

Week of April 23, 2017



**LIFE GROUP
MATERIAL**

Q Series: Week 1

Q SERIES NOTE:

For the next seven weeks during this series, we'll take an honest look at some difficult topics. These questions are designed for Life Groups, and to spur on discussion about the content of the sermon with people you're doing life with.

GETTING STARTED:

If you were able to get a face-to-face meeting with God, what question would you want to ask Him?

NOTE: The goal here is to get into the question of doubts, or questions. Maybe this could be funny "Why did you make mosquitos?" or maybe it's serious.

QUESTION 1:

Talk about a time when you had a doubt (or a major question) about life that shook you up. How did you deal with that big question?

QUESTION 2:

Looking over the Q series, which topic is most personal to you? Why?

NOTE: There was a bulletin insert card in this week's bulletin that lists each of the weeks.

WEEK 1: The happy, moral irreligious person

WEEK 2: Hypocrisy in the church

WEEKS 3 + 4: Hell

WEEK 5: Contradiction in the Scriptures

WEEKS 6 + 7: Suffering

WEEK 8 :: Q&A Panel

DIVING IN:

Read **Matthew 5:1-11** (sometimes known as The Beatitudes) out loud in your group.

What stands out to you about Jesus' words here? Does anything surprise you? Confuse you?

Dallas Willard once wrote, "The Beatitudes cannot be 'Good News' if they are understood as a set of 'How-to's for achieving blessedness. They would only amount to a new legalism...No. These singled out cases that provide proof that, in Jesus, the rule of God from the Heavens truly is available to all, even those in life circumstances that are beyond all human hope."

In light of this, why are the Beatitudes comforting to those who aren't happy with life and challenging to those who are?

NOTE: A couple of thoughts. In this passage, Jesus is confronting the idea of what it means to be "happy" or live "the good life." He explodes the question. Basically, Jesus is offering this amazing life to people who are on the down-and-out. To quote Willard again, "This means that happiness is available to anyone at anytime. It means that if I, as a recovering sinner myself, accept Jesus' good news, I can go to the mass murderer and say, "You can be blessed in the kingdom of the heavens. There is a forgiveness that knows no limits." To the pederast and the perpetrator of incest. To the worshiper of Satan. To those who rob the aged and the weak. To the cheat and the liar, the bloodsucker and the vengeful: Blessed! Blessed! Blessed! As they flee into the arms of the One who is the very Kingdom of God Among Us. This is Corrie Ten Boom taking the hand of the Nazi who killed her family members. And this is, quite literally, not of this earth."

Week of April 23, 2017



**LIFE GROUP
MATERIAL**

Q Series: Week 1

QUESTION 3:

Read **Matthew 5:21-40** aloud.

In these short passages, Jesus outlines a difference between what a traditionally “good” person does, and what a person with a “Kingdom Heart” does. What does Jesus outline is the difference between a “good” person and a “Jesus” person regarding murder? Adultery? Divorce? Promises? Dealings with enemies?

NOTE: The main point that Jesus is confronting in this part of the Sermon on the Mount is the idea of “what does it mean to be a good person.” Jesus is saying the standard is not simply external behavior, but completely transformed Kingdom heart. He sets the bar so high – not only don’t kill, but don’t get angry. Not only don’t commit adultery, don’t look at someone with lust. Not only don’t kill your enemy, but go above-and-beyond with kindness. This is insane. And impossible. And that’s the point. Jesus’ standard for good is perfect, but, to quote CS Lewis “The command “be ye perfect” is not idealistic gas. Nor is it a command to do the impossible. He is going to make us into creatures that can obey that command.” That’s the promise.

QUESTION 4:

What point is Jesus trying to make here? How are we to live in response to Jesus’ words in this section of Scripture?

NOTE: Help your people see that in these passages, Jesus is exploding our categories, saying “you don’t know how to be happy” AND “you don’t know how to be good.” He’s saying that those things can both, only be found in Him and in His Father and by living the way that He lives, by following His lead.

MAKING IT PERSONAL:

Based on **Matthew 7:24-29**, is your life being lived in a wise way or a foolish way at this time? Be as honest as you can.

NOTE: This might be too direct of a question, but it IS an important question. If we have rage, bitterness, un-forgiveness, uncontrolled lust, bouts of anger, then we are not accessing the life that Jesus is offering. He wants us to be in FREEDOM from all those things, but we need His help, His guidance and His spirit.

FINAL ACTIVITY:

Pray as a group.