

## Uncompromising Resolve (Daniel 1)

How do you live faithfully in a society that not only disagrees with you but is determined to redefine you? The ancient story of Daniel chapter 1 has inspired generations to engage culture with an enduring faith and uncompromising resolve. The result is a faith that doesn't simply survive culture but shapes it.

### 1. Enduring faith when your world is falling apart (Daniel 1:1-7)

On the surface it appears King Nebuchadnezzar is the one in control; but something else is going on behind the scenes. "Lord" = Adonai (Sovereign; Master) "gave" Judah into the hands of Neb.

The prophet Jeremiah told them, "Don't compromise and don't revolt. Settle in. Seek Babylon's well-being." Jeremiah 29:5-7; 11

1 Peter 2:8-10 = Live "called out and sent in"

### 2. Uncompromising resolve when you could lose it all (Daniel 1:8-21)

Daniel believed by taking the royal food he would defile (compromise) himself.

Eating at the king's table meant allegiance to the king.

*"This is where I draw the line. You can dress me up in your clothes, you can teach me your customs and language – you can change my name...but my allegiance belongs to another."*

Daniel stands his ground (disagrees) with grace and humility.

V21 More than 60 years into the future. Nebuchadnezzar is dead. The Babylonian empire is over. Persia is on the scene. King Cyrus issues a decree allowing Judah to return home. And Daniel is there to see it all.

**QUESTIONS** (Pray, read the passage and pick 4-5 questions to discuss. Trust the Holy Spirit to guide.)

1. Read Daniel 1:1-7. Why were the Judeans (southern kingdom of Israel) exiled to Babylon? What is the significance of Nebuchadnezzar taking the vessels of the Lord's house? How does the phrase "the Lord gave Judah into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar" reflect God's sovereignty?
2. How does the prophet Jeremiah's advice to "seek the peace of the city" relate to the exiles' mission in Babylon? What does it look like to seek "the peace and prosperity" of St. Pete?
3. Imagine how disorienting it was for the four young men to be steeped in Babylonian culture. Have you ever been in a disorienting environment where other beliefs/worldviews were being celebrated that conflicted with a biblical worldview? How did you respond? What did you learn?
4. Read Daniel 1:7-21. Why did Daniel refuse to eat the king's food? What does this decision reveal about his character and faith?
5. We've all faced situations where our convictions were challenged. Describe a time when you decided to "draw a line"? What did it require? What did it cost you?
6. Daniel stood his ground with grace and humility. What happens when we do this?
7. How does the story of Daniel 1 relate to our own experiences of living in a challenging culture?
8. What are some practical ways we can demonstrate enduring faith and uncompromising resolve in our daily lives?

Pray for the grace and strength to live faithfully in a culture that not only disagrees with you but is determined to redefine you. Ask for the opportunity to engage the culture of St. Pete with an enduring faith and uncompromising resolve – for the good of the city and glory of God.