

## Blasting through the Roadblocks

Have you ever been traveling somewhere and been thwarted by a roadblock of one sort or another? There's nothing like wanting to get to your destination only to take a wrong turn or encounter something that prevents you from getting where you are trying to go, but when you finally reach your destination, especially after a long trip, that can truly be a wonderful feeling.

They were there. They had arrived. When we look at the early church in this passage, we see a picture of blessed harmony. They would have their share of tremendous troubles later on, but for the moment, the Acts 2 community is at peace enjoying fellowship with one another and with their risen Savior, Christ. In a sense, they had reached their destination as a community of believers worshipping God freely and fully.

In stark contrast to this destination, the modern day believer faces roadblocks to corporate worship that leaves him or her, at times, feeling isolated, inhibited and distant from God. May God use this week's study to provide the power to destroy the roadblocks between us and heartfelt worship. May he draw all of us together as a community of worshippers who truly enjoy the heart of God.

### Monday – Roadblock One: Time

1. Please read Acts 2:42-47 (focusing on verses 46-47a). Why did they meet daily as opposed to once a week?
2. How long do you suppose the believers spent worshipping together each day, and how much time do you suppose they spent in conversation with one another?

**Making it Personal** - If you feel an unspoken resistance toward spending more time with others at FBC, it could come from many sources. However, your view of time might greatly affect your capacity to form deeper relationships at FBC. Prayerfully ask God to lead you offering the hours of your days (including this day) to him.

### Tuesday – Roadblock Two: Location, Location, Location

*"[Worship] is the one shining gem that is lost to the modern church, and I believe that we ought to search for this until we find it."* AW Tozer

1. Please read Acts 2:26-47a. How much of the Early Church's worship was formal in nature? How much of it was informal and casual?
2. What is the significance of the believers meeting at the temple instead of at Starbuck's or Steve's Place? In other words, what is it about the architecture, expectations and behavior at the temple that makes it an effective location?
3. Think of the last time you had lunch or coffee out with a Christian brother or sister. What did you talk about? How does such interaction contribute to what happens at FBC? How does it relate to our worship of God?

### Wednesday – Roadblock: Insincere Hearts

**Text Insight** - Our passage mentions how the believers had "glad and sincere hearts." The origin of the word "sincere" is worth our attention. It literally means *without wax*. It comes from the practice of pot-making. In ancient times, wax was a cheaper material than quality clay; therefore, potters could consider mixing wax with the clay as filler. The problem is that wax would be consumed in the firing process, resulting in pots that leaked. A buyer knew he had a sincere pot by holding it up to the light: if no glimmerings from weeping holes appeared, he could buy with confidence knowing that the potter offered the genuine article.

1. What sorts of "wax" additives do you suppose the early Church was tempted to mix into their worship and fellowship?
2. Read Acts 5:1-6. What "wax" additive was Ananias guilty of?

**Making it Personal** - To have a sincere heart is to have a single heart unalloyed with competing loves. What is competing for your loyalty, time and intimacy with Christ? Prayerfully seek God's guidance regarding today's choices, so that you may be able to live sincerely and gladly in Christ.

### Thursday – Roadblock: Mood and Worship

*Come, let us sing for joy to the LORD; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation. Psalm 95:1*

1. Very often in our worship, we think monochromatically. We limit worship to the dimension of singing, or at best, limit it to a fairly narrow band of emotions. Read Psalm 95:1 above. Have you ever shouted in your worship to God?
2. Please read Psalm 22; an example of David's worship through prayer. What different emotions are at work in this Psalm? How do these emotions fit together in the worshipper?
3. What clues does Psalm 22 suggest about bringing all of ourselves to worship before Christ?

### Friday – Roadblock: Effort and Renewal

1. Please read Hebrews 13:15-16 and Colossians 3:14-17. Depending upon whom you ask, believers split on their notion of what worship really involves. Some are of the opinion that one should expend himself in worship, a sacrifice of the self offered to God. Others counter that intimate time worshipping the Holy One is rejuvenating—for, after all, it is what we were made to do. After reading these two passages, what do you think? Does worship involve effort or is it more about renewal?
2. The two references to "sacrifice" in the Hebrews passage elicit recognition of animal sacrifices with *blood* shed on the altar in the temple. In contemporary society, time is the *lifeblood* of our culture. What type of sacrifices of your time might you be able to offer freely to God in worship this weekend?

**For the Weekend:** Read Col. 3:14-17 once again. The tone of the passage is buoyant and glad; a response out of fullness and not a parceling out of scarcity. Think of someone who strengthens you in worship, adding zeal to your love of God? Kindle the flame of worship by getting together with that person for a BBQ, coffee, or a walk. Try to allow that person to strengthen you even more.