

# Stepping Out

FBC's Fall Focus: "Dwell"

Week of October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2009

Welcome to our second week of our Fall Focus. During the seven weeks of our Fall Focus the Scrolls will direct us into God's Word so that we may be encouraged and challenged in our faith. Specifically, we will learn together how we as Christians can engage the culture in which we find ourselves. As we do each week, we begin with a reflection from a member of our FBC congregation.

## Live Where You Dwell

*"No matter where you go, there you are."*

The Adventures of Buckaroo Banzai Across the 8th Dimension (1984)

*The Adventures of Buckaroo Banzai* is one of my favorite quirky movies. Buckaroo Banzai is a brilliant scientist, gifted surgeon, courageous adventurer and talented rock musician who saves the planet from alien invaders. But along the way he displays constant humility. He seems to attract people who have very odd – at times uniquely odd – traits, but Buckaroo never makes them feel inferior (even though no one can do all the things he does so well). Instead, he dwells among them and cares about them.

In a small way, it reminds me of the way God cares for me. God the Son humbled himself to come live with us, to dwell fully among us despite (or perhaps I should say due to) our own odd – at times quite ungodly – traits. Let's spend this week learning what it means to have a God who cares so much for us that he chose to dwell with us. And may his example lead us to follow in his footsteps.

### Monday – The King who Stooped Down

*"Amazing love, how can it be that you, my King, would die for me?"* Billy James Foote, American songwriter

1. Please read John 1:1-4 and 1:14. How would you contrast the life Jesus had before he came to earth and the one he had while lived among us? What does this tell you about the character of God?
2. Long before Jesus was born as a man, the Bible spoke of God dwelling with his people. How is it described in Psalm 90:1 and 91:9-10? How does this help you understand your relationship with God?
3. What does Ephesians 3:16-19 say about the closeness of Jesus' present relationship with Christians?

**Making it Personal:** Ask God to draw you closer to him each day as you dwell with him, and he with you.

### Tuesday – Bending Down, Rising Up

*"It is the laden bough that hangs low, and the most fruitful Christian who is the most humble."* Anonymous

1. Please read Philippians 2:5-11, and describe the contrast between these two aspects (i.e. bending down and rising up) of Jesus' ministry.
2. Read Matthew 11:28-30 and 23:11-12. How can Jesus' humility make our lives both easier and exalted?

**Text Insight:** Biblical humility is not false modesty or self-degrading behavior. Rather, it is the exercise of sound judgment when considering your place in this world and with God (Romans 12:3).

3. What description does Jesus provide for proper humility in Matthew 18:1-6? How might one person's lack of humility cause another person to stumble in their relationship with God?

**Making it Personal:** Where do you see pride and humility battle in your daily life? Ask God to give you a proper understanding of your place with him and those around you.

### Wednesday – Reaching Out, Gathering In

*"He who sows courtesy reaps friendship, and he who plants kindness gathers love."* Spanish proverb

1. Please read Philippians 2:1-4. How should we act toward others? Why?
2. What instructions did God have for the Israelites in Leviticus 25:35-38 about foreigners among them? How can you reach out to people around you who may seem different?
3. In Ezekiel 47:21-23, we read of a vision of our future with God. How will God treat those who we might think are very different from us?

**Digging Deeper (optional):** Read Acts 10:1-48. How did God prepare Cornelius and Peter to meet someone different from themselves? Is there a group of people in our culture that you need to change your mind about?

### Thursday – Sharing in Humanity

*"Love, hope, fear, faith--these make humanity; these are its sign and note and character."* Robert Browning, Paracelsus

1. Please read Hebrews 2:14-16. How did Jesus act upon his great concern for his people? Why?
2. According to Ephesians 2:1-5, what is our condition before we belong to Jesus? After?
3. Jesus' willingness to take on flesh and come and live with us has made a radical difference in the world and in our lives. Where would we be, and where would the world be, if Jesus had decided against coming and living with us?

**Prayer Focus:** How can you begin to follow in his footsteps, by loving and reaching out to those in your neighborhood or workplace? Ask God to guide you as you endeavor to reach out in his name.

### Friday – A Merciful and Faithful Helper

*"When you have no helpers, see your helpers in God. When you have many helpers, see God in all your helpers."* Charles Spurgeon, 19<sup>th</sup> c. British preacher

1. Please read Hebrews 2:17-18. For what reason did Jesus – God the Son – decide to be born as a human child? What happened as a result of Jesus choosing to do so?
2. How does the description of God in Psalm 145:8-9 help you understand Jesus' mercy and faithfulness mentioned in Hebrews 2:17?
3. Read Hebrews 4:14-16. Why is it significant that Jesus had both a heavenly and earthly existence?

**Making it Personal:** When have you relied on Jesus as your merciful and faithful helper? Is there someone in your life for whom you can be a helper today?

**For the Weekend:** Take some time to memorize John 1:14. Throughout the weekend, as the Lord brings the verse to mind, consider what it means that Christ came and lived among us.