



Living for God in an Ungodly Culture

Ice Breaker: If someone gave you a million dollars to GIVE AWAY, where would you give the money?

Read Together: Daniel 1:8

In the recap of last week, Pastor Jason reminded us that if the enemy cannot keep you from being saved, he will try to keep you from being effective for the Kingdom, though. The enemy will use culture to make you believe that lies are truth.

Discuss: What lies do you see people believing around you?

Satan was created to do God's Will. He rebelled against his created purpose and now opposes God. He cannot stand to see us because we are made in God's Image. Not every person is a child of God (that requires us to choose Him), but we all bear His Image and have the opportunity to choose Him. Because of this, Satan wants to destroy us. Satan's purpose is to deprive God of eternal reunion with His family.

We are created to carry out the WILL and WAYS of God on the earth. When you get saved, the devil is terrified of you living out the purpose that God created you to live.

In our current cultural climate, people in the church have been indoctrinated by culture. More and more Christians are starting to look at things they would have said were sins years ago, but they are now saying maybe it's not really sin, maybe it's ok because culture says it makes more sense than how God says it should be. Culture defines their truth on their own terms.

But friends, we do not determine what it means to be a Christian. We do not determine what is right and wrong. God has already defined that in His Word.

Discuss: What are some things that have become more acceptable in culture that you know God has said are sins?
What are some things that you have been tempted to take small steps of compromise toward because you want to be accepted or liked?
What are some ways that the Holy Spirit has shown you that need to come back into alignment in your mind?

How to Pass the Test When Confrontation Comes:

1. Determine in your heart now that you will not compromise your convictions and commitments to God.

Read together: Jeremiah 10:2, Jeremiah 10:5, Jeremiah 10:6, Jeremiah 17:5-8

Pastor Jason reminded us that Daniel would have remembered the Prophet Jeremiah's warnings before the people were taken into captivity. He was now living out the fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecies and knew that God was serious. He determined in his heart what he would do LONG before temptation came. He made sure that He was walking with God and depending on HIS strength to help him stand for what was right.

Discuss: Pastor Jason made a comment that often the people of God are looking to the Bible to see how much they can get away with rather than how they can be holy and honor God. How have you experienced that in your own walk with God?
What are the ways that you try to justify things that you know are not how God wants you to live?
What are some things that you have already determined you will not participate in?

2. Respond with honor and respect.

Read together: Daniel 1:8-10, 1 Peter 2:9, Mark 11:17, Isaiah 41:10

We are different than the world. Responding with respect and kindness is showing honor to those who are image bearers. We can stand for what is right and still be kind.

Daniel was determined to do what was right in the Lord's eyes. He knew that the food at the king's table had been offered to idols. He also knew that partaking in the food symbolized the worship of that idol to whom the food had been offered. Something about Daniel's approach won him favor with his leadership.

Discuss: Why was it a big deal for Daniel and his friends to eat the food of the king?
What would have been the result of them starting a riot to protest being asked to eat the king's food?
Daniel was not weak, he had controlled strength. We see how his approach brought him favor.

How we behave is directly connected to what we believe about ourselves. If you believe a lie, then you begin to act as if it's truth. Your response to people in the test of confrontation is not based on them and the lie that they are believing. Your response to people is based on YOU and the truth that you believe about yourself and who God is in you.

Discuss: Is there a situation that you are facing that you want to blow up about?
How might using Daniel's example give you tools to approach your situation?
Listen to how the Holy Spirit may be leading you to handle that situation. Share with your group if you have time.
In Christ, you are Royalty. What does that mean to you?

Pray:

Father, you have called us to be different from the world. As culture shifts and changes, we are feeling more and more pressure to compromise. We want to be liked. We want to be accepted. Sometimes we even fear that people will reject You if we live and speak the truth. Help us to know how to speak truth in LOVE. Help us to be gentle and kind in our responses. Please help us to determine before we are tempted, how we will respond. Help us when we are triggered to respond in your spirit instead of our flesh. We need you to help us make a difference in this world for You. Be glorified in us and show us how to live with conviction and kindness knowing that it flows from who YOU say we ARE! In the name of Jesus, Amen.