



ICEBREAKER (10 MINUTES)

Have you ever had a recurring dream or one you remembered after waking up?

INTRODUCTION (5-10 MINUTES)

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

David said that faith which has not been tested, cannot be trusted. How did that statement strike you? Since many writers in the New Testament say how valuable the testing of our faith really is, what should our perspective be toward trials and hardships?

INTO THE WORD (25 MINUTES)

Read James 1:2-4 and 1 Peter 1:6-7. What truths about the role of testing in our lives from the two passages stick out to you?

Read Matthew 13:3-9. Jesus here explains four soil types as a metaphor for hearing versus living out the Word of God. As David said, a faith that isn't tested can't be trusted or counterfeit faith.

This can look like the following:

- Having good intentions but not following through.
- Having high morals but not applying the word of God to your life.
- Having dramatic starts but not finishing well.

What sticks out to you about the soils mentioned in Matthew 13 or the examples of untested faith listed above?

APPLICATION (25 MINUTES)

We see in Daniel 2:12-16 that Daniel responds to the dangerous situation facing him with perspective and prudence rooted in God. Are there any difficult situations in your life currently? What would responding with perspective and carefulness look like for you in your situation?

In verses 17-19, Daniel trusted God and built endurance. He included his community in praying for God to show Daniel the king's dream. Is there an area or situation where you can invite your community to help pray? Is there an area or situation that you need to keep trusting God for a response?

Where in your life do you need to take a step towards obedience?

PRAYER (10 MINUTES)

Father God,

We thank you for being in control even when it can feel like our worlds are out of control. Remind us that testing our faith helps reveal counterfeit faith and builds a genuine faith that builds us up and draws us closer to You. As we walk through many hard and difficult situations, we may grow in our endurance and faith, knowing that You are at work and will be glorified regardless of the outcome. May the way we endure shine a light on our communities and point others toward You. Please bring people into our lives that can put their faith in You, Jesus. We pray all of this in Jesus' name, Amen.

REACH 2 EMPHASES (BONUS)

In chapter 6 of Thom S. Rainer's book, *Sharing the Gospel with Ease*, he shares eight common objections people have about following Jesus:

- I'm not a bad person.
- I've done too many bad things.
- I'll think about it later.
- How can a loving God let bad things happen to people?
- There are many ways to get to heaven or God.
- I believe in God.
- The church has hurt me.
- How can I believe the Bible is true?

Which objection do you find most prevalent with people you live with who do not know Jesus? Which one do you feel most ill-equipped to have a response for?