

Week 2: Interpersonal Intervention (Daniel 1:1-9)

LEADER'S INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

Brian Jones: "We Christians believe the only reason we have long stretches of good days accumulate together **INTO GOOD LIVES** is because God has intervened and blessed us."

WELCOME & WARM-UP

Icebreaker: (You can choose one from the following questions.)

1. Have you heard of God's "favor" before? How would you describe it?
2. How did you struggle with peer pressure when you were younger? In what ways do even adults struggle with peer pressure?
3. Describe a bold demonstration of faithfulness to God you have taken or witnessed in your lifetime.

WORSHIP

Sing "Cornerstone" or "What a Beautiful Name". Prepare song sheets in advance.

WORD

Note to Leaders: You can have someone read Daniel 1:1-9 OR tell the story the best as you can. Don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it, but to learn it and be able to just share it.

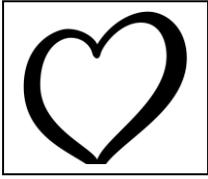
Note to Leaders: Please choose questions (one from each section) that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members. Don't feel you have to use all or any of these questions and you don't have to make it to the end! Use the questions that best fit your group and let discussion flow.



1. Why do you think the king wanted Israelites in his court?
2. What do you think David, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah were thinking when they were chosen for this process? Why do you think Jacob was so reluctant to give up?

Nebuchadnezzar conquered Israel, and one of the reasons he wanted the best and brightest in his court was to show off his conquest. When the people of Nebuchadnezzar's court saw the fairest and smartest that Israel had to offer, it demonstrated how wise and powerful Nebuchadnezzar was to subjugate such a people. In addition, if Nebuchadnezzar had the smartest and best working for him, it would also prevent them from working against him.

Nebuchadnezzar wanted Daniel and the other Israelites completely immersed in Babylonian culture. He wanted them to worship his gods, read his books, wear his clothing, and eat his food. The quicker he could assimilate them, the less likely it would be for them to rebel against him.



1. In Daniel 1:1-2 we learn about the Babylonians besieging Jerusalem. If you were living there, how would that make you feel about God?
2. In Daniel 1:8 we learn that Daniel, after being taken by the Babylonians, still resolved to remain faithful to God. Do you think you could have been so resolute under the circumstances?
3. Is it possible for a person to be boldly faithful if he or she avoids culture altogether to receive God's favor? Explain.

Daniel and the others were given the finest food that the court had to offer. This made certain that they had plenty to eat, but it also reminded them that they were dependent upon the king of Babylon for their sustenance. The boys were renamed because they were named after the God of Israel. Their new names reflected the Babylonian pantheon. This was another technique to assimilate Daniel and his friends.

The temptation for Daniel to give in would have been incredible. The king had the power of life and death, so any kind of rebellion could have terrible consequences. Plus, he was being treated well. He was being educated, well fed, and groomed for the highest court in the world. Losing that opportunity would have been a great cost. Further, Nebuchadnezzar had taken Jerusalem and looted the temple. His empire was filled with conquered peoples. It would have been very tempting to give up, worship the gods of Babylon, and assimilate with the people there.



1. What are some ways Christians today can be part of culture that won't compromise our faith and provide us opportunities to share that faith?
2. If you could have a Daniel 1:9 moment, what would it look like?

WORKS

Weekly Prayer Points

1. Pray for the names you listed during Pastor Dyke's sermon;
2. Church
 - Elders, Pastors, Leaders and families
 - Ministries of the church
 - That CCMW would continue to love and honor God and make disciples
3. Personal
 - Deeper intimate relationship with God
 - Righteous living
 - Salvation of family and friends