

*Would you like to join a Small Group at Fellowship Bible Church?*

Most existing groups are open to new group members, and new groups begin on a regular basis. If you have friends in a small group, ask about joining their group. If you are new to Fellowship and are looking for a place to connect, please feel free to contact us and we can help you find the right group.

*Leader Tips:*

1. The sermon notes are designed to be used as a guide for discussion. Don't feel like you have to use every question. Some questions will take a while to work through, others will be over in a few seconds!
2. Don't teach the lesson. The sermon was taught on Sunday morning. Just ask questions and let everyone else talk.
3. Let other people ask questions. It's OK to go "off topic" for a while. Sometimes those conversations are more interesting anyway!
4. Have fun. Relationships, not curriculum, are the heartbeat of Small Groups. So have fun with the people in your group.

*Agenda for a Small Group Meeting*

*Gathering Time*

Take 15-20 minutes to welcome everyone, catch up, and share some food!

*Discussion Time*

Here's a suggested format:

1. *Ice Breaker* – Lighthearted ice-breaker question (15-20 min.)
2. *Discussion* - Discussion time, Bible study, application challenge (30-40 min.)
3. *Prayer* – Prayer requests and praying for one another (15-30 min.)
4. *Planning* – Keep the vision before the group, HEALTH planning, etc. (10 minutes)

Small Group Staff:

Ian Kayser

[ian.kayser@fbclife.org](mailto:ian.kayser@fbclife.org)

823-8338 ext. 2008;

Becca Murdaugh

[becca.murdaugh@fbclife.org](mailto:becca.murdaugh@fbclife.org)

823-8338

What is Easter and Why Does it Matter?

Phillip Wright

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Talk it over!

What is Easter?

Easter is about breaking out of the box.

1. Jesus broke out of the box of theology.

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was with God in the beginning.*

–John 1:1-2

Also see John 1:18 and 14:7-10

Question: Why is theology important? What does "bad theology" do to a person? To a church? To a community?

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Every mental picture of God must be centered in Jesus.

How did Jesus break out of the box of theology on Easter?

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2. Jesus broke out of the box of religion.

*You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder.*

–James 2:19

Question: How is following Jesus different from following a religion?

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What happens when our faith is no longer a religion?

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Why Does it Matter?

We can break out of our boxes.

1. I can break out of the guilt box from my past.

*And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins.*

–1 Corinthians 15:17

*When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, <sup>14</sup> having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. <sup>15</sup> And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.*

–Colossians 2:13-15

Question: What does guilt do for you?

- Shame
- It paralyzes me
- It weighs me down
- It doesn't do anything
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

How did Jesus break us free from guilt?

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**2. I can break out the worry and frustration box about my present.**

*and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength<sup>20</sup> he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms,*  
—Ephesians 1:19-20

Question: What is worrying and frustrating you today?  
How does Jesus' resurrection free us from the things that weigh us down today?

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**3. I can break out of the fear box about my future.**

*Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,<sup>4</sup> and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you,*  
—1 Peter 1:3-4

Question: What worries you about the future? What does Easter say about the future?

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## Work It Out!

One thing I'll do differently because of this sermon:

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