



**Our Next Guests – Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego
Sermon Discussion Questions – July 17th, 2022**

Scripture Passages:

Daniel 1:1-20

In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. 2 And the Lord delivered Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, along with some of the articles from the temple of God. These he carried off to the temple of his god in Babylonia[a] and put in the treasure house of his god. 3 Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, chief of his court officials, to bring into the king's service some of the Israelites from the royal family and the nobility— 4 young men without any physical defect, handsome, showing aptitude for every kind of learning, well informed, quick to understand, and qualified to serve in the king's palace. He was to teach them the language and literature of the Babylonians. 5 The king assigned them a daily amount of food and wine from the king's table. They were to be trained for three years, and after that they were to enter the king's service. 6 Among those who were chosen were some from Judah: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. 7 The chief official gave them new names: to Daniel, the name Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abednego. 8 But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine, and he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way. 9 Now God had caused the official to show favor and compassion to Daniel, 10 but the official told Daniel, "I am afraid of my lord the king, who has assigned your food and drink. Why should he see you looking worse than the other young men your age? The king would then have my head because of you." 11 Daniel then said to the guard whom the chief official had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, 12 "Please test your servants for ten days: Give us nothing but vegetables to eat and water to drink. 13 Then compare our appearance with that of the young men who eat the royal food and treat your servants in accordance with what you see." 14 So he agreed to this and tested them for ten days. 15 At the end of the ten days they looked healthier and better nourished than any of the young men who ate the royal food. 16 So the guard took away their choice food and the wine they were to drink and gave them vegetables instead. 17 To these four young men God gave knowledge and understanding of all kinds of literature and learning. And Daniel could understand visions and dreams of all kinds. 18 At the end of the time set by the king to bring them into

his service, the chief official presented them to Nebuchadnezzar. 19 The king talked with them, and he found none equal to Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah; so they entered the king's service. 20 In every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king questioned them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in his whole kingdom.

Romans 12:2

Do not conform to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Ephesians 2:10

For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Daniel 3:16-18

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to him, "King Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. 17 If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to deliver us from it, and he will deliver us from Your Majesty's hand. 18 But even if he does not, we want you to know, Your Majesty, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up."

Daniel 6:10

Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before.

John 16:33

I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.

Warm Up

1. If there is one aspect of summer that you wish could be brought into the fall what would it be and why?
2. Last week we talked about encouraging one another. How have you encouraged someone this past week?

Discussion

1. Pastor Scott took us into the book of Daniel and mentioned some of the crazy stories found there. What story from the book of Daniel interests you the most?
2. Pastor Scott says we are faced with a dilemma which can be pondered through a question of "How do you live godly, in an ungodly world?" What were your initial reactions when Scott asked this question?

3. Read Daniel 1:1-6. Pastor Scott explains that there is major influence that culture has on generations. This is not only shown in Daniel's time but also for us today.
How have you seen culture change and influence not only your life but the world at large?
4. Read Daniel 1:7-9. The first thing that happens to Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah is that they now become Beltshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Pastor Scott points out that culture wants to put a new name on you and your identity. That the world will try to conform you to its mold. Pastor Scott counters by saying 'know who God created you to be.' What names or labels have the world/culture tried to give you? What names or labels does God give you? Check out just a few things God declares about you: Romans 8:14-17; 1 Thessalonians 1:4; 2 Corinthians 5:17 ; 1 John 3:1; 1 Corinthians 3:16.
5. Read Romans 12:2 and Ephesians 2:10.
What are your initial reactions to these verses? Pastor Scott declares that God is for us and has a way for us. God doesn't change like culture does, his will is good, pleasing, and perfect. How might these verses help us stand firm in a shifting culture?
6. Read Daniel 1:10-14. In his message, Pastor Scott shared that your faith will create tension with the world, but we must keep our eyes on the prize.
What experiences do you have where there was tension between your faith and the world?
What are some effective or practical ways to keep our eyes on the prize?
7. Read John 16:33. We are told here that we will have trouble in this world, but there is hope because Jesus Christ has overcome the world.
How does this truth give you peace and hope for what you may be facing and what you may face in the future?
8. Read Daniel 3:16-18 and Daniel 6:10. We see the unwavering faith of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego as well as Daniel in these verses.
What do you think it takes to have unwavering faith? What does it look like to trust God more among the tension of the world we live in today?
9. Read Daniel 1:15-20. After the test, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were found healthier and God have given them wisdom which was much greater than the others. Pastor Scott explains that God is better than anything this world has to offer.
How have you seen this truth in your life? What are some stories or examples you can think of where what God had to offer to you was much greater than anything the world might promise?

Next Steps:

Ask God to open your eyes this week as you reflect on these questions.

Who has God said you are?

What things do you need to surrender that are blinding you or distracting you from keeping your eyes on the prize?

Try journaling what God is revealing or speaking to you. Keep these truths close to your heart and surrender those things which might distract you from keeping your eyes on the prize.