

WORSHIP

SUGGESTED WORSHIP SONGS:

Hark the Herald/King of Heaven, No Other Name, Beautiful Savior, Jesus at the Center

WELCOME

How do you think a person who lives an EXTRAORDINARY life is like? Are you living an extraordinary life? Why or why not?

WORD

DANIEL 1:8, 3:17-18

⁸ But Daniel made up his mind that he would not defile himself with the king's choice food or with the wine which he drank; so he sought permission from the commander of the officials that he might not defile himself.

¹⁷ If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire; and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king. ¹⁸ But even if He does not, let it be known to you, O king, that we are not going to serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up."

Read Daniel chapters 1-6 and 12

Did you know that we were meant to live extraordinary lives? **Genesis 1:26** tells us that God created us in His image. **Romans 8:28-29** tells us how God accomplishes his plan for us to live extraordinary lives: "And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren."

If you allow the situation that you're in to conform you to Christlikeness, then God will enable you to live an extraordinary life for Him.

Daniel 1:2a says that God gave Jehoiachim, king of Judah into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon. God is sovereign and in control over global history! At the same time, God is the God of your personal history as we shall see from Daniel's life.

Daniel was among the royal youth from Judah that were exiled into Babylon, the most powerful nation in the world at that time. Nebuchadnezzar chose the best among his captives to serve in his royal court. But first, he would conform them into Babylon's culture and religion. Daniel and his friends Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah stood out from all the captives of Israel because they had both **CONFIDENCE in God** and the **CONVICTION to please God** in every situation they encountered as captives in Babylon. Confidence in God is to believe in God's sovereignty and that God is in control. Convictions to please God flow from this confidence.

Through their convictions, Daniel, Hannah, Mishael and Azariah went against the flow of Babylon's culture and

remained true to their God. This was true despite the king trying to change their identity by changing their Hebrew names that honored Israel's God, to names that honored the gods of Babylon—Belteshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego (**Daniel 1:3-7**).

We see Daniel's convictions at the very beginning of his captivity in **Daniel 1:8** when he made up his mind that he would not defile himself with the king's food or wine. In keeping his convictions, Daniel used reason and respected authority as he made his appeal (**Daniel 1:10-13**). Here we see that even if it seemed like such a small thing (diet), convictions matter. The Bible says that whoever is faithful in little things will be faithful in bigger things (**Luke 16:10**). What are your convictions over "little" things? As a student, do you hold the conviction to not cheat in exams? Cheating in a quiz will eventually transform into cheating with bigger things, such as taxes or a spouse later in life.

God grants Daniel favor from the pagan authorities as Daniel respected those who ruled over them (**Daniel 1:9, 14-20**). Daniel trusted God and used reason. Do not trust in your own reasoning and use God! When king Nebuchadnezzar had a dream which he ordered his "wise men" to reveal and interpret the dream (**Daniel 2:1-9**), nobody except Daniel would even attempt to tell the king what the dream was, and what it meant (**Daniel 2:10-16**). Daniel appeals to the king to give him time to discern the dream (**Daniel 2:14**) and asks his friends to appeal to God for compassion (**Daniel 2:17-18**). Daniel's confidence was in God (**Daniel 2:19-24**) and he had confidence about God in front of the most powerful man on earth at that time (**Daniel 2:28a, 30**). Daniel's friends also showed confidence in God and their conviction to

WORD (cont'd)

please Him. Conviction means you must be willing to pay the price to please God and we see this clearly in **Daniel 3:16-18** when the three friends stood their ground under threat of death for refusing to worship another god. God came through for them, and it was probably Jesus himself who protected and rescued them from the furnace (**Daniel 3:24-25**). The king acknowledged and honored God because of what he witnessed in the lives of Daniel and his friends (**Daniel 3:26-29, 4:1-3, 34-37**). Because of Daniel's extraordinary life, even the other kings from succeeding kingdoms whom he served after Nebuchadnezzar witnessed the greatness and power of the one true God: king Belshazzar (**Daniel 5:14**), king Darius who saw how God delivered Daniel from the lion's den (**Daniel 6:20,25-28**) and finally king Cyrus (**Daniel 1:21**) who was the one who gave the decree for the Jews to return to Jerusalem. Do you think Daniel was able to

influence the decision of the Persian king, Cyrus in his decree to let Israel return to their homeland? This is most likely so, through Daniel's confidence in God and conviction to please God that made such an impact on entire kingdoms and pagan kings.

The rest of the book of Daniel contain prophecies on what is to take place after Daniel's time such as **Daniel 12:2-3**. Are you confident that you will be among those who will "awake into everlasting life" and those who "lead many to righteousness?" May it be so, and as for Daniel, we read in the closing verse the final words on his EXTRAORDINARY LIFE:

"But as for you, go your way to the end; then you will enter into rest and rise again for your allotted portion at the end of the age." (**Daniel 12:13**)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. Can you truly say that you have complete confidence in God's sovereignty and control over your life? Explain.
2. Share how you see God cause all things to work together for good in your life to conform you into Christlikeness.
3. What Biblical convictions do you need to establish or practice especially in your current season in life?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray for those in authority; witness to them through your confidence in God and your conviction to please God in all circumstances in life.

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives

II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of Public Servants
- A God-centered Philippines
- Repentance and Salvation

III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples
- Elders, Pastors, Leaders, and Families
- Ministries and Churches worldwide

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God
- Righteous living
- Salvation of family and friends