



Week 2: Not Your Average...Year January 11-12, 2020 | Tim Harlow

This weekend, Pastor Tim continues our "Not Your Average..." series, talking about how to live a Godly lifestyle in our culture.

CELEBRATE

At the beginning of your small group time, it's good to share about your week and share with each other how you're doing. So, spend some time, right now, connecting before jumping into the discussion questions. You can use the *Connect* section as a guide. If you're doing this Study Guide on your own, take a moment to focus your mind on God and what He might want you to hear today.

CONNECT

1. Talk about a time you felt like a fish out of water. Maybe it was moving to a new place, or starting at a new job... share what that experience was like for you.
2. When you're passionate or on defensive, are you more likely to keep a level head, or get loud and angry? Talk about a time you noticed that about yourself.

Before watching the sermon, or moving on in this study, take a minute to remember that God is always with you. Pray as a group for God to bless your conversation and open your eyes and hearts to what He wants you to hear.

REFLECT

Before moving forward in your study, take a moment and review the key points from this weekend's message.

1. The story of Daniel is not about what he looked like - it's about WHO he looked like.
2. When we're stuck in Babylon, can we actually believe in an unexpected God when the life we expected falls through?
3. As an exile in a foreign culture: it takes more work to follow God's values, treat others with respect have have faith in a God that's bigger than we understand.
4. God was up to something in Babylon.

SCRIPTURES USED IN THE MESSAGE: Jeremiah 29:4-7; Daniel 1:1-9, 1:12-17; Romans 12:2; 1 John 3:1

RESPOND

1. Talk about a thought, phrase, or moment from this weekend's message that resonated with you. What made it stick out to you?
2. Share a time you found yourself struggling to live in a culture or environment that didn't line up with your values. Maybe it was at a job, at school or with people that sucked the life out of you. Talk about what that was like for you.
3. Read Colossians 3:1-9. Read slowly and out loud, if possible. Notice the sin that Paul says we must put to death, in the same way we die with Christ when we accept Him as our Savior. Talk about a certain practice or habit you've implemented in your life, that challenges you to look more like Jesus and avoid old habits.
4. Paul encourages us to "set our minds towards thing above, not on earthly things." This can be difficult amidst the stress and chaos of life. Talk about a current or recent situation that took your attention away from Jesus... why did it demand so much attention?
5. Daniel keeps clear focus on God throughout his story, despite his circumstances in Babylon. Think of someone you know who is like Daniel - keeping a positive attitude amidst hardship. Share who that person is in your life and why you admire them.
6. Pastor Casey said, "More people will follow beautiful lives than they do belligerent loudmouths." Sometimes the greatest way to instill change somewhere is by being the change. Talk about one of your characteristics or traits that you'd like to work on in 2020... something you wish could *change* about yourself that could even help you change the world.
7. As we set our minds to things above, God renews our minds. Share one thing you could do daily this week to remind you to fix your eyes on the things above.

8. Take these last few minutes and write down or reflect on things in this world, or in your daily life, you wish could change or you wish looked different. Then, take some time and process that with those around you and pray for God to move in those areas.

Closing Prayer:

God, thank you for your Spirit that lives within us... teaching us, reminding us and challenging us to look more like your Son. Allow us to look more like Him this week as we step into our world, remembering to fix our eyes on you. Thank you for all you do for us, each and every day.

Amen.