

FBC Small-Group Materials

Week of November 13
A Matter of Perspective!

"If we really believe not only that God exists but also that he is actively present in our lives – healing, teaching, and guiding – we need to set aside time and space to give him our undivided attention."
– Henri Nouwen

For Small-Group Leaders

Dear Leaders,

This week in our morning services we jump back into our Colossians study. This week's topic is exceedingly practical and important for our lives. This week is all about "focus." What do we focus our minds and hearts upon, if anything? Our hope is that this week's discussion can bring your group back to what life is all about – Christ. We hope your group benefits greatly!

The Scrolls Team

Discussion Starters (choose one or both or make up your own):

- Read the following introduction from the Scrolls and the question that follows:

"[Our culture]... saturates the self with conflicting and confusing images and ideas, with little unity or coherence at hand..." – Douglas Groothuis

This saturation of images and ideas overwhelms us, leaving us mentally dulled and distracted. In this environment our hearts and minds become battlefields in which economic, political and social interests vie for our attention and affection. Our ability to focus and live a directed life is significantly undermined.

What cultural ideas and images are saturating the mind of the average person today? How many of those images or ideas are new in the last 20 years?

- Ask your group if anyone is willing to share something from their "Spiritual Life Notebook" regarding what God is teaching them. If group members don't yet have a notebook, have them share something that they are learning.

Discussion Questions:

1. Read Colossians 3:1-4. What two things are we told to set upon God? Why does the passage say we should do this?
2. What does it mean to "set your heart?"
3. Read Matthew 14:25-32. Where was Peter's focus in this story?
4. If we use this story as a visual metaphor for life in the year 2005, what are the things in our lives that act like the storm did for Peter (things that distract us, worry us and preoccupy us)?
5. What happens when we truly focus our life upon Jesus?
6. How do we practically do this (setting our hearts and minds upon Jesus)?

Group Reflection:

1. What is one thing in your life (activity or spiritual discipline) that truly helps you to focus upon Christ?
2. Is there an activity or spiritual discipline that you have wanted to integrate into your life that would help you to live more Christ-centered?
3. What would you like to do differently this week?

Putting Focus into Practice – Close your time together by praying as a group, focusing upon Christ and his all-sufficiency. Thank him together for all the ways he works in and blesses our lives.