

The Jesus Diaries

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

Use these questions as the basis of study sessions or conversations at church or in homes. A focus on Jesus is especially relevant during the six weeks of Lent, and weekly discussions using these questions would be a great way to deepen your Lenten experience.



TO ORDER COPIES OF

The Jesus Diaries: Who Jesus is To Me,
by The Stillspeaking Writers' Group

[CLICK HERE](#)

"INCONSISTENT ON JESUS" by Lillian Daniel

1. Lillian writes of different ways she perceives and experiences Jesus. Describe these ways, either drawing on her words or using your own.
2. On page 7 she asks, "Is it wishy-washy to perceive Jesus in many different ways?" How would you answer that question? Could there be times when it's wishy-washy and times when it isn't?
3. Lillian imagines a long table to which Jesus has welcomed all sorts of "sinning misfits," including her. Imagine this "Welcome Table." Who do you see at that table? Are there particular people you know who are there? Anyone surprising? Are you there?

"NOT ASHAMED OF JESUS" by Tony Robinson

1. In his story, Tony mentions hymns. What are a couple of your favorite hymns about Jesus? What do your favorite hymns say or emphasize about Jesus?
2. What was it that Tony found troubling or embarrassing in the hymns of the small church he visited?
3. On page 11, Tony says he was accustomed to the idea that he was to help others, but less accustomed to and comfortable with the idea that he might need help. Can you relate to that? What does it have to do with what he writes about Jesus?

"JESUS AND THE CHURCH IN CONFLICT" by Kenneth Samuel

1. This essay begins with these words: "I confess Jesus as my personal Savior, but not my private Savior." What does Kenneth mean by that distinction? Do you find it helpful?
2. He tells the story of his childhood friend, Stevie. How did that experience impact Kenneth's faith and understanding of Jesus?
3. Kenneth writes of his decision to deviate from the formula for a successful mega-church. Do you think a church can be institutionally successful and faithful to Jesus?

"OF WINDOWS AND BODIES" by Quinn Caldwell

1. Do you, like Quinn, have memories of a church or sanctuary from your childhood? If so, what stands out in those memories?
2. What does the "darkened" or "blank" face of Christ in the stained glass window represent in this story?
3. How has the church strengthened and confirmed Quinn's faith in ways that neither study nor emotions managed to do?

"SAVED EARLY BY JESUS" by Donna Schaper

1. Donna mentions a particular person, Pastor Witte, who showed Jesus to her. In your life, has a particular person shown Jesus to you? Who? When?
2. "Jesus Christ is Lord," writes Donna on p. 25, and then she goes on to say what that ancient term, "Lord" means for her. What does "Lord" mean to her? To you?
3. Donna speaks, several times, of Jesus as a "warmth in her belly." What does that image say to you? Why do you think she uses it?

"THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT JESUS" by Ron Buford

1. Ron writes of himself as "black, orphaned, adopted, gay and liberal." How, in your view, does social location or social status influence faith or the experience of Jesus?
2. On p. 31, Ron writes, "What is it about a living Jesus who defies the limits of cultural packaging?" What do you think Ron means by that? How have you experienced Jesus defying or breaking out of "cultural packaging"?
3. Ron writes that when he receives Communion, he imagines receiving it from the hands of Jesus himself. Imagine doing that yourself. Would it change or affect your experience of Communion? How?

"SEEING JESUS IN THE NIGHT SKY," by William Green

1. Bill begins with the story of a telescope. He compares Jesus to a telescope that helps us to see, and understand, the distant God. Is that a helpful image for you? Why or why not?
2. Bill writes of the influence of a grandparent on his faith. Did a grandparent influence your faith? How?
3. On p. 37, Bill distinguishes between "the faith of Jesus" and "faith in Jesus." What does he mean by this distinction? Do you find it helpful? Why or why not?

"THE GIVER OF SECOND CHANCES" by Christina Villa

1. In Catholic churches there is usually, as Tina describes, a crucified Jesus on a cross. In Protestant churches the cross is usually empty. What message does each convey to you?
2. What were the upsides and the downsides of Tina's Unitarian experience as she describes it?
3. Tina describes Jesus on the cross as "some kind of ultimate protest, a refusal to accept," and later says that Jesus is "the ultimate champion of the underdog." How do you respond to these words and ideas?

"GOD WITH A FACE" by Martin Copenhaver

1. Martin writes that "I began to wonder why I couldn't be a liberal and love Jesus at the same time." Why do you think he had that question? Is that a question for you?
2. God can seem vague, like a "sacred blur," writes Martin. But Jesus is "one who makes God real for me." Does this idea speak to you? Why or why not?
3. Martin relates the story of a church member who faced tragedy and loss with the phrase and faith, "For this, I have Jesus." What do you think she meant by that? What does that phrase say to you?