

Bible Study: Psalm 69:1-14 2 Corinthians 10:1-6 John 15:18-16:4

## Confrontation with the world

### Question 1

John uses the concept of “the world” frequently in his gospel. Look at:-

- John 1:10
- John 3:16
- John 3:19
- John 12:31
- John 17:15

What do you think that John means by “the world”? Does it differ from “creation”, “humanity” or “the earth”? If so how? Do you think that “the world” still exists?

### Question 2 Not of the world.

- a) In what ways would the disciples have identified with the milieu they lived in with respect to religion, values, culture etc. Would they have had any significant differences?
- b) Why did Jesus say that the disciples were not of the world? (Jn 15:19; 17:16). How were they going to see that Jesus was hated by the world? (Jn 15:18) Would Jesus’ death have surprised them? Would their persecution after Jesus’ death have surprised them? (Jn 16:1-2)

### Question 3– Knowing God.

Paul can say of himself before he was confronted by Jesus *“<sup>4</sup> Though I myself have reason for confidence in the flesh also. If any other man thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more: <sup>5</sup> circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law a Pharisee, <sup>6</sup> as to zeal a persecutor of the church, as to righteousness under the law blameless.* (Philippians 3:4-6). Would he have said that he was “*offering a service to God*”? (Jn 16:2). What was his question when he was confronted by Jesus on the road to Damascus? (Acts 9:5) What was Jesus’ reply? (Acts 9:5) Who was Paul persecuting? What was Paul’s attitude after his conversion?

*<sup>7</sup> But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. <sup>8</sup> Indeed I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. (Philippians 3:9).*

### Question 4

“Knowing” God is a key theme of John’s Gospel. There is an element that is threatening to us in this concept. What if, like the Jewish leaders of Jesus’ day the god that we believe in is made up? How can we know that we know the God that Jesus reveals?

- a) Jesus claims to reveal the Father (Jn 14:9) What did Jesus’ miracles reveal about Jesus that perfectly revealed the character of God? (John 15:24)
  - Water into wine (Chap 2) - plenty of great wine. A sign of the new age.
  - The official’s son (Chap 4) - “your son will live”
  - The sick man (Chap 5) – the Father raises the dead and gives them life (21)

- 5000 fed (Chap 6) the bread of God... gives life to the world (33)
- Blind man (Chap 9) that those who do not see may see (39)
- Lazarus (Chap 11) I am the resurrection and the life (25)

Each of these “works”/”miracles” has teaching associated with it. The teaching is about the character of Jesus not his power. The teaching centres on life. Should people have recognised the character of God in these works? Why or why not?

#### Question 5

The view that the God of the OT is different to the God of the NT is widely held. God made promises to Abraham in about 1800BC. The Old Testament records 1400 years of God’s dealings with his people. The New Testament records about 60 years.

- How persistent is God in the Old Testament in the face of the repeated apostasy of his people? Why is he persistent? (Exodus 34:6)
- What does he want for his people? (see the miracles above)
- Jesus says that if people had known the OT God then they should have recognised him. (Jn 16:3) Do you think that is reasonable?

#### Question 6

When Jesus says *“If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin.”* (John 15:22).

- What does he mean? Surely, they were sinners whether he spoke to them or not. See John 15:24. What difference does Jesus’ coming make?
- How would you define sin?

#### Question 7

Have you ever felt the hatred of the world? (John 15:19) Do you know of Christians who have? Do you think that it a bit strong to describe the world’s response to disciples of Jesus as hatred?

- What do you think alienates Christians from the world in Australia in the 21<sup>st</sup> century? Do any of the following accusations ring bells? Are any of them justified? Are any of them characteristics/views you think Christians should have?

Superstitious

Intolerant

Child molesting

Fight against equality

Impose views on private matters and freedom

Are legalists not gracious

Advocate unpopular causes

- Forgiveness
- Refugees