Grace Group Discipleship Guide

RENEW

ENERGY FOR **YOUR JOURNEY**

"Thriving in Babylon"

For the week of January 28 - February 3, 2018

Main Passages:

Five centuries before Jesus came, God disciplined His people for constant disobedience by allowing them to be held captive by a powerful Babylonian empire. Some of the finest and young, Hebrew males were groomed for leadership, most prominently a teenager named Daniel. He realized that to keep his devotion to God pure, courage and wisdom would be required:

"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."
(Daniel 1:8-20 ESV)

(Turn over for continuation…)

Daniel would go on to serve as a top leader for four kings, bring witness to the true God in a land of idolatry, and live well into his nineties.

Main Lesson:

God is sovereign and we must trust that He is in control of who appears to be in control. Remember: there is a big difference between what we don't like and what God forbids. Sometimes, He will allow the short term success of the wicked to accomplish a larger purpose. God can bring hope through us as we maintain humility, and even show respect to those who seem evil. His will is that we not just survive, but thrive in the challenging culture that surrounds us. As He gives us wisdom, we can be vessels who transform culture rather than conform to it.

Reflection:

- What especially speaks to you about all that is said in the main passages and the main lesson?

Application:

- How can you be a transformer of culture in your own world, rather just comfortably conform to it?
- Share a time when you, like Daniel, had to take a wise and humble stand against compromise in order to gain influence. What did you learn?

For Prayer:

- Pray for God to break fear and bring forth culture changing wisdom and courage to group members' lives so impact can be made in the world around them.
- Pray for God to use you to bring a person from seeker/unbeliever to believer/disciple this year by imparting a culture of faith to their heart.
- Pray for those who responded to Jesus over the years but strayed to return, stick, and grow as devoted followers of Christ.

Communications:

Grace Group Leaders and Apprentices, make sure to sign up for the upcoming Discipleship Summit on February 5th or February 10th, 2018. You can do so at Pearlside.org/events or on the Pearlside App.