

Divine Conspiracy Book Study
Discussion Questions – Jun 8, 2009

Introduction

1. Do you see Jesus as a brilliant person who taught a way to live that you would be a fool to disregard it? (xiv) What are some wrong or unhelpful ideas we have about the person of Jesus? In what way are they
2. Why did Jesus teach his disciples? Were his teachings a set of laws to keep? Were they wise platitudes to comfort his followers until they get to heaven? Were they something else? In what way were his teachings good news to his listeners then or to us today?
3. Agree/disagree: "...the message of and about him is specifically a gospel for our life now, not just for dying." (xvii)

Chapter One

Life in the Dark

1. (Study guide #2) Recall the story of the student of Harvard University's Professor Robert Coles. She asked, "What's the point of *knowing* good if you don't keep trying to *become* a good person?" This illustrates the disconnection between learning or discussing the *knowledge* of right and wrong and actually changing our *actions* and *character* with this knowledge. Question: Is there evidence that the church also experiences this disconnection between knowledge and character? Explain.
2. (Study guide #3) What 'mere ideas' have had drastic consequences in your lifetime? Have any of them crept into our understanding of how we follow Jesus?

Word from a Different Reality

3. How would you describe what God is inviting us to? (11) What is Jesus offering to us "ordinary human beings," living ordinary lives and coping daily with their surroundings?
4. (Study guide #7) In the section "Entering the Ordinary" what startles you about this description of Jesus?
 - a. Could you see Jesus living your life? Why or why not?
 - b. If he lived your very ordinary lives, would he still have been able to live "the eternal kind of life" (14) that he did in the first century?
5. When in our life have you exhibited egotism? How is it related to "the drive to significance"? (15)
 - a. Under whose rule and reign does one live when we suffer from egotism?
 - b. Can you think of a time when "being adequately loved" healed you from egotism?
 - c. Can you think of a time when the "drive to significance" lead us to the good to be done? Describe how it felt to do what God had designed us to do.
6. Jesus establishes a beachhead of divine life in an ordinary existence by stepping into the public arena to expose his life publicly and to make it available to the world. Compare Willard's paraphrase of Mark 1:15 on page 15 with your translation of the bible. Comment.