



spiritual infant

DISCIPLE ME

THE ONE ABOUT THE WORLD HATING YOU

ICEBREAKER: UNPOPULAR OPINIONS

Everyone's got at least one "hot take" - that opinion that makes other people do a double-take. Maybe you think pineapple *does* belong on pizza. Maybe you secretly enjoy Mondays. Maybe you think country music is underrated (or overrated 😊). Take a minute to share one of your *unpopular opinions* with the group. Keep it light and fun - no debates, this is just for laughs.

STUDY & DISCUSS:

Today we're talking about what it means to follow Jesus even when it's not popular - when others might not understand. Jesus was honest about this from the start. He didn't sugarcoat it. Following Him can sometimes mean being misunderstood, criticized, or even rejected. He was perfect love, yet people still turned against Him. So, it's no surprise that those who walk in His footsteps will face resistance too.

Read John 15:18-24

- When Jesus says, "*If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first,*" what do you think He's trying to prepare His followers for?
- How does it make you feel to know that being misunderstood or rejected for your faith doesn't mean you're doing something wrong?
- What are some ways you've felt pressure to "fit in" instead of standing out for your faith?
- Why do you think following Jesus sometimes challenges the values or priorities of the world around us?
- What might it look like to respond with grace and love when someone pushes back against your beliefs?

When you begin to live for the Kingdom of God, your life starts to look *different*. Different priorities. Different values. Different responses. You may forgive when others want revenge. You may choose generosity instead of greed. You may speak truth when others stay silent. And sometimes, that difference makes people uncomfortable.

The early followers of Jesus experienced this and the New Testament scriptures speak to this reality:

Read 1 Peter 4:4

- Why do you think people sometimes react negatively when someone tries to live differently or make changes for the better?
- When have you felt pressure to “fit in” or go along with something you knew didn’t honor your faith? What helped you stay true to your convictions?

Read 2 Timothy 3:12

- When you hear that “everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,” how does that make you feel? Does it surprise you, discourage you, or prepare you?
- Why do you think living for Jesus can sometimes bring opposition or make life harder - even when you’re trying to do what’s right?
- How does it feel to know that following Jesus might make some people misunderstand or reject you?
- Have you ever held back your faith because you didn’t want to seem “different”?

ACTIVITY: SCRIPTURE MATCH - Read the verses below and match them to the correct description.

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| 1. Matthew 5:10-12 | A. Our confidence in Jesus gives us courage to stay faithful. |
| 2. Romans 12:17-21 | B. Our resilience in the face of challenges will lead to good fruit. |
| 3. 1 Peter 2:12 | C. To follow Jesus means we respond in counter-cultural ways. |
| 4. Philippians 1:27-28 | D. When we suffer for doing good, we share in Jesus’ story. |
| 5. John 16:33 | E. Following Jesus will not be easy, but there is nothing to fear. |
| 6. 1 Peter 4:12-13 | F. Suffering for doing what’s right isn’t a sign of failure. |
| 7. Galatians 6:9-10 | G. Your conduct can become your greatest testimony. |

answer key: 1-F, 2-C, 3-G, 4-A, 5-E, 6-D, 7-B

CHALLENGE: DON’T CLAP BACK

Think of one person or group that may not understand your faith - maybe someone who’s been critical, distant, or dismissive. This week, choose to respond differently: → Pray for them. → Show kindness when it’s not returned. → Let your life speak louder than your words. Remember Jesus’ words: *“Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.”* - **Matthew 5:44** Your quiet faithfulness might be the clearest picture of Jesus they’ll ever see.