

“Different is Good”

The Book of Daniel

Common Ground 2020

SERIES OVERVIEW:

We're living in a world where there's tremendous pressure to fit in. What does it mean to follow Jesus in a culture of conformity? As an exile in Babylon, Daniel shows us that *different is good*. He demonstrates not only how to resist the influence of culture, but how to be an influencer of culture, bringing grace and truth to the relationships and communities where God has placed us.

- Daniel 1 **“Embrace Your Exile Status”**
Learning to value our role as exiles; distinguishing what parts of culture to receive, which to resist, and which to redeem.
- Daniel 2 **“Choose the Better Kingdom”**
Many kingdoms will come and go, but only one will last forever. Which kingdom has your heart?
- Daniel 3, 6 **“Get into Good Trouble”**
Defying cultural expectations, whether through abstinence or engagement can risk our personal safety, but God is faithful.
- Daniel 4 **“Humble Yourself or God Will”**
God will humble all who (like Nebuchadnezzar) exalt themselves & fail to acknowledge God.
- Dan 7 **“Develop your Inner Grit”**
Followers of God should be prepared for growing opposition, be confident of ultimate victory, and persevere.
- Daniel 10 **“Learn to See what Eyes Can't See”**
Be aware of the unseen spiritual world behind the physical world, and allow this reality to deepen your prayer and strengthen your resolve.

DISCOVERY BIBLE STUDY

SMALL GROUP GUIDELINES

DIRECTIONS: We encourage everyone (small group facilitators and small group members) to sign up to receive the [Daily Devotions for Common Ground](#). These will be available online and emailed daily. We also encourage everyone to complete the weekly Personal Reflection Page BEFORE your group meets. Engaging in both of those will serve to enrich your group's discussion.

FACILITATOR GUIDELINES

Please make sure your group members have signed up to receive the Daily Devotions for Common Ground. Also make sure to encourage your group members to use and complete their weekly Personal Reflection page BEFORE your group meets.

Here are some general guidelines for using the Discovery Bible format with your group. Leaders, please review with your group the first few times you meet, so everyone becomes familiar with them:

1. Everyone shares in sentences, not paragraphs.
2. Focus only on what this passage is saying, not on other passages.
3. Focus only on what this group is seeing.
4. Give people time to respond. Don't be afraid of silence!
5. The facilitator should guide the discussion, not teach.

HELPFUL TIPS & REMINDERS:

1. Start and end your group discussion on time. Complete all sections, though not necessarily all questions.
2. Prepare beforehand by studying the passage, looking for the main idea and think of some examples, stories or applications from your own life. Consider what others might share. This will help you to be more prepared
3. Respond to questions by asking the group, "What in the passage helps us answer that question?"
4. Respond to distracting comments by simply asking, "Where is that found in this passage?"
5. Respond to "strange" answers by asking, "Help us understand what you are thinking."

DISCOVERY BIBLE STUDY – FORMAT

(1) RE-CONNECT– 25% group time

Begin your group time by asking questions about the various ways that God has worked since your group’s last meeting. These questions help get the group sharing, and encourage practical application of lessons learned, as well as accountability.

- a. What are some things to give thanks for?
- b. What has been something you have been struggling with?
- c. Were there any lessons you applied or shared in the last week? Did you follow through on your “I will” and “I will tell” statements?

(2) READ & RETELL– 50% group time

- a. Have one person read the Bible passage out loud, while everyone else follows along. Ask someone else to retell the story in their words, and ask others fill in anything that they might have missed.

Read & Look

- b. Choose another group member to read the passage again.
- c. Discuss what the passage says about **God**. How does the passage point us to **Jesus**?

Read & Look Again

- d. Choose another group member to read the passage one more time.
- e. Discuss what the passage says about **people (or myself)**.

(3) REFLECTION QUESTIONS – 25% group time

- a. According to this passage/weekly study, what things are you/we doing well?
- b. What is God telling you to do or obey? Is He asking you to change something?
- c. Who else needs to hear this story, and how can you/we tell them? Encourage group to be specific, prayerful, and intentional in the week ahead.
- d. Who else needs our help? How can we help them?

PERSONAL REFLECTION PAGE

What does the passage say? Rewrite it in your own words.

What do you think the passage means? What do you learn about God? How does the passage point you to Jesus? What do you learn about people, or about yourself?

This is God's Word speaking to you. Are there things you are doing well? Is there something specific He is telling you to do or change? What will you do? Be specific!

HAND-OFF

Who can you tell this week about what you learned? How will you share with them? Be specific and intentional!

How else can you show God's love to other people this week? Who is in need? Consider ways to serve individually and also as a Small Group.
