

FBC Small-Group Materials

Week of June 11th, 2006

Acts 2:43; In the World, Not of the World

For Small-Group Leaders

Dear Leaders,

AWE! We usually associate "awe" with fantastic sports moments or standing at the foot of Yosemite Falls, but how do we experience awe and wonder during the daily happenings of our lives, or are we even supposed to? Eugene Peterson writes,

"Unfortunately we do not live in a world that promotes or encourages wonder.... There are many reasons, but mostly the lessening of wonder takes place as we develop in competence and gain mastery over ourselves and... our environment."

Do you see where Peterson is going with this? As we become more and more self sufficient, we cease to look for God in the daily happenings of life. We're no longer in awe of his works and his presence. Life becomes ho hum, and we begin to look for excitement elsewhere. This is worth talking.

Blessings to you,

Scott

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

Discussion Starters:

- **Awesome** – What comes to your mind when you hear the word, "awesome?"
- **Awe and wonder** – People have an appetite to stand in awe of things. Some find their mouths dropping when they watch a Barry Bonds homerun or a good movie. Others are impressed by nature's beauties such as Yosemite Falls, a shooting star, and the like. What is it that leaves you standing in awe?

Discussion Questions:

Introduction: Read Acts 2:42-47 together (focusing on verse 43)

1. What is it that had the early church community in a state of awe and wonder?
2. Not everyone who witnessed these events saw them the same way. Read Acts 2:13. What caused some people to believe and some to continue in disbelief even though they have all witnessed the same work of God?
3. In Matthew 12, we find Jesus teaching and healing a man with a withered hand. Read verses 9-14. As you skim through the events that followed, note the reaction of the Pharisees. How did the Pharisees respond?
4. How does the reaction of the Pharisees in Matthew 12 compare with the response of the people in Acts 2?
5. Confronted with a miracle before their very eyes, the Pharisees were unimpressed. How does their reaction relate to Jesus' comments in Matthew 12:38?
6. Developing a sense of awe and wonder has little to do with miracles and signs. It has more to do with seeing God at work in the ordinary things of life. The Apostle Paul was skilled at this. In Philippians 1, we find the imprisoned Apostle seeing beyond his circumstances and seeing God at work. If you had been in Paul's shoes as a prisoner of Rome, how might you have assessed the situation?
7. How does Paul assess the situation (read Philippians 1:12-19)?
8. How did Paul develop a godly sense of wonder and awe?

Getting Personal:

- If time allows, read Eugene Peterson's quote to the group (found in the introduction) and follow with this question: Do you agree or disagree with Peterson's conclusion that self sufficiency undermines our sense of awe and wonder?
- How can we develop a sense of wonder and awe in our own lives today? How can our home group encourage each other to do so?

Putting it into Practice:

- What could your group do to put these ideas into practice?