

FBC Small-Group Materials

Week of April 30th, 2006
Deuteronomy 31: 19-22 and 32:1-18

For Small-Group Leaders

"The wilderness holds answers to questions man's not yet learned to ask." Nancy Newhall

Dear Leaders,

This week Pastor Glen will teach our congregation from Duet. 31 & 32. This precedes his new series which begins the following Sunday. The new series, "Life with Purpose" will feature highlights from the book of Acts. But first things first. Deut. 31, 32 draws us into the life of Israel during their wandering years in the wilderness. The wilderness was difficult for Israel but it was also an immense blessing. For it was there that they learned to trust God. This week we seek to learn together from their wilderness experience. I hope your time together in the Word is rich.

God Bless,
Scott

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

Discussion Starters:

- **Wilderness:** Have you ever spent long periods of time in the wilderness? Where did you go and what was it like?
- **Read the following quote:** *There's something enormously attractive about wilderness. Jack London wrote a famous book with the title "The Call of the Wild" – and it does call.... When we're in the wilderness, we aren't in control, we have no assignment, no appointments to keep. Stay alert, stay alive – that's it. When we're in the wilderness, we commonly feel our lives simplifying and deepening.... Always in the wilderness, there's a tension between the beauty and the danger, between pristine simplicities and sinister threats. And because most of us can't sustain this tension for long, we live in towns and cities. We surround ourselves with water faucets and furnaces, roofs and street signs, grocery stores and police officers and firefighters. We lock our doors at night, put umbrellas over our heads when it rains and keep our dogs on a leash. But there are times, no matter how thoroughly we're civilized, when we're plunged into the wilderness – not a geographical wilderness but what I'm going to call a circumstantial wilderness.... What I want to say is this: I readily acknowledge that this circumstantial wilderness is a terrible, frightening and dangerous place; but I also believe that it's a place of beauty. There are things to be seen, heard, and experienced in this wilderness that can be seen, heard, and experienced nowhere else. When we find ourselves in the wilderness... we're plunged, if we let ourselves be, into an awareness of the great mystery of God and the extraordinary preciousness of life. Eugene Peterson, Leap Over a Wall*
Question: After reading this quote, ask people what stood out to them.

Discussion Questions:

1. The 40 years that Israel spent in the wilderness was difficult but it was also an immense blessing. What lessons of dependence did Israel learn from God during their wilderness years?
2. Please read Deuteronomy 31: 19-22. In your own words, what is God saying to Moses?
3. Why do you suppose God is giving the Israelites a song that forecasts their future rebellion?
4. Why are we so prone to turn away from God when all is going well?
5. Please reread Deuteronomy 32: 1-18. Who is the songwriter?
6. What does this song say about God? What kind of person is he? (Don't miss verses 6, 10)
7. Verses 9-12 describe God's treatment of Israel (aka Jacob) during the forty years of wandering in the desert. How did God treat Jacob?
8. Israel's sin is forgetfulness – forgetting God and all that he had done for them. Why are we so prone to forgetfulness?
9. What steps can we take to remember God and his faithfulness to us?

Group Prayer: As a group, you might consider having a time of confession and thanksgiving. Specifically, take some time to confess your tendency to forget God and his goodness. And thank him for all he has done.

Putting it into Practice: What practical steps could your home group take to remember God and all he has done? Perhaps, a book of remembrance could be established. Perhaps your group will come up with a different creative idea for remembering our Heavenly Father.