

Group Questions – *Fear/Faith: Week 1*

06/02/24 – Pastor Kirby

Getting to Know Me Questions:

- If you had to watch one television program continuously for eight hours, three days in a row, what would it be and why?
- What would you say are the 3-5 biggest fears people have in our community today?
- What are some pressures we face today that make it hard to live a righteous life?

Into the Bible Questions:

- What's something in this week's teaching that you learned, that stood out, interesting etc?
- Living a fearless life does not mean we deny the reality of darkness and fear. There are real things worthy of our concern and even fear. But it does mean that we never lose our hope and confidence in God no matter what life throws at us. Jesus recognized that the twelve disciples would face some serious fears after He was gone. What hope did Jesus give them in the following verses?
 - John 14:1; John 14:26-27; John 16:33
- What hope does Paul also give us to live a fearless life?
 - Romans 8:38-39
- **READ:** Daniel 1:1-2
- How do you respond/think/feel to the idea that God used and allowed evil to succeed?
- Daniel had 3 things that helped him thrive in a godless culture
 - Optimism - Spiritual optimism is having a biblical perspective
 - How does knowing the ending change the perspective?
 - Pastor Kirby said "We need to set down the binoculars we're using to find the "enemy" and instead we need to take a good hard look at ourselves in a mirror." How do you respond to this in regard to Optimism?
 - Humility
 - **READ: Romans 12:9-16**
 - The level of our humility is often revealed in how we respond to those who oppose us. How does the Romans passage help us better understand and define what Godly humility looks like?
 - Wisdom
 - Pastor Kirby said "There is a huge difference between the things that God forbids and the things we don't like."
 - Are you able to give some examples of this?
 - Pastor Kirby said "We are called to infiltrate not isolate from culture!"
- How do you understand this? What does this practically look like?

Application Questions:

- Looking back at this week's teaching and study, what big idea or verse is most important for you to remember in order for you to continue to "thrive" in the midst of your own Babylon?

FEARLESS

Week 1: Thriving In Babylon

Pastor Kirby

Daniel 1:1-2a

In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. ²And the Lord delivered Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand...

Daniel 1:2

²And 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 and put in the treasure house of his god.

Daniel 1:3-16

³Then 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— ⁴young 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. ⁵The 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.

⁶Among those who were chosen were some from Judah: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. ⁷The chief official gave them new names: to Daniel, the name Beltshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abednego.

⁸But 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. ⁹Now God had caused the official to show favor and compassion to Daniel, ¹⁰but 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."

¹¹Daniel 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. ¹³Then compare our appearance with that of the young men who eat the royal food, and treat your servants in accordance with what you see." ¹⁴So he agreed to this and tested them for ten days.

¹⁵At the end of the ten days they looked healthier and better nourished than any of the young men who ate the royal food. ¹⁶So the guard took away their choice food and the wine they were to drink and gave them vegetables instead.

Daniel 1:17-18

¹⁷To 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.

¹⁸At the end of the time set by the king to bring them into his service, the chief official presented them to Nebuchadnezzar.

Daniel 1:19-21

¹⁹The king talked with them, and he found none equal to Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah; so they entered the king's service. ²⁰In 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.

²¹And Daniel remained there until the first year of King Cyrus.

How Bad Was It?

- Babylon: The personification of evil!
- Nebuchadnezzar: Raided God's temple and put the holy things on display in an evil temple.
- Culture: Government enforced religion opposite of the God of Israel.

Daniel's Dilemma:

- Kidnapped - Castrated - his name changed – forced to

Names:

Daniel = God is my judge

Beltshazzar = 'protect the King' or 'Bel's prince'

Daniel's three big things:

Optimism, Humility and Wisdom

1. Optimism

Spiritual optimism is having a biblical perspective.

- Even in Babylon, God is with him
- Sometimes God allows the short-term success of the wicked.
- Panic and despair are not from God.

2. Humility

Timothy 2:23-26...

²³ Don't have anything to do with foolish and stupid arguments, because you know they produce quarrels. ²⁴ And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. ²⁵ Opponents must be gently instructed, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, ²⁶ and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will.

3. Wisdom

There is a HUGE difference between the things that God forbids and the things we don't like.

We are called to infiltrate, not isolate from culture!