

# “Jesus and the World”

John 7:1-9

7/11/21

## Discussion Guide

Read the passage as preparation for the discussion time.

*After this, Jesus went around in Galilee. He did not want to go about in Judea because the Jewish leaders there were looking for a way to kill him. <sup>2</sup> But when the Jewish Festival of Tabernacles was near, <sup>3</sup> Jesus' brothers said to him, "Leave Galilee and go to Judea, so that your disciples there may see the works you do. <sup>4</sup> No one who wants to become a public figure acts in secret. Since you are doing these things, show yourself to the world." <sup>5</sup> For even his own brothers did not believe in him.*

*<sup>6</sup> Therefore Jesus told them, "My time is not yet here; for you any time will do. <sup>7</sup> The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify that its works are evil. <sup>8</sup> You go to the festival. I am not going up to this festival, because my time has not yet fully come." <sup>9</sup> After he had said this, he stayed in Galilee.*

1. Of the five historic approaches the Church has taken towards relating to the world which one fits your approach? (I'm using the headings of the book *Christ and Culture* by *Rienhold Niebuhr* but the definitions that I used in the sermon. I find the headings an easy way to remember them)
  - **Christ Against Culture:** Oppose the world because it is totally corrupt.
  - **Christ of Culture:** Embrace the world and use the "best of Jesus" to improve the world.
  - **Christ Above Culture:** See ourselves as above the world and its dealings. The Church's calling is a spiritual calling so we should not get wrapped up in secular matters.
  - **Christ and Culture in Paradox:** Be good citizens of both this world and the next, which is not easy because there are times you have to oppose one in order to be faithful to the other. There are the times, stated the way scripture does, that you must obey God rather than "man." (Acts 5:29)
  - **Christ Transforming Culture:** See the world as being partly good and partly corrupt and seek to transform what needs to be transformed and affirm the what needs to be affirmed.
2. In your view, what is the role of the Church in society? Is it to "get with it" and fall into step with the times or is to uphold the Word of God which tells us what it looks like to live as an authentic human being in this world?

# “Jesus and the World”

## John 7:1-9

7/11/21

3. The Apostle Paul said: *“In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.”* 2 Timothy 3:12 Have you found this to be true? Have you experienced persecution, ridicule, or scorn for your faith? Share your experiences.

4. Scripture says various things about the world. Read the passages below. What do you make of them? Do they contradict or is John saying two different things about two different topics?

*“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son so that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have everlasting life.”* John 3:16

*“I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world.”* John 12:47

*“Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in them.”* I John 2:15

5. What is the difference between a worldly mindset and a Christian mindset?

6. Discuss the differences the two ways of relating to the world make on corporate life. Have you worked in companies where profit is the bottom line? What was it like? Have you worked in a company where people were placed above profit? What was the experience like?

7. Discuss the differences the two ways of relating to the world make on your personal life. Pastor Richard mentioned several:

- It changes our perspective on immediate versus delayed gratification.
- It affects our attitude toward material things.
- It affects what we use our money for.
- It has an effect on our degree of certainty & stability
- It affects how we view people and value them.
- It affects how people view us and treat us and our response to them.

8. When you know that to speak up in certain settings will result in ridicule or opposition, do you tend to speak up anyway, remain silent, become combative and defensive, or remain calm but resolute in your beliefs? Is it becoming harder in our culture to share an opposing view and stand up for what one believes?

# **“Jesus and the World”**

**John 7:1-9**

7/11/21

9. Have you ever been able to turn an enemy into a friend? If so share how you did it.

10. Final comments or questions?