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DISCUSSION GUIDE – Based on the 3-minute video at OverflowToday.com titled:

Behind Tough Questions

Featured is Rick Richardson, author of the book REIMAGINING EVANGELISM, from InverVarsity Press. Filmed at The National Outreach Convention in San Diego, CA.

Section 1

Discuss what you applied in the past seven days from the last OverflowToday show.

Read Matthew 5:11-12 Discuss what may be modern day examples that you've observed of what this scripture is describing.

Section 2

Watch the 3-minute video podcast entitled "Behind Tough Questions" at <http://OverflowToday.com>

Section 3

What did you think? What stood out to you as you watched this?

What are some labels that you see Christians pasted with in our culture today? Where do you see that happening?

Have you or your friends had any personal experiences of being called intolerant or narrow? Tell about those.

How would you describe what the author's main point was regarding what can be behind a person's tough question or charge?

What does he say should be your first thought, before scrambling to defend yourself?

I wonder what issue might be behind their question?

What does he say your first RESPONSE should be in certain situations like this?

Ask why they are asking. Apologize if they have felt insulted in the past by a Christian.

How valid do you think his view is that tough questions are often rooted in a deeper issue, stereotype, or past experience?

Above, we shared examples of how we've felt labeled or stereotyped by the secular world. What are ways or reasons that some non-Christians might form a negative stereotype of us? What examples have you seen that you could understand being a turn-off for some?

The author shared about an experience where someone asked him: "You're not one of those people who think that your way was right and everyone else's way is wrong, do you?!" He felt in that situation that the best response was not to go immediately to answers in scripture.

Do you envision that there may be different ways to respond depending on the tone and attitude of the questioner? Discuss different attitudes the critic may have and what responses might match those attitudes.

Section 4

Discuss some ways we could apply a few of these principles in the next 7 days.

One suggestion, if needed. Each group member ask a non-Christian friend this week this question: "What are some things that you have seen done or heard said by Christians or people who called themselves Christians that were disappointing to you?"

If appropriate, apologize for others' actions. Ask them for their opinions on those matters. Explain what you feel may have been behind those actions and what you feel would have been more appropriate actions, if any, by a Christ-follower. Share a scripture or two that might show a different perspective to them. Discuss your views on those matters.

Meet back next week to report on what happened.