

LBM Small Group Materials



The Great Gamble – Week One: October 2nd

For Small Group Leaders

Life change, rather than information and theology, is the goal of these **small group materials**. Prayerfully read through these materials in advance. The Holy Spirit will prepare you and help you to creatively use these ideas and questions. The goal is not to get through the material but rather to get God's truth through our lives. You may find that there are more questions than your group can get through. Use these questions as a guide, not as a "step by step" manual. If your group is large, you might consider breaking into smaller groups of 2-4 to encourage group participation.

The **Living Beyond Myself** emphasis at FBC is built on a three part strategy. If you imagine a three legged stool, one leg represents the Sunday morning worship services at FBC. Another represents the Scrolls that we are asking each person to go through individually. The final leg is the small group experience. The three together will make for a very dynamic four weeks. These **Small Group materials** will be available each week at the Info Table in the Plaza or online at www.fbcdavis.org.

The Spiritual Life Notebook (available Sunday mornings in October in the Plaza) is a great resource for groups. As a group leader you can provide opportunities during group meetings for members to share from their notebooks the things that God is teaching them.

Above all, please know how grateful we are for you and your willingness to lead you group in **Living Beyond Myself**.

Praying with you,
FBC Pastoral Staff

Discussion Starter – Ask each person to describe the most self-centered person they've ever seen in a movie or TV show. As an option, you could preface this opening question by showing a video clip of Mr. Potter from *It's a Wonderful Life* or of *The Grinch who Stole Christmas*.

Discussion Questions:

1. Read Ecclesiastes 2:1-11 together. How does Solomon's quest resemble the quest of many in our culture today?
2. With what messages and values are we bombarded everyday (through TV, advertising, etc.) that reinforce this self-centered/self-fulfilled way of life that Solomon writes about?
3. Now read Mark 8:34-37 and John 13:2-17. How do Jesus' words help us understand the loss of life and emptiness that Solomon was experiencing?
4. Our world says, "Take care of number one. It's all about you." Jesus says things like, "whoever wants to save his life will lose it," and "Give and it will be given to you." Why is living your life as a "taker and grabber" a bad strategy for living? Why is living as a servant a good strategy?
5. Look again at John 13, specifically verse 3. What is the significance of this verse as it relates to the manner in which Jesus lived his life as a servant? Jesus lived his life of service out of a strong sense of identity. In what ways is it important for us to do the same (to live out of a strong sense of who we are in Christ)?
6. At the beginning of our discussion we talked about self-centered people in movies and TV. What about the opposite? Jesus says in John 13:17 that the truly blessed ones are those who join him in serving and caring for others. Have you ever known someone who lived more in keeping with the way Christ lived (serving others)? In what ways were they blessed and the lives of those they served, blessed?

Group Reflection – Ask group members to individually and privately consider the following question: Is your life more like Solomon's or is it more in keeping with what Jesus says? Or is it a mix of the two? Give group members a few moments to consider that question.

Leader Note: This is a rhetorical question designed to simply give each group member a moment or two to reflect.

Putting LBM into Practice – We don't drift into a life of caring for and serving others. It requires intentionally on our part and the help of God's Spirit. **What is one simple thing we could do this week to serve someone else?**

Leader Note: As a group discuss this closing question. Perhaps the group would like to do something together (an act of service to FBC or our community). Perhaps each person would like to do something individually. As a group decide and share together.