

A Place to Belong...A Place to Transform

March 14th, 2010

*Focus: To engage the reality that our life joins Christ's life as we realize we are only 'beggars' before God.*

## *The Beatitudes*

### *Blessed are the Poor in Spirit -Lesson 1*

*Introduction:* Tonight we begin in earnest looking at these radical statements of Jesus. He is clearly not spouting quaint religious platitudes for us to simply discuss. He is telling us about a way of life which costs us everything and yet brings the greatest joy imaginable. I once heard a man suggest as followers of Jesus we should simply, "Read the red words, believe the red words, and do the red words."

- Discuss how your life would change if you chose this way of living.
- Describe the faith it takes to live like Christ.
- What might we do as a group to make sure our study in the Beatitudes is not just another intellectual exercise?

*Text: Matthew 5:3; Luke 18:9-14*

- Read Matthew 5:3 and discuss your interpretation of what Jesus is saying. (Cf. Luke 6:20; 24).
- Read Luke 18 and share how this connects with our text in Matthew.
- Compare and contrast the Pharisee's spirituality with the tax collector's.
- If there is time, put this story in context with 17:20-18:30.

*Application:*

- Discuss your own sense of spiritual poverty.
- How might our realization of being 'beggars' before God make us blessed?
- Discuss: Frederick Buechner said we live our lives like a big clenched fist. The clenched fist can do many things: it can work, hang on to things, impress, even fight. But, the one thing a clenched fist cannot do is accept, even from the good God himself, a helping hand.
- How have you seen this beatitude in members of your group?
- How might this up-side-down way of life change you at work, church, home?