



Guess Who? Who are you - Daniel
Sermon Discussion Questions – July 9, 2023

Scripture Passages:

Daniel 1:1-16 (NLT) ¹ During the third year of King Jehoiakim's reign in Judah, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. ² The Lord gave him victory over King Jehoiakim of Judah and permitted him to take some of the sacred objects from the Temple of God. So Nebuchadnezzar took them back to the land of Babylonia and placed them in the treasure-house of his god.

³ Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, his chief of staff, to bring to the palace some of the young men of Judah's royal family and other noble families, who had been brought to Babylon as captives. ⁴ "Select only strong, healthy, and good-looking young men," he said. "Make sure they are well versed in every branch of learning, are gifted with knowledge and good judgment, and are suited to serve in the royal palace. Train these young men in the language and literature of Babylon." ⁵ The king assigned them a daily ration of food and wine from his own kitchens. They were to be trained for three years, and then they would enter the royal service...

⁸ But Daniel was determined not to defile himself by eating the food and wine given to them by the king. He asked the chief of staff for permission not to eat these unacceptable foods. ⁹ Now God had given the chief of staff both respect and affection for Daniel. ¹⁰ But he responded, "I am afraid of my lord the king, who has ordered that you eat this food and wine. If you become pale and thin compared to the other youths your age, I am afraid the king will have me beheaded."

¹¹ Daniel spoke with the attendant who had been appointed by the chief of staff to look after Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. ¹² "Please test us for ten days on a diet of vegetables and water," Daniel said. ¹³ "At the end of the ten days, see how we look compared to the other young men who are eating the king's food. Then make your decision in light of what you see." ¹⁴ The attendant agreed to Daniel's suggestion and tested them for ten days.

¹⁵ At the end of the ten days, Daniel and his three friends looked healthier and better nourished than the young men who had been eating the food assigned by the king. ¹⁶ So after that, the attendant fed them only vegetables instead of the food and wine provided for the others.

Leviticus 11:44 (NLT) ⁴⁴ For I am the Lord your God. You must consecrate yourselves and be holy, because I am holy. So do not defile yourselves . . .”

Daniel 4:17 (NLT) ¹⁷ For this has been decreed by the messengers; it is commanded by the holy ones, so that everyone may know that the Most High rules over the kingdoms of the world.

Daniel 5:11 (NLT) ¹¹ There is a man in your kingdom who has within him the spirit of the holy gods. During Nebuchadnezzar’s reign, this man was found to have insight, understanding, and wisdom like that of the gods. Your predecessor, the king—your predecessor King Nebuchadnezzar—made him chief over all the magicians, enchanters, astrologers, and fortune-tellers of Babylon.

John 14:6–7 (NIV84) ⁶ Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷ If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.”

John 14:15–17 (NLT) ¹⁵ “If you love me, obey my commandments. ¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, who will never leave you. ¹⁷ He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth. The world cannot receive him, because it isn’t looking for him and doesn’t recognize him. But you know him, because he lives with you now and later will be in you.

Matthew 6:10 (NLT) ¹⁰ May your Kingdom come soon. May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven

Warm Up:

In his message today Pastor Tom talks a bit about legalism. Just for fun what are some of the silliest rules you ever had to follow in church? Or if you can’t think of any in church, what are some of the silliest rules you’ve had to follow in other contexts? (Work, school, at home etc.).

Discussion:

1. Pastor Tom opened up his message by talking about how prophecies paved the way for Jesus. What are some things that you might do to prepare a group for an important moment or message? How might preaching and prediction have prepared the way for Jesus?
2. Read Daniel 1:1-16.
Briefly summarize what’s happening in this passage. What do we know about Daniel and his friends from these verses?
3. In his message, Tom gives us this definition of the word holy: to be set apart, pure and righteous. How do you understand the idea of being holy? What might it look like for someone to be set apart or pure today?

4. Look back at Daniel 1:1-16. And read Daniel 4:17.
How does God prove himself in this passage? What relationship do you see between Daniel and his friends' actions and God's reputation?

5. In his message, Pastor Tom talks about three traps we can fall into when reading the book of Daniel:
We make descriptive stories prescriptive.
We could conclude that if I refuse to compromise things will turn out in my favor.
We could conclude the Law makes us holy.
Which of these traps do you think would be easiest to fall into and why? How does understanding these three traps impact the way you see the story of Daniel?

6. In his message, Pastor Tom touches on the dangers of legalism.
What experiences have you had with legalism in your own life? What are some ways to counteract the impact of legalism? What are some practices that you have built into your life to remind you of grace?

7. Excerpt from Pastor Tom's message:
The Old Testament believer was saved by grace, through faith in looking forward to Jesus and what he will do. The New Testament believer is saved by grace, through faith in looking backward to Jesus and what he has done.
What are some of your reactions to this statement? How have you seen the story of grace throughout all of scripture? What might it look like to live as someone understanding you are saved by grace?

8. Throughout this message, Pastor Tom touched on the theme of God's power and authority over all kingdoms (See Daniel 4:17).
How might understanding God's power like this impact the way you live? How might understanding God's power impact the way you relate to Him or to people who believe differently from you?

Next Steps:

Pastor Tom ended his message with these three application points:

- We belong to a King, greater than any other.
- Holiness comes from the King living in us.
- The King will use us where we are.

Which of these truths do you find most comforting and why? Which one is most challenging?

What is one step you can take this week to remind yourself of these truths?