

Whom God Blesses Matthew 5:1-12

One of the shocking differences between life in this world and life in the Spirit is how _____ and _____ are devalued in the world but are among the first and highest values in God's kingdom.

Discussion 1. Who do you think humility and lowliness get so overlooked in our culture? How do the ways of our current culture operate against such characteristics? For you personally, what helps keep you humble?

If God's faith journey for each of us begins with humility (knowing that we need a savior), the next steps involve our thought life, i.e., what we _____, what we think about, and what we care about.

Discussion 2. What kinds of disciplines help you with your thought life (what you desire, what you care about, etc.)? Why do you suppose humility is a necessary foundation to getting our thought life right?

In terms of our engagement with an unbelieving world, Jesus expressed two different expectations for his followers: (1) that we would be _____ in how we relate to others, and (2) that others would persecute us in response.

Discussion 3. What are some qualities and characteristics of our current culture that make the need for peacemakers so clear? Do you believe being a peacemaker is a special gift only some have or a learned skill expected of all Christ followers?

Christian "entitlement" to being understood and accepted is a perspective fairly limited in both time and geography. The vast majority of Christ followers over the past two thousand years have not only expected _____ but have even embraced it.

Discussion 4. What do you suppose it looks like for a Christ follower to embrace persecution? When we are persecuted for our faith, what kind of response on our part do you think God would bless?