FBC Small-Group Materials

Week of February 12th, 2006
Signs of Life 2

"The more I read these three chapters…the more I am both drawn to them and shamed by them. Their brilliant light draws me like a moth to a spotlight; but the light is so bright it sears and burns. No room is left for forms of piety which are nothing more than veneer and shame." D.A. Carson

For Small-Group Leaders

Dear Leaders,

This week's small group materials take us to the second half of Christ's beatitudes. We are calling this series, "Life on the Rock." Jesus is announcing in these three chapters (Matthew 5-7) a whole different reality and a way to live that sets our feet on solid ground.

I do want to let you know about an upcoming event for our Home Group Leaders. It is scheduled for the evening of February 28th, and will take place at FBC in the Fireside Room. Please put it on your calendar.

Blessings to you and your group.

Scott

P.S. Beginning this Sunday, these small group materials will be available at the info table each Sunday.

Discussion Starters:

- If you've ever been to a foreign country you know that things work differently outside the United States. The values are different; the rules are changed, etc. As a group, share about the different countries that group members have visited and what is different about those countries (when compared to the United States).
- In the beatitudes, Jesus is explaining that things are different in the Kingdom of God. Values are different; the rules are changed, etc. As you look at the eight beatitudes, which one do you think represents the most radical departure from the way things are here in our contemporary western culture?

Discussion Questions:

1. **Merciful**: How would you define mercy? Jesus says that mercy will be extended to the merciful. Why do you think he is so insistent that our treatment of others will affect God's treatment of us?
2. **Pure in Heart**: J.B. Phillips says that the "pure in heart" are "utterly sincere." They have a transparency to their faith that is obvious to God and others. Why would God value such an attitude? Why is it difficult to live this way? What role does the love and mercy of God, play in becoming someone who is "pure in heart?" What do you think Jesus means when he says that the pure in heart will "see God?"
3. **Peacemakers**: Why does Jesus make a connection between peacemaking and being called sons/daughters of God? Who comes to your mind when you hear the word peacemaker?
4. **Persecuted for Righteousness Sake**: Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who was killed by the Nazis because of his faith convictions, wrote: "With every beatitude the gulf is widened between the disciples and the people." Why would the world be opposed to someone who lives out the beatitudes? Have you ever wondered why some people seem more opposed to Jesus Christ than any other religious leader? Why do you think that is so? **Leader Hint:** As an option, before your group meeting, visit www.persecution.com and share some of the stories and information with your group.

Living it this Week – Close by allowing group members a chance to share how they would like to grow in the beatitudes. Pray as a group for one another and then pair up and encourage people to pray for their partner during the week.