



Welcome

Message: Settling for Samples
Dr. Lance Watson, Senior Pastor

PRAYER: Gracious God, give us the courage to step forward into the opportunities and challenges You set before us without letting fear or uncertainty dictate our path. Help us to see every situation with eyes of faith—recognizing the real obstacles in front of us without losing sight of Your surrounding goodness and unfailing promises. Grant us the resolve to bring back testimony of Your faithfulness into our everyday lives, trusting that You go before us into every new season. In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.

ICEBREAKER: If you were sent as a spy to scout out your own life right now, what is one “giant” obstacle you’d see, and what is one “fruitful” blessing you’d find?

INTRODUCTION: When God calls us into new territory, He doesn't ask us to turn a blind eye to reality; He calls us to look at every obstacle through the lens of His promise. In Numbers 13:17–20, as Moses sends twelve leaders to scout the Promised Land, he charges them to examine both the strength of the land and the scale of the challenges with clear-eyed honesty and unwavering courage. He also asks them to bring back a sample of what they found—the sample was just that—a sample. It was never intended to satisfy. This passage reminds us to gather facts without surrendering to fear, recognizing that no fortified city or daunting giant is greater than the God who goes before us, and never accept a sample as satisfactory.

BIBLE STUDY: Read Numbers 13:17-20 (NLT): ¹⁷ Moses gave the men these instructions as he sent them out to explore the land: “Go north through the Negev into the hill country. ¹⁸ See what the land is like and find out whether the people living there are strong or weak, few or many. ¹⁹ See what kind of land they live in. Is it good or bad? Do their towns have walls, or are they unprotected like open camps? ²⁰ Is the soil fertile or poor? Are there many trees? Do your best to bring back samples of the crops you see.” (It happened to be the season for harvesting the first ripe grapes.)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. **What was your biggest takeaway from the message?** What’s one thing you learned? What questions came to mind as you listened to the message? What points did you find most insightful?
2. **Assessing the Landscape:** Moses asks the spies to look at both the dynamic challenges (strong/weak people, fortified cities) and the good features of the land. *When facing a new season or major decision, do you tend to hyper-focus on potential obstacles or potential blessings? How does that initial focus shape your mindset?*
3. **Courage in the Reconnaissance:** Moses explicitly tells the scouts, “Be of good courage” before they even set foot in Canaan. *What is an area of your life right now where God is calling you to step forward, even though gathering the facts or looking closely feels overwhelming?*
4. **Bringing Back the Fruit:** The spies were instructed to actively taste and return with evidence of the land’s goodness (the first ripe grapes). *How can we as a group better identify and “bring back” tangible reminders of God’s current faithfulness in our daily lives, even while we are still waiting for full answers to prayer?*

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5. **Faith vs. Fear in Preparation:** Preparing to enter a new space requires looking clear-eyed at reality without letting fear dictate the outcome. *How do you distinguish between wise preparation (gathering facts) and fear-driven hesitation (letting the “fortified cities” stop you from moving forward in faith)?*

LIVE IT OUT: Step forward courageously to inspect the challenges in front of you, trusting God’s promises more than the size of the obstacles you see.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Take this time to share group announcements. Announcements can be found at www.myspbc.org. You can also “find, follow and like” our Facebook page at facebook.com/myspbc. Turn on your notifications. Remember to subscribe to our YouTube channel!

CELEBRATIONS: Take this time to share praise reports (e.g. answered prayers, birthdays, anniversaries, promotions).

PRAYER REQUESTS & PRAYER: Take this time to share prayer requests. Close with prayer.

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We Care!

NOTICE: As a small group leader, we depend on you to show members that we care. Here's a list of resources to help you.

FOR PRAYER:

CALL: 804.463.2472

EMAIL: prayer@myspbc.org.

FOR COUNSELING:

CALL: 804.643.6177

EMAIL: care@myspbc.org

TO REQUEST A HOSPITAL VISIT:

CALL: 804.304.3890 (For Emergencies)

EMAIL: ecare@myspbc.org.

TO REQUEST FUNERAL SUPPORT:

CALL: 804.304.3890 (Pastor On Call)

EMAIL: ecare@myspbc.org.

TO FIND A SUPPORT GROUP:

CALL: 804.643.6177

EMAIL: care@myspbc.org.

TO REQUEST EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE:

CALL: 804.643.4000

EMAIL: emergencyassistance@myspbc.org.

TO CONTACT MY LIFE STAGE PASTOR: CALL: 804.643.4000 and Press 1 for the Dial by Name Directory

EMAIL:

- Imagination (0-10): Vernita Williams: Vernita.Williams@myspbc.org
- SMB (11-19): Martina Jones-Smith: Martina.Jones-Smith@myspbc.org
- Dreamchasers (20-29): Juan Shackelford: juan.shackelford@myspbc.org
- Aspire (30-39): Lance Watson, Jr.: lance.watsonjr@myspbc.org
- Fusion (40-49): Michelle Townsend: michelle.townsend@myspbc.org
- Encore (50-59): Lisa Johnson: lisa.johnson@myspbc.org.
- Prime Time (60-69): Maceo Freeman: maceo.freeman@myspbc.org
- Refiners (70+): Roscoe Jones: roscoe.jones@myspbc.org

*GPS is a study guide based on the weekend message. The purpose of this guide is to assist small groups in study.
Previous GPS Guides are available online at www.myspbc.org.*



Small Group Leader Guide

Would you like to START or JOIN a Small Group at Saint Paul's?

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 Saint Paul's and are looking for a place to connect, please feel free to contact us and we will do our best to help you find the right group.

Leader Tips:

The GPS document is a guide for discussion. Don't feel like you must use every question. Some questions will take a while to work through while others will be over in a few seconds!

1. Don't teach the lesson. The lesson was taught on the weekend. Just ask questions and let everyone else talk.
2. Let other people ask questions. It's OK to go "off topic" for a while. Sometimes those conversations are more interesting anyway!
3. Have fun. Relationships, not curriculum, are the heartbeat of our small groups. So, have fun with the people in your group.

Agenda for a Small Group Gathering

Gathering Time

Take 5-10 minutes to welcome everyone, catch up and if planned, share some food!

Discussion Time

Here's a suggested format:

1. **Ice Breaker** – Lighthearted icebreaker question (5-10 min.)
2. **Discussion** - Discussion time, Bible study, application challenge (30-40 min.)
3. **Prayer** – Prayer requests and praying for one another (10-20 min.)
4. **Planning** – Remind the group of how we serve together (e.g. usher, sing, greet, pray, etc.)