



MEETING AGENDA

ICEBREAKER (10 MINUTES)

People often talk about “the good ol days.” As you reflect on your life experience, would you say that society is declining in terms of morality? Are things getting better or worse? In what ways has morality declined?

INTRODUCTION (5-10 MINUTES)

(Feel free to use one or all of the following introductory questions)

Was there one idea from Pastor David’s message that particularly stood out to you? Share that with the group.

Was there anything you saw in Daniel chapter 1 that stood out to you or was new to you?

As David explained the background for the story, i.e. Daniel’s new name, his education in astrology and the occult, the pressure to give up his identity, culture and practices- how does that help you to better appreciate the challenge Daniel and his friends faced in Babylon?

INTO THE WORD (25 MINUTES)

Read Jesus' words in John 16:33. How can they encourage us and remind us of the importance of thriving in exile?

How does knowing the truth that pain and trials will be a part of our lives help us face them today? How has knowing that Jesus has overcome the world helped you during your darkest moments?

Read Habakkuk 3:16-19. What does this Scripture tell us about the character of God? Does God always promise deliverance? And what did Habakkuk choose to do in the midst of a failed crop, starvation, and deprivation?

How Can Habakkuk's response help you to face your current trials?

Read Hebrews 11:32-40. There seem to be two categories of faithful people in the section. How would you describe each category? How did God treat each group (v.39), regardless of their circumstances in life? Is this passage meant to encourage us? If so, why?

APPLICATION (25 MINUTES)

[Hosts: don't feel pressure to cover all the questions below. Pick the one or two questions that might lead to the best conversation, but if discussion fades, include the others.]

David closed with this question, "What is your Babylon?" How would you answer that question? How does knowing that God is in control of people who are in control (v. 1-2) and that God is in control of situations that seem out of control (v. 3-7) encourage you in your circumstances?

David said that it's hard to live a godly life. In what area of your life have you found that statement to be most true? What idea from the sermon most encourages you to keep pursuing godliness?

Have the trials you've endured in your life caused you to experience any of the following?

- Prepared us to be "light in darkness"**
- Exposed genuine faith from counterfeit faith**
- Exposed our hidden spiritual weakness**
- Awakened strengths that were dormant**

Is there a "Babylon" situation you are facing, that you could invite your small group to pray over?

PRAYER (10 MINUTES)

Father God,

We ask you to give us your divine perspective on the world around us and on any difficult situations we may be facing. Teach us what it means to thrive in difficult times. Grant us the grace to trust that you are working in every situation and that you always have our best interests in mind. Help us to hold onto Jesus, our Light, just as tightly as Daniel held onto God. Awaken the strengths we need for today. Amen.

