

DANGEROUS FAITH

Discussion Notes

WHAT THEY DON'T TELL YOU

This week Philip spoke in a similar manner to Paul in Athens; not speaking based solely on exposition from the Bible but instead speaking to the culture we are surrounded by. However, as a church community we want to be deeply invested in the Bible and allow it to speak to us. So, hubs are a great time to do that in a deeper way. Why not break down into smaller groups and spend some time going through the passage together? The passage is Acts 17:22-28.

Then Philip, spoke about three things that even we as Christians might not know about faith today as culture feeds us opposite messages.

1. 40% OF SCIENTISTS BELIEVE IN GOD

This is the same number as those who are atheist. This number is true across the world and has been the same for the last 100 years since the first survey was conducted.

- Is this surprising? Would your friends be surprised by this stat?
- Have you been told science and religion don't mix? What do you say to the accusation that the two aren't compatible.

2. THE GAPS ARE GETTING BIGGER

Previously, people have said that the idea of 'god' just explains the things science can't explain, and so as science works out more the need for God diminishes. However, instead of the 'gaps' getting smaller, they are actually getting bigger. Scientists are finding more and more places where they just cannot explain why something happened. Philip said this: "The more we discover about our world the more probable God becomes."

- Do you agree with this statement?
- Have you been told that there is less need for God as an explanation because of science?

3. THE CHURCH IS GROWING MIRACULOUSLY

Philip explained around the world the Church is growing, especially in places where it is toughest to be a Christian. Iran and Afghanistan are where the Church is growing the fastest. China is predicted to be the country with the most Christians by 2025 (160 million).

- Did you know that the Church is growing today?
- Would that make a difference to peoples' attitude towards Church if they saw it as something that is growing rather than dying?

Perhaps most profoundly, the persecution of Christians seems to correlate with the growth of the Church. One quote from a Christian in Iran shows how miraculous this is. You may want to read this quote out loud and reflect on it together.

"We know that if they get us, the first thing they will do to us as a woman is rape us and then they will beat us and eventually they will kill us. This is the decision we have made that we want to offer our bodies as sacrifices. Because I have this thought when I wake up, that when I leave that door, I might not come back."

- What can we learn from the experiences of persecuted Christians around the world? How does their faith challenge us? How can it encourage us?