

Community Group Questions

Daniel Chapter 1

WB: 6th February 2017

Overview

- *Written about 500 years before the birth of Jesus, following Judah's (God's people's) exile into Babylon (a city of polytheistic idol worship)*
- *Upon Judah being conquered by Babylon, many of the sacred objects (Gold and valuable objects) were taken from Judah and placed in Babylon - which would have been a reminder to all of God's people now living in the city of their past culture and life.*

Q: In the bible we are encouraged to remember how God has moved in the past, in order to get faith for the future. What personal stories from the past give you faith for the future? Are you good at doing this? How might you be better at doing this?

'I will remember the deeds of the Lord; yes, I will remember your wonders of old. I will ponder all your work and meditate on your mighty deeds' (Psalm 77)

Overview (Cont...)

- *As part of Babylon's conquest of nations they would also take the 'Strong, healthy good-looking young men with knowledge and good judgement' which they would then train in Babylonian culture, literature and life for 3 years in order to 'assimilate; their values onto them, for the benefit of Babylon. Daniel refused to let himself be redefined by this culture, by actively refusing various of these assimilations and by remembering who he was and what culture (God's people) he was originally from.*

Q: What would you say are the subtle assimilations of our current culture that you may personally find challenging?

Examples might be:

- Consumerism
- Eroding of biblical values i.e. Sex
- Undermining of biblical truth (creation / the redefinition of marriage / gender / the right to life) - the power of the crowd, of popular opinion
- The 'me' centred focus of our culture - the fact that everything is immediate, is tailored for us, the cookies on our search engines, the social media profiles - that we are effectively becoming our own gods.

Q: The main way in which we can fight against our own cultural assimilation is by making sure we are constantly reminded of our own biblical one. What are the way that we can practically do this?

Example might be:

- Worshipping
- Reading our bibles (paper or electronic)
- Attending church / community group
- investing in biblical friendships
- Praying

Overview (Cont...)

- One of the ways in which Daniel didn't completely take on these Babylonian values is by being very 'active' and not 'passive' in making decisions ie. not eating the food that was being offered to him and having faith that God's way was the best way for him (that he would remain strong and healthy eating only water and vegetables) that was being offered to him.

Q: Passivity can be a product of our current culture. In what ways can we find ourselves facing this in our lives? With our relationship with God?

Q: How might we be more effective in being 'active'?

Examples might be:

- Being disciplined in various areas of our life (Including, but not limited to, relationship with God)
- Asking the Holy Spirit for help with these

Overview (Cont...)

- The result of this, was that Daniel and his friends were stronger and healthier after 10 days than all the other men. They were thought highly of and were 'ten times more capable...'*

Q: *How might this be an encouragement for us?*