



Sermon-based small groups connect the week to the weekend!

Dig deeper into the talk each week, while getting connected, cared for and known. Challenge yourself to see how the message actually makes sense and applies to your everyday life and do it with people just like you to support you on your journey.

Message Info: The Power of: Encouragement, 12/4/22 - Words are powerful. But our actions are just as important. Encouraging words & actions build up confidence, beliefs, attitude, and actions; they define us. Encouraging one another leads to sustainable, genuine change. The opposite, criticism, produces short term change at best, and builds resentment. Be an encourager who motivates and brings out the best in people. (Passages: James 3:3-6, Acts 4:36, 9:26, 11:22-26, 13:6-12; 1 Thess. 5:11; Romans 15:5)

Discussion Questions: Take your time and dig into these questions.

Recall a time you felt encouraged or could have used encouragement. How did receiving, or not receiving it, effect your mood/work/attitude? How did it impact those around you? Did it effect the rest of your day? How?

Read Acts 11:22-26. What sticks out to you about this passage? Why?

Barnabas was the early church's go-to guy for encouragement. And Paul, newly transformed by his Damascus Road experience, was not yet readily received by most believers. Barnabas' encouraging demeanor played a vital role in Paul's development and his inclusion by other Christians. They were paired up strategically by God. Were Barnabas and Paul effective in building up other/new christians or not? How do you know?

Read Acts 13:6-12. How do we see growth in Paul through Barnabas' mentoring?

Encouragement can be hard to come by at times. What can we do to foster an encouraging attitude for ourselves?

We can always go to God for encouragement (Romans 15:5.) God provides all we need. Focusing on who He is and His promises to us are a wealth of encouragement.

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:11. God actually *commands* us to encourage one another. Can you identify people in your life that could use encouragement? How can you encourage them?

Group Challenge: Invite a friend to join you this Christmas Eve at one of our Christmas Eve services.