



## **Introduction to “Bigger Than Babylon”**

This week we begin our study in the book of Daniel. As we open chapter 1, we see that Daniel and several other young men have been exiled from their family, home, and culture, and find themselves at the center of the pagan world of Babylon. While it may seem as though all hope has been lost, already in chapter 1 we begin to see the ways in which God’s sovereign purposes are at work. God is not only in control of the nations, he also cares about the lives of these young teenagers. It would be easy to make a hero out of Daniel and his friends. Indeed, there is much we can learn from them. However, the real hero is God, who takes a seemingly worse-case scenario and works his sovereign purposes through it all in amazing ways. Wherever you find yourself in life right now, have faith that as you glorify God your faith and hope can be renewed in him. Let’s dig in!

## **Daniel Series Objectives:**

Head: To understand the Book of Daniel.

Heart: To face hardship with courage.

Hands: To make choices that glorify God.

## **Part 1: Bigger Than Babylon**

Text: Daniel 1

Big Idea: Your deepest devotions dictate the direction of your life.

From the Sermon (add your own notes here):

1. God knows exactly where you are in life (1-3).
2. God knows exactly the difficulties you are facing (3-7).
3. The Spirit helps you glorify Jesus (8-13).
4. A life of Blessing is possible even in Babylon (14-21).

## **Getting Started**

In what ways have you seen God's sovereignty at work in your life over the summer?

How familiar are you with the book of Daniel? What are you looking forward to in this study? What questions do you have?

What are some of the biggest challenges you see at work in the lives of Christians in the US these days? Globally?

## Digging Deeper

In Daniel, God is at work even through the sins of Israel. Where else in Scripture do we see examples of God's sovereignty amidst people's sins?

What challenges did Daniel and the other young men face in being exiled...both in being away from home and being in Babylon?

Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself with the king's food and drink. **Read Matthew 15:10-20.** How does Jesus describe what it means to be defiled?

What are some things that threaten tempt us to be defiled in our culture? What can we do to prevent defilement from those things? Bonus: Is there such a thing as being too protective at the risk of engagement?

Read 1 Corinthians 10:31. What are some things in your life (in your family, in school, in the workplace, or in the community) that you could approach differently or do differently, to glorify God?

## Live It Out

**Pray:** Take time to give thanks for God's sovereignty in our lives and the way God works all things, even the challenges, for good, for those who love him and have been called according to his purposes.

**Confess:** What changes --in attitude and actions-- might the Spirit be impressing on your heart as you live the week ahead?

**Act:** Consider the example of Daniel and his friends living through hardship, together, to the glory of God. How might you live this out with your discipleship community this week?