



**PART 3 OF 3: RELIGIOUSLY INCORRECT
SUMMER ON THE MOUNT**

Group Discussion Guide



8500 West 159th Street
Overland Park, KS 66223
913.814.7223

VisitGraceChurch.com

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Summer on the Mount: Religiously Incorrect Group Discussion Guide

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Series Overview

Jesus teaches us how to avoid being religiously incorrect. Our focus should be on pleasing Him rather than having others be impressed by our adherence to rules.

Purpose of This Guide

The primary purpose of this group guide is to reinforce and deepen the lessons of the Grace Church message series: **Summer on the Mount: Religiously Incorrect.**

1-Religion to be Seen

Scripture: Matthew 6:1-8, 16-18

Icebreaker: Appearances

As a group, discuss your experiences with changing things about your appearance. When have you changed your appearance to gain credibility? What did you change? Have you ever changed your manner of speech or behavior to gain approval? Share your experience.

Discussion Questions

- Discuss whether you should always keep giving a secret (**Mat 6:3-4**). What are our motives in having someone see us?

<i>verse</i>	<i>motive</i>
Mat 6:1	
Mat 5:16	

Considering the motives noted in the verses above, when would it be okay for someone to see our good deeds (including giving)?

- When someone praises you for good deeds, which of the following most resembles your reaction?
 - I feel uncomfortable and often say, "It was nothing."
 - I use the opportunity to tell the person more about what I did.
 - I praise God and say, "God is good." (**2Cor 10:17-18**)
 - I use the opportunity to recruit the person in joining me in future good deeds (**Heb 10:24**).
- What kind of giving and praying gains God's approval (**Mat 6:3-6**)?

Dig a Little Deeper: Sincere Prayer

Our motive for praying is important to God. Mindlessly reciting memorized words is what Jesus called vain repetition (**Mat 6:7-8**). True prayer is heartfelt and seeks to do God's will. The sincerity is more important than the actual words. When we pray, He wants us to talk to Him rather than try to impress other people.

- How often do you pray privately to God?
- Why do you pray?

Application Exercise: Motivation for Good Deeds

- During the coming week, before you do any good deed, ask yourself *why* you want to do the good deed. Who do you want to please?
- If you don't feel compelled to do any good deeds, ask yourself *why*.

2-Lord's Prayer

Scripture: Matthew 6:9-15

Icebreaker: Role Model

Have you ever had a role model? What about the person did you admire? Did you want to be exactly like them or only like them in some ways?

Discussion Questions

- The Lord's prayer is a model or example of how to pray. The intention is not to repeat the same exact prayer. The first portion of the prayer instructs us to worship God for who He is. The direction of this part of the prayer is **UP**.

Mat 6:9-10 In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. ¹⁰ Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven.

In your group, pray UP, telling God in your own words what He means to you and how serious you are about doing things His way.

- The next part of the prayer instructs us to ask for what we need. The direction is **IN**.

Mat 6:11 Give us this day our daily bread.

In your group, pray IN, asking God for your basic needs.

- The last part of the prayer instructs us to petition God to release us and others from pride and bad decisions. The direction is **OUT**.

Mat 6:12-13 And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors. ¹³ And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

In your group, pray OUT, asking God to help you and others resist temptation, make good decisions, and lean on Him.

Dig a Little Deeper: Forgiving Others

- Notice that the Lord's prayer illustrates the importance of not only asking God to forgive us, but notes that we are to forgive others.

Mat 6:12 And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors.

Why is it important to forgive others ([Mat 6:14-15](#))?

Application Exercise: Release Your Life to Him

During the coming week, begin each of your prayers by praising God and telling Him how important He is to you. Do ask Him for what you need. Also release all aspects of your life to Him.

3-Money, Treasure in Heaven

Scripture: Matthew 6:19-34

Icebreaker: Treasure

What is one thing you treasured as a child? When did you begin to understand that money has value?

Discussion Questions

- It is not wrong to possess things; however, it is wrong to let things possess you. Discuss how materialism can enslave you in the following ways.

heart	Mat 6:19-21
mind	Mat 6:22-23
will	Mat 6:24

- In what way can riches devalue your relationship with God ([Mat 6:25-30](#))?
- What should be the primary concern for believers ([Mat 6:33](#))?
 - ▶ How can you focus more on doing what God wants and less on worrying about what you need?
 - ▶ What should your attitude be towards earthly wealth?
- What are some ways to put your treasure in God's kingdom?

Dig a Little Deeper: Avoid Over Focus on Money

Study [Matthew 6:31-34](#) to see how an over-focus on money can ruin your ability to let Christ's light shine through you to others. How can it darken your eye and divide your heart ([Mat 6:22-24](#))?

