

Study Series: The Good Life

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Lesson Title: “Happy Are the Beggars” (pp. 7-20)

Session 1

June 4, 2023

The main point of this lesson is: The good life only comes to spiritual beggars.

Focus on this goal: To help adults root out any pride preventing them from being spiritual beggars

Key Bible Passage: Matthew 5:3

Before the Session

1. Create and hang up a large piece of paper entitled, “The Good Life.” Display throughout this study, adding description as instructed. (Step 7)

2. Prepare to briefly discuss the Year of Jubilee (Lev. 25). (Step 5.)

During the Session

Step 1. Create Interest / Jumpstart Discussion

As class begins, invite learners to travel back in their memories by asking: When you were a child, you probably had some grand notions of what you would do as an adult so that you could live the good life. Perhaps you thought having a good-paying job would lead to the good life. Perhaps it was a swimming pool, a paved driveway, or not living on the farm. To your childhood self, what led to the good life? Engage learners in sharing, being sure to share your own insight.

Say: We’re starting a new study today about living the good life. Jesus’s description isn’t going to match what we once thought that was!

Step 2. Worshiping Self

Invite a volunteer to read Matthew 5:3. Use Day One content to draw a parallel between “poor in spirit” and humility, particularly from the paragraph that begins, “An ancient Jewish song . . . ” (pp. 7-8).

Read Titus 3:4-7, carefully and deliberately. Ask: According to this passage, what have we done to deserve the salvation of Jesus?

Point out the danger of pride, the opposite of humility, using the author’s story (p. 8) or your own.

Step 3. In Need of Rescue

Read the Day Two paragraph (pp. 9-10) that begins “On vacation in Western Montana . . . .” Say: Many of us have the same type of story; at some point, our pride was almost our undoing.

Use Day Two content (p. 10) to explain the definition of sin and compare God’s purpose of having us bear His image to that of a king erecting statues of himself throughout his kingdom.

Observe: Though God made us in His image, we cannot live this purpose when our minds are full of pride. Read Genesis 3:5-6 and the last paragraph of Day Two (p. 11). Point out: That’s the seriousness of pride, and that’s why Jesus tells us that we must be humble in spirit if we are to experience His kingdom.

Step 4. My Night Turned into Day

Give a brief overview of the author’s fall from thinking he was good to realizing he wasn’t good at all (Day Three, pp. 11-12).

Invite a volunteer to read Mark 10:18. Say: Hopefully you have a good day from time to time, and you feel good about your choices and your actions. But what does this passage teach about our goodness versus the goodness of God? How can realizing the immensity of God’s goodness free us from our pride?

Invite another volunteer to read James 4:6. Ask: If God gives grace to the humble, what does that mean for those who refuse to humble themselves?

Step 5. Messianic Expectations

Using the opening paragraphs of Day Four (pp. 13-14), summarize how Jesus was certainly the promised Messiah and fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies.

Invite a volunteer to read the Day Four paragraph (p. 14) that begins, “One typical Saturday . . . .” Point out that, as Jesus quoted Isaiah in Luke 4:18-19, He was proclaiming a better year of jubilee. For learners who aren’t aware of that term, briefly describe it according to Leviticus 25.

Say: The coming of Jesus was better than any other debt forgiveness ever; He has the power to forgive sins! Explain that, as saved people, we find joy in Jesus our Messiah because He forgives us our debt of sin; we cannot be prideful when we understand the amazing grace of Jesus’s sacrifice!

Step 6. Poor People Matter to Jesus

Observe: We’ve considered the first statement in the Beattitudes; the poor in spirit are blessed and inherit the kingdom of God. But, for just a moment, let’s consider day-to-day poorness.

Using Day Five content (pp. 15-16), remind learners that poor people still exist and that we are called to help them. Invite some volunteers to read Galatians 2:10; Proverbs 19:17; and Proverbs 28:27.

Read the Day Five paragraph (p. 17) that begins, “The book of James . . . .” As a group, consider how regularly helping your community’s poor will make you more aware of the love of Christ and your own spiritual depravity.

Step 7. Practical Application – Live Out the Lesson

Read the last sentence of Day Five (p. 17), then read Matthew 5:3 one more time. Say: This won’t be the last time we’ll see that the things that lead to the ‘good life’ in God’s kingdom are not the things that lead to the “good life” according to most people in the world.

On the paper you hung up before class, write Spiritual Beggars. Challenge learners to spend time today or tomorrow choosing humility and rooting out any pride that’s taken hold.

**Close in prayer.**

