

1. The Beatitudes in the Great Sermon on the Mount

- a) Matthew 5:2–12 Where do you see the teaching of Jesus about caring for those in need reflected in the Beatitudes?
- b) How do the appeals of Jesus in the first part of His Sermon on the Mount relate to His description of His followers as “the salt of the earth” and “the light of the world”? Matthew 5:13–16
- c) How is your church or Christian small group impacting your community as salt and light?
- d) What course of action should we take if our community impact is minimal or non-existent?

2. Radical appeals of Jesus

- a) Matthew 5:38–42
- b) Are these instructions of Jesus to be taken literally or is this figurative language?
- c) How does the story of the Good Samaritan illustrate these radical principles in real life? Luke 10:30, 33–35
- d) Why were the priest and Levite unwilling to care for this beaten and bruised traveler? Luke 10:31–32
- e) Share a time when you have experienced or witnessed radical demonstration of care from a follower of Jesus
- f) Why is the Golden Rule of Jesus a radical guideline for those who are called to care for those in need? Matthew 7:12

3. Learning to be sensitive to those in need

- a) Luke 16:19–21—what’s wrong with this picture?
- b) Luke 12:16–21—why was this rich man so insensitive to the needs of others?
- c) How can we avoid the same mistake?
- d) Share some examples of wealthy followers of Jesus who did not allow their wealth to hinder their care for those in need
 - i) Zacchaeus—Luke 19:1–8
 - ii) Joseph of Arimathea—Luke 23:50–53
 - iii) Nicodemus—John 19:39–42
- e) Matthew 25:31–40—a parable of Jesus
 - i) Does our care for those in need earn us a place in the kingdom of God? Support your answer from the teachings of Jesus
 - ii) What is the connection between our care for those in need and our relationship with Jesus?
 - iii) Share a time when your care for someone in need drew you closer to Jesus
 - iv) How can we discern between those who are genuinely needy and those who simply want to take advantage of another person’s generosity?

