

Care Group Homework
(For the week of January 31, 2010)
The Importance of Expectancy

Getting to know one another:

1. The Winter Olympics are coming up in just about a month. If you could compete in any two events, which would they be and why?
2. The message focused on our sense of expectancy concerning Christ. What things have filled you with a sense of expectation?
3. Looking back over your sermon notes, was there a particular point or passage of Scripture that most challenged, confused or caught your attention?

Getting into the Word:

4. What do you think the experience the disciples had in verse 10 was like? How do you envision the return of Christ?

It seems to me that the disciples, who had already witnessed numerous miracles and mind boggling events - like the calming of the storm, walking on water, feeding the 5000, the resurrection and more - must have been faced with something unimaginable. The amazement of watching Jesus ascend into heaven probably left them without words. Awestruck. I do not find it at all strange that the angels found them staring into heaven. It was more than we can fathom. As for the return of Christ, I presume it will have a similar effect upon those who experience it. Although in my mind's eye I usually see everybody on earth looking to the sky to see Christ descending, it is more likely that it will be experienced regionally - that those in close proximity to the actual event will be the ones who will see him descend.

5. Why do you think the disciples were so intent on telling people about Jesus? How is this a reflection of their belief that Jesus was coming again?

They were men and women who were totally convinced of the truth of Jesus. They understood that faith in Christ is what every man needed to be reconciled with God. Their commitment to tell others arose from their conviction of the truth of the message. Their urgency to tell others came from their conviction that Jesus' return was imminent.

6. The book of Acts indicates a number of ways in which the disciples built bridges to communicate the gospel. What are some of those ways? What ways are you building bridges to introduce others to Christ?

The numerous healings performed by the disciples certainly opened up doors of communication. In the message Philip was mentioned as just being bold enough to approach someone reading scripture. Peter made friends with his jailor. Paul used the altar to the unknown God as a starting point.

7. How does the experience of “belonging” to the early church differ from our experience today?

We certainly do things differently in regard to having all things in common. Our level of care for the widows and orphans is different. We don't meet together every day. Yet we still care for one another - society has changed significantly making some of the things which marked the early church difficult to transfer into our time.

8. What advantages do we have over the early church as it pertains to our fellowship with one another and our heart for the lost? What disadvantages do we have?

Because there are so many churches in town, we have the advantage (or disadvantage) of being able to choose the Christians we want to associate with - We have far greater mobility and security within our country. We have access to far more resources in helping one another. There is also a diminished sense of urgency to the message, thereby dulling our sense of mission and commitment to it.

9. In what ways can we better express our hope for the future?

It wouldn't hurt for us to actually talk about it! It also might help if we didn't worry so much about the future.