



LESSON THREE: UNDERSTANDING DIFFERENT WORLDVIEWS

*Lamb of God Lutheran Church, Columbus, OH
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RELATING TO THE WORLD'S STORY

Places that are different from “home” often put us out of our comfort zone. How do we react?

- 1) If you have visited another country or culture, describe what it was like for you. What was hardest for you? (If you haven't had that experience, describe places where you think it would be hardest for you to live.) What made it (or would make it) difficult?

LEARNING FROM PAUL'S STORY

Paul wasn't by himself. He had a team with him. One of them was young Timothy. Walking into Philippi might have been out of Timothy's comfort zone. This wasn't like his hometown. It may have been sensory overload and a real culture shock. Philippi was filled with people with practices that probably irritated or confused him. He must have seen the spiritual darkness, the social cruelties, and the greed of this active city. He probably didn't feel he fit in. But this is where God led them. Now what?

- 2) Read the story of Paul's entry into Philippi in  Acts 16:11-12, and watch the second segment of  *To the Ends of the Earth* (2:11-13:31).

Describe thoughts and emotions you might have experienced, if you had been part of Paul's team, as they surveyed the scene in Philippi.

- 3) Describe a time when you experienced similar thoughts or emotions. How did you react?

4) Before Paul became a Christian, he had an air of superiority. He despised and persecuted those who believed or lived differently from him. They were a threat to his worldview and way of living. All of that changed when God came to him and worked on him, so he could see things from God's point of view. Read the following passages, and identify what Paul realized about the viewpoints of the world around him.

 Romans 1:18-25

 2 Corinthians 4:1-7

 Ephesians 2:1-5; 4:17-24

 Colossians 2:8, 16-23

5) How do Paul's realizations affect what we might expect from perspectives and behaviors of those who do not know God? Why is this important?

6) There is only one way to survive the judgment and condemnation of God—and that is through Jesus. Only Jesus can give us entrance to God's kingdom. God restores his glory and ours. Based on the following passages, evaluate what gave Paul boldness and a sense of urgency to his mission.

 Romans 1:13-17

 Romans 10:6-17

 1 Corinthians 1:18-25; 2:1-10

 2 Thessalonians 1:5-12

Estimates show that about one third of the world (2.5 billion) has little or no access to the gospel and, of those, 50,000 die daily without ever hearing about Jesus. Paul says that our Savior “wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all people” (1 Timothy 2:4-6). Among all the spiritual and moral ideas in the world, there is only one gospel. (See Acts 4:12; Galatians 1:6-8.) It centers on the life, death and resurrection of Jesus that saved us from the world of darkness.

TELLING YOUR STORY

- 7) List some beliefs, practices, assumptions, and attitudes in our own culture that may offend others. Discuss why it is important to be aware of these things.

- 8) People who are outwardly very similar (ethnicity, age, education, etc.) can still have very different worldviews. And people who are very different can have very similar worldviews. What value is there in understanding cultures around us, and what are the limitations of such understanding?

THIS WEEK:

- *Learn this Bible Story to share: **Jonah’s Trip to the City of Nineveh** (Jonah 1-4).*
- *Use factfinder.census.gov to learn more about the demographics of your community and of the community around your congregation. How does what you learn frighten you? How does it excite you?*

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