

FBC Small-Group Materials

Week of April 16th, 2006
Matthew 28:1-10; Wide Awake!

For Small-Group Leaders

“Our four Gospel writers all complete their narrations of the gospel of Jesus with a story or stories of Jesus’ resurrection. They come at it from different directions and provide different details, but one element is common to each of them: a sense of wonder, astonishment, surprise.”

Eugene Peterson – Living the Resurrection

Dear Leaders,

The Resurrection is the centerpiece of our faith. Many have said that Christianity rises and falls depending upon the validity of Christ’s rising. What was that Resurrection Day like? What was going on in the hearts and minds of the first witnesses? More importantly, what does it mean for us today? This week’s study is meant to take us back to where it all began; at a cross and a tomb; an empty tomb.

Blessings to you and your group as you interact together on Jesus’ words of life.

Scott

These small group materials are available at the info table each Sunday and at www.fbcdavis.org.

Discussion Starters:

- **Easter:** How did your family celebrate Easter during your growing up years?
- **Celebrating:** Is there a tradition or aspect of Easter that you celebrate now that is meaningful to you?

Discussion Questions:

Introduction: Read Matthew 28:1-10 and Luke 24:1-12.

1. What do you think was on the minds of the women as they headed towards Jesus’ tomb early in the morning?
2. As you consider Matthew’s resurrection account, how did the guards react in verse 2?
3. How did the women react (in verse 8)? How can you account for such different reactions to the morning’s events?
4. Looking at Matthew 28 again, notice what happened as the women ran to obey the angel’s instruction. What was their reaction upon seeing Jesus? What is going on in their hearts?
5. In what ways did their worship involve their entire being? Why do we often hold back from worshipping Christ with our whole being?
6. The different Gospel accounts differ somewhat about the details of the resurrection. What are some of those differences? Should that bother us? Why or why not?

Text Insight from the Scrolls - Keep in mind the words of E.P. Sanders: “a calculated deception should have produced greater unanimity.” Keep in mind that the gospel writers are not giving a complete history, but a synopsis of events that may not include all facts known to them.

7. Now, look at Luke’s account. How did most of the disciples react? What about Peter? How was their reaction in sharp contrast to the women?
8. The women took the angel’s words to heart, the disciples found the news unbelievable, and Peter wondered what it all meant. How do you think you would have reacted?
9. Why do you think that the women seemed to have more faith than the disciples?
10. In the culture of Jesus’ day, women were a disenfranchised group. Yet Jesus chooses the women to be the first ones to appear to. Should we make anything of this fact?

Getting Personal:

(Leader’s note: You may want group members to answer this last question in pairs or groups of 3-4). Jesus often did things differently than we would. Appearing first to the women was not something anyone could have scripted. What is Christ doing in your life right now that is different than the way you would have hoped he would do it (for example: is he using a trial to mature you that you’d rather not be going through?)

Putting it into Practice:

Jesus was constantly breaking social norms and reaching out to outcast groups. Is there someone God is calling you to reach out to this week?