Application Exercise: Investment in Eternity

During the coming week, find a way to use your time and money to make an investment in eternity.

4-Misquote “Don’t Judge”

Scripture: Matthew 7:1-12

Icebreaker: Measure the Christian

Describe how you would tell the difference between:

- ▶ an excellent Christian
- ▶ a lukewarm Christian

Is there any way to measure the difference? Would you want others to apply those measures to you?

Discussion Questions

- Do you judge yourself before you judge others? What are some reasons for judging yourself first?

Mat 7:1-2
Mat 7:3-5

- What can you do to be sure you have pure motives when you judge others?
- When you notice someone behave in a way that is not godly, under what circumstances should you say something or not say something ([Mat 7:6](#))?
- Discuss your experiences in applying the “golden rule” ([Mat 7:12](#)).
 - ▶ How would the golden rule look differently through the eyes of a believer and a nonbeliever?
 - ▶ When you want what God wants for others, how might they oppose your good intentions?

Dig a Little Deeper: Judge Righteously

What do the following verses say about not judging compared to judging righteously?

<i>Judge Not</i>	<i>Judge Righteously</i>
Mat 7:1 Luke 6:37 Rom 14:13 Jas 4:11-12	Mat 7:6 1Cor 6:2-5 1Cor 2:15 John 7:24

Application Exercise: Pure Motives

During the next week, use Biblical standards to evaluate your heart and the behaviors of yourself and others. Ask God to keep your motives pure and to give you words that help others.

5-Exclusivity of the Gospel

Scripture: Matthew 7:13-23

Icebreaker: Maze

Discuss what it's like to be in a maze. If you have tips for navigating a maze, share them with the group. What things can you do before entering the maze to help stay oriented?

Discussion Questions

- Consider the broad way versus the narrow way (**Mat 7:13-14**).
 - ▶ Did your profession of faith cost you anything?
 - ▶ Did you give up the baggage of sin and your focus on worldly things?
 - ▶ What are some reasons there are few who find the narrow way?

- Consider the illustration of the good tree bringing forth good fruit (**Mat 7:15-20**).
 - ▶ In what ways has your decision for Christ changed your life?
 - ▶ What godly fruits (**Gal 5:22-23**) has He brought forth in your life?

- One of the pathways that can lead us away from Christ is false leaders. Some leaders claim to be Christians; however, they seek public praise, they crave material things, and they insist they have a right to judge others. These are indicators that they don't know Christ (**Mat 7:22-23**). What are you doing to be certain you directly build your life on Christ rather than lean entirely on a human leader?

Dig a Little Deeper: Narrow Way

Meditate on the following ways to stay on the narrow way.

Become less as He becomes more.	John 3:30
Seek God Himself before you seek having Him meet your personal needs.	Mat 6:33
Guard your heart.	Pro 4:23
Approach life with joy and expectancy.	Pro 17:22

Application Exercise: Real Relationship

During the next week, pray each day asking God to help you put all areas of your life in perspective. Tell Him you want to have a real relationship with Christ.

6-Don't Waste Your Life

Scripture: **Matthew 7:24-29**

Icebreaker: *Three Little Pigs*

Have someone read or tell the story of the *Three Little Pigs*.

- ▶ Discuss how the building materials the pigs used can be a picture of what materials we use to build our lives.
- ▶ Make a list of three columns: straw, sticks, and bricks. Under each column list some things we do that would fit in the column.

<i>straw</i>	<i>sticks</i>	<i>bricks</i>

Discussion Questions

- In **Matthew 7:24-26**, Jesus tells us that a wise man hears His Words and does them. A foolish man hears His Words but fails to do them. In what areas of your life is it easier to do His Word? In what areas is it more difficult?
- Many of us seek peace. The Peace of God is a marker of being a Christ-follower (**Col 1:2**, **Col 3:15**, **1Pet 5:14**). A new home address, a new job, or even a new church won't necessarily bring you peace. What is the only source of real peace (**John 14:27**, **John 16:33**, **Php 4:6-7**)?
- For our lives to not be wasted, our lives must have purpose. If we have Christ as Lord and Savior, what is the purpose of our lives (**Php 2:13-16** and **Mat 13:23**)?

Dig a Little Deeper: Minimize Storm Effects

Study the following verses for thoughts on how to minimize the effects of storms in our lives.

praying	Mark 1:35
spending time in God's Word	2Tim 2:15 and Psa 1:1
worshiping	Heb 10:24-25
serving	Gal 6:10
giving	Mal 3:8-12

Application Exercise: One Item for Improvement

Consider the table in "Dig a Little Deeper." Pick one item for improvement. Focus on that area in the coming week.



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