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## The Real Deal

*Becoming and Being a True Follower of Christ*

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### Part 3: Make Yourself Comfortable

#### Matthew 5:4

The genuine article. The real deal. What's involved in becoming and being a true follower of Jesus Christ? That is a question we want to begin to answer in this series.

Floating around our culture are many definitions and opinions of what a true Christian is and the resulting adjectives are often less than flattering: Obnoxious. Fanatical. Pious. Intellectually shallow. Religious. Closed-minded. Crutch-holder. Right winged. Simplistic. No fun. Legalistic. Boring. Intolerant. Judgmental. Naïve. Out of touch with the real world.

Then you come into religious circles and the definitions might not be as negative but they are often just as confusing: Church attender. Rule-keeper. Bible-owner. Person who prays. Somebody with conviction. Good morals. Nice family person. Somebody who filled out a form at an evangelistic meeting. Or raised a hand. Or walked down an aisle.

So what is a Christian? For the answer, we thought it would be a good idea to turn to Christ Himself. We are looking at His definition of a follower of His by taking a closer look at what has become known as the "Beatitudes" (Matt. 5:3-10).

In our introduction, we looked at the overall context of Christ's teaching in Matthew 5-7, which is known as the "Sermon on the Mount." In these chapters, Jesus is proclaiming the "good news of the Kingdom" (Matt. 4:23). He is explaining what an authentic relationship with God is all about. The Kingdom of God is referring to the "rule" or "reign" of God. To seek after an authentic walk with God is to submit to His rule—His leadership, His provision, His grace, His forgiveness, His power. Therefore you cannot separate becoming and being an authentic follower of Christ's from seeking His Kingdom. You can't have one without the other.

In the Beatitudes, Jesus gives us eight marks of someone who is "blessed," who is approved before God. Eight characteristics of a Kingdom-seeker. Last week we looked at the first beatitude which emphasizes our need to acknowledge our spiritual bankruptcy before God. Today we will look at the second beatitude, which deals with our response to the reality embedded in the first. What should be my response as I own up to my poverty of spirit?

*"Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted."* When we see our true condition, our appropriate response is contained in these words. Grasping the reality of our sin, we will long for Christ's comfort and, when we receive it, we'll taste His joy!

*The comfort and joy of God are experienced in four "arenas:"*

1. In the arena of \_\_\_\_\_ because of my sin.

...an \_\_\_\_\_ response

2. In the arena of \_\_\_\_\_ from my sin.

...a \_\_\_\_\_ reaction

3. In the arena of \_\_\_\_\_ for my sin.

...a \_\_\_\_\_ blessing

4. In the arena of \_\_\_\_\_ in spite of my sin.

...a \_\_\_\_\_ status