**TRUSTING GOD IN TIMES OF ADVERSITY**

**Daniel 1:1-21**

**THE BIG IDEA: No matter how dire the situation, Christians must remain faithful to God and trust in His sovereignty.**

**GOD’S POWER IS GREATER THAN EVEN THE MOST POWERFUL EARTHLY RULERS**

* *“In the third year of the reign of King Jehoiakim of Judah, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came to Jerusalem and laid siege to it. 2 The Lord handed King Jehoiakim of Judah over to him…”* (Daniel 1:1-2a)
* **In our humanity we tend to fear what powerful people can do to us when in reality there is no power greater than that of the LORD we serve.**
* *“Oh, Lord God! You yourself made the heavens and earth by your great power and with your outstretched arm. Nothing is too difficult for you!”* (Jeremiah 32:17)
* *“For everything was created by him, in heaven and on earth the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through him and for him.”* (Colossians 1:16)

**CIRCUMSTANCES MAY SEEM HOPELESS FOR A TIME BUT GOD WILL PREVAIL**

* *“along with some of the vessels from the house of God. Nebuchadnezzar carried them to the land of Babylon, to the house of his god, and put the vessels in the treasury of his god.”* (Daniel 1:2b)
* **Sometimes the “hopeless” situations we find ourselves in are due to our sinful actions, but God never stops working on our behalf.**
* *“We know that all things work together[k] for the good[l] of those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.”* (Romans 8:28)

**NO MATTER THE CIRCUMSTANCES WE FIND OURSELVES IN, GOD’S PEOPLE MUST STAND FIRM AS WITNESSES TO HIM AS THE ONE TRUE GOD**

* *“Daniel determined that he would not defile himself with the king’s food or with the wine he drank. So he asked permission from the chief eunuch not to defile himself. 9 God had granted Daniel kindness and compassion from the chief eunuch…”* (Daniel 1:8-9)
* **Now, more than ever, Christians need to stand faithful and shine the light of truth in the darkness of a world overcome with deception.**

**WALKING FAITHFULLY WITH GOD ENABLES YOU TO HAVE CONFIDENCE THAT GOD IS IN CONTROL**

* *“God gave these four young men knowledge and understanding in every kind of literature and wisdom. Daniel also understood visions and dreams of every kind. 18 At the end of the time that the king had said to present them, the chief eunuch presented them to Nebuchadnezzar. 19 The king interviewed them, and among all of them, no one was found equal to Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. So they began to attend the king. 20 In every matter of wisdom and understanding that the king consulted them about, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and mediums in his entire kingdom.”* (Daniel 1:1-21)
* **God never forgets His children and is able to take the most dire circumstances and use them for our good and His glory.**
* *“Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you at the proper time, 7 casting all your cares on him, because he cares about you. 8 Be sober-minded, be alert. Your adversary the devil is prowling around like a roaring lion, looking for anyone he can devour. 9 Resist him, firm in the faith, knowing that the same kind of sufferings are being experienced by your fellow believers throughout the world. 10 The God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, establish, strengthen, and support you after you have suffered a little while. 11 To him be dominion forever. Amen.”* (1 Peter 5:6-11)

**Connect Group Discussion**

**Understanding:**

* What does Daniel 1 teach us about God/Jesus?
* Why didn’t Daniel and his friends want to eat the Kings food?
* How did God reward Daniel and His friends’ faithfulness?

**Digging Deeper:**

* In what ways and why do so many people fear people over God?
* How do we see a “plundering of God’s house” today?
* What are the things you find the most challenging to stand for truth in today’s culture? How can you speak truth with love?
* Knowing the events in the Book of Daniel are real events, does that impact your commitment to honoring God first no matter what may happen to you as a result of your faithfulness? Explain.

**Loving Outward:**

* Who do you need to share the gospel with this week?
* Who do you need to follow-up with regarding the gospel?
* Who are you bringing to church next Sunday?