

The Gospel of Inclusion

Chapter Six: The Gospel of Salvation

Notes, Questions, and Reflections

In preparation for this week's discussion, please think about the [Basic Homework Questions](#) as you read it. Mark in your copy of the book or in your notebook which paragraphs pertain to these questions for you. Include your thoughts as to how they pertain to it. You'll be ready to engage in discussion with the Group.

Then come back to this page and check out the additional questions and thoughts from past courses that St. John's MCC people have had about the section that are listed below....

Chapter Six: The Gospel of Salvation

What is it about questions that make us feel uncomfortable? What has your experience been when you have dared to ask probing and perhaps controversial questions?

In his book *Journey into the Self*, Leo Stein writes, "To be intelligent is to be open-minded, active-minded, and persistently experimental." (p. 109) What does that mean?

"There is nothing you can do to make God love or stop loving you." (p. 110)

What pleases God? How can God be offended? What does Pearson say about that? (p. 111)

What about the question: "Can I do anything I want and still go to heaven?" (p. 112)

"People do what they want to do. If they don't do something, it is because they either lack the desire or have the desire but are disciplined enough to resist the temptation." (p. 114) Pearson says that as if it is an absolute truth, but is it?

He continues to say on page 115, "Somehow Christians have convinced themselves that the only reason they are not out whoring, drinking, and fornicating is their dedication to Jesus Christ and their fear of God. That's that fatal, legalistic point of view at work again: follow God's law or be cast into hell forever!"

Read Romans 7:15. What is Paul trying to say? How do those same issues affect your life?

On page 120, Pearson asks, "Who actually belongs to Christ and to God?" How does he answer that question? How do you answer it?

Does God need anything? (p. 121)

"... when we perceive God to dislike something or someone, we tend to act out that dislike and claim it to be on God's behalf." (p. 113) This was the transforming sentence of this entire book for me and made me understand how crucial it is that I internalize what Pearson is saying. How have you used the belief that God condemns someone or something to justify your actions against them?

Pearson goes on to say, "What a convenient excuse for wars, oppression, suppression of knowledge, theft of human rights, and neglect of social justice!" The perception of a loving, lenient, and forgiving God would rob fear mongers of their motivational whips and change much about our world that needs changing."

How do Jesus' words in John 3:3-8 disagree and/or agree with this gospel of inclusion? (p. 125)
What does Jesus save us from? (p. 128)

When we ask someone to "accept Jesus as their personal Lord and Savior," are we asking the right question? (p. 131)

"For Christians, the challenge is to put aside ego, stop attaching such self-importance to the notion of being born again, and work to inspire others to reach their God-ordained potential, regardless of their particular faith or tradition." (p. 133)

"The State of North Carolina [or wherever you live] didn't give me my sense of peace and power! God gave me that! Why am I letting them steal that away from me? They can't have that! I hereby take that back! Done!" What is the power that God gives all humans? How is that different from the "power" that some people use against one another?