



# {INVITATIONS}

# CELEBRATE.

## People of the Kingdom

**Psalm 15; Micah 6:8; Matthew 5:1-12; Luke 2:25-40**

### GETTING STARTED

Describe a time when you misjudged a person or found your initial impression of a person nothing like the real person once you knew them.

### READ AND REFLECT

Read the Lectionary passages above.

What themes and threads do you see in these passages?

Simeon and Anna represented the *anawim* (the very poor of Israel who spent time at the Temple seeking God and praying for the coming Messiah). How do you see Simeon and Anna in the Beatitudes of Jesus?

When you read the Beatitudes, you read them like:

- Grace-based stepping stones. You need to receive God's grace first (poor in spirit) and then you move to adopt the other beatitudes?
- A virtue list of godly habits you should practice in order to be a good Christian?
- A requirement list to enter the Kingdom of God or the list of how God will judge you when you die?
- A list of the kinds of people who will be in the Kingdom of God which was contrary to the current religious thinking of the day?
- I never really knew what to do with or how to read the Beatitudes.

Explain your answer.

If Jesus is saying these are the kinds of people who will be in the Kingdom of God, what kinds of questions kick up for you?

Which of the Lectionary passages speaks to you most (or most challenges you)? Why do you think this is so?

## **ENGAGE AND DISCUSS**

What do you think the religious leaders thought of Jesus' list of the people who would be in the Kingdom of Heaven (Mt 5:3-12)? Why would they have issues here?

Do you feel we have our own list or standards as to "who is in" and "who is not" when it comes to the Kingdom of God? Where do we get our lists? What is the danger in OUR lists (you may share examples personally or what you have observed from others or other churches)?

What do you feel God requires of us?

In the story of Simeon and Anna one finds *faithfulness* and *perseverance*. How do these realities link to Jesus and his Beatitudes? How would describe your current reality of faithfulness and perseverance in this season of your life?

## **NEXT STEPS**

Reflect on how these Bible passages and study have challenged you and your thinking. How do you sense God calling you to respond?

Continue to read these Bible passages (and the other lectionary passage for this week found at [www.cc-og.org/series](http://www.cc-og.org/series) ). Before and after each reading, ask God to reveal himself and his understanding to you.

Report back to your group any new insights or how God challenged you this week.