

COMMUNITY GROUPS

living out the gospel with
one another in our homes

Date: 1/29/22

Sermon: Lessons for Exile

Text: Daniel 1:1-7

Speaker: Ted Rastatter

Questions: Will Massaro

Sermon Summary and Text Overview

In the first seven verses of the book of Daniel, the scene is set for the entire book. Because of Israel's disobedience, God ordains and allows the Babylonians to attack and take the people of Israel as captives. A few of these captives, who will be main characters in the book, are Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. These four young men were specifically taken by the King of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar, in order to be educated, assimilated, and used for the glory of Babylon, instead of the glory of Yahweh.

Pastor Ted preached from these verses with a focus on the lessons we can learn from the exile of the Israelites, like Daniel. Although we have not been enslaved by another country, we are citizens of the kingdom of God who are living in a place that is not our eternal home. Therefore, we should embrace our life as exiles who belong to God and not the world we live in. Pastor Ted made three main points in his sermon. 1. Exile is God's doing. God is still sovereign in the midst of our hardships, and everything happens according to his plan. 2. The battle between the kingdom of the world and the kingdom of God revolves around narrative. We must constantly remind ourselves of the true story about God and ourselves, because the world and Satan will attempt to change the narrative so that we believe lies about ourselves and God. 3. Jesus is the better exile. Despite our best efforts, we are constantly shaped by the world around us in a sinful and evil way. We are not good exiles. Daniel was also not a perfect exile. Jesus is the only perfect exile. For this reason, we must repent of our sins, and put our faith in Jesus Christ, who is faithful and just to forgive us.

Questions

1. In this sermon series, we are going to be talking a lot about exile. What is exile, and how does it apply to us? What are some of the evidences of exile in our lives?

2. God loved the people of Israel, and yet he allowed them, even planned for them, to be taken captive. What are some events that have happened in your life that have made it difficult to remember that God loves you and is still in sovereign control of all things?
3. **Read John 17:14-19.** In this passage Jesus prays that we would remain “in the world”, but not “of the world”. This brings about a lot of gray areas about how we interact with the world around us. Daniel and his friends accepted the name changes related to Babylonian gods, but just one verse later, we see that they would not eat the king's food. How should we resolve to be in the world, but not of it. How do we make decisions on some of these gray areas?
4. In John 17:14-19, we get the popular Christian phrase “In the world, but not of the world”. However, if we look at the passage more closely, we read that Jesus actually flips this phrase around. Jesus prays that we would remain, “not of the world”, so that we could be sent, “into the world”, just as he was sent into the world to share the truth of the Gospel. Discuss the distinction between the ways of looking at the popular truth? **Hint: We are meant to be missional in the world, instead of simply thinking of ways to distance ourselves from it.**
5. Pastor Ted ended his sermon with Jesus as the better exile. How was Jesus an exile? Why did he choose to be an exile? Why is this good news for us? **Practice preaching the Gospel to each other.**

Final Application: Pastor Ted referenced Psalm 137 because the Israelites were trying to figure out how to sing praise to God in their exile. Sing the Doxology with your group, and remember that God is still worthy of praise no matter the circumstances we are going through.