

Daniel Small Group Study Guide 3

Making the Right Decision in Babylon

Daniel 1:8–21 (ESV)

⁸ But Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself with the king's food, or with the wine that he drank. Therefore he asked the chief of the eunuchs to allow him not to defile himself. ⁹ And God gave Daniel favor and compassion in the sight of the chief of the eunuchs, ¹⁰ and the chief of the eunuchs said to Daniel, "I fear my lord the king, who assigned your food and your drink; for why should he see that you were in worse condition than the youths who are of your own age? So you would endanger my head with the king." ¹¹ Then Daniel said to the steward whom the chief of the eunuchs had assigned over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, ¹² "Test your servants for ten days; let us be given vegetables to eat and water to drink. ¹³ Then let our appearance and the appearance of the youths who eat the king's food be observed by you, and deal with your servants according to what you see." ¹⁴ So he listened to them in this matter, and tested them for ten days. ¹⁵ At the end of ten days it was seen that they were better in appearance and fatter in flesh than all the youths who ate the king's food. ¹⁶ So the steward took away their food and the wine they were to drink, and gave them vegetables. ¹⁷ As for these four youths, God gave them learning and skill in all literature and wisdom, and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams. ¹⁸ At the end of the time, when the king had commanded that they should be brought in, the chief of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. ¹⁹ And the king spoke with them, and among all of them none was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. Therefore they stood before the king. ²⁰ And in every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters that were in all his kingdom. ²¹ And Daniel was there until the first year of King Cyrus.

Sermon Outline

1. The Problem
2. The Purpose: Culture Pressure, Peer Pressure, Fear Pressure
3. The Provision "God Gave"
4. The Proof

Questions for Discussion:

What does it mean to be defiled by the world?

What defensive measures can you take to protect against being defiled?

Is it possible to be too protective? Explain.

Why does the presence of risk require faith in Christ? Because you identified with Christ, have you ever experienced risk that required deep faith? If so, explain. What physical, mental, and spiritual blessings has the Lord given to you? How can you use them to bring glory and honor to him the way Daniel and his friends did?

How does Daniel's journey mirror the life and ministry of Jesus?

How does Jesus fulfill the work done by Daniel?

David Helm wrote, "People of resolve are fashioned. They are made. They rarely simply appear. This prompts us to ask ourselves: What kind of young people are we raising in our churches? Let us realize, or be reminded of, the truth that raising children for God is one of the most important businesses done on earth—and all Christians, whether parents or not, are involved in this business, because we are all part of a church family. We need a generation of Daniels, so let us commit ourselves to growing them. The words of an old Sunday-school song speak of the kind of person the church should be looking to produce: Dare to be a Daniel, Dare to stand alone, Dare to hold a purpose firm, Dare to make it known."

Church members are all (even if not at home) involved in training the next generation.

What part are you, or could you be, playing?

Is your aim to raise children to "dare to be a Daniel"?

Being godly in the world is not necessarily opposed to being useful in the world.

Does this encourage or challenge you? How?