

## Small Group Guide: The Character of Daniel



### Opening Prayer

Begin your time together in prayer, asking God to help you learn from Daniel's example and strengthen your faith through this study.

### Icebreaker Question

What is one thing you've been consistent with in your life (good or bad)? What made you stick with it?

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### Key Takeaways from the Sermon

- 1. Faith is built through consistency, not just in crisis moments**
  - Daniel's faith was developed over decades of daily practice
  - His response to trials was simply continuing what he already did
- 2. Drawing lines in a compromising culture**
  - Daniel refused to consume what was unhealthy (physically and spiritually)
  - Standing firm when everyone else bows down requires conviction
- 3. Our choices create ripple effects**

- Daniel's faithfulness influenced kings and nations
- His enemies' sin destroyed their own families
- What we do impacts those closest to us

#### 4. Humility in prayer despite righteousness

- Daniel confessed corporate sin even though he lived blamelessly
  - He depended on God's mercy, not his own goodness
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### Discussion Questions

#### Section 1: Refusing to Compromise (Daniel 1)

1. Daniel and his friends were pressured to assimilate into Babylonian culture—new names, new education, new food. What are the "delicacies" our culture offers that might seem harmless but could compromise our faith?
2. The sermon mentioned consuming unhealthy things from the world, including "online discourse." What are some modern examples of things we "consume" that might defile us spiritually?
3. Jesus said, "Man does not live on bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God." How does this principle relate to what we allow into our minds and hearts today?

#### Section 2: Standing When Others Bow (Daniel 3)

4. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego stood while everyone else bowed to the golden statue. When have you felt pressure to "bow down" to something the culture says is right but contradicts God's word?
5. The sermon noted that Nebuchadnezzar's anger only burned the ropes that bound the three men—it set them free. How have you seen opposition to your faith actually strengthen you or free you in some way?
6. What does it look like practically to stand against cultural pressure without being unnecessarily combative or divisive?

#### Section 3: Consistent Prayer Life (Daniel 6)

7. "Daniel's enemies, and our spiritual enemy is in a really difficult spot when the only thing they could use against you is how strong your faith is." What would your enemies find if they looked for dirt on you? What does that reveal?
8. Daniel prayed three times a day with his windows open—it was his custom "since the early days." What daily spiritual practices have you built (or want to build) that prepare you for difficult times?
9. Why do you think Daniel didn't hide his prayer life when the law was passed? What does this teach us about public vs. private faith?

#### **Section 4: Ripple Effects (Daniel 6 continued)**

10. The sermon emphasized that our actions affect those around us—for good or bad. Who in your life is most affected by your spiritual choices (spouse, children, friends, coworkers)?
11. Daniel's faithfulness led King Darius to proclaim God's greatness to all nations. How might your consistent faith influence those who are watching you?
12. "It's never too early to start working towards what God wants for you." What's one area where you need to start building faithful habits now, before you have more responsibility?

#### **Section 5: Humble Prayer (Daniel 9)**

13. Despite being blameless, Daniel prayed, "We have sinned." Why is it important to maintain humility even when we're living righteously?
14. Daniel knew the Scriptures well enough to recognize God's timing. How familiar are you with God's promises in Scripture? Which promises do you need to bring before God in prayer?
15. Daniel prayed for restoration based on God's character and promises, not on the people's worthiness. How does this shape the way we should pray for ourselves and others?

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#### **Personal Reflection Questions**

*(Take 5-10 minutes of silence for individual reflection)*

- Is my faith a regular practice or just a response to circumstances?

- What "delicacies of the world" am I consuming that might be compromising my spiritual health?
  - Who holds me accountable in my walk with God?
  - What ripple effects is my life creating for those closest to me?
  - Am I in God's Word regularly enough to recognize His promises?
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## Practical Applications

### This Week's Challenge (Choose One or More):

1. **The Daniel Diet (Spiritual Version):** Identify one thing you're "consuming" from the culture that isn't healthy (social media habits, entertainment, news consumption, etc.) and fast from it for one week. Replace that time with Scripture or prayer.
  2. **The Prayer Window:** Like Daniel, establish a consistent prayer time at a regular part of your day. Set an alarm if needed. Pray for 10-15 minutes at the same time each day this week.
  3. **Scripture Saturation:** Read through the book of Daniel this week (it's only 12 chapters). Journal what stands out to you about Daniel's character.
  4. **Accountability Check:** Reach out to 1-2 people and ask them to be your accountability partners. Share one area where you need to be more consistent in your faith.
  5. **Ripple Effect Assessment:** List the 5 people most influenced by your life. Pray for each one by name daily, asking God to help you be a positive spiritual influence on them.
  6. **Promise Prayer:** Find three promises of God in Scripture. Write them down and bring them before God in prayer this week, asking Him to fulfill them for His glory.
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## Closing Discussion

**Final Question:** If someone could only use your faith against you (like they did with Daniel), would they have enough evidence to convict you?

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## Closing Prayer

Pray together for:

- Consistency in faith, not just in crisis
  - Courage to stand when the culture bows
  - Awareness of how our lives affect others
  - Humility in prayer
  - A deeper knowledge of God's Word and promises
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### **For Next Week**

The group will be studying Daniel's visions and prophecies (Daniel 2, 4, 7-12). Come prepared by reading at least Daniel 2 and 7.

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*"My God sent his angel and shut the lion's mouth so that they have not hurt me. Because I was found innocent before him." - Daniel 6:22*

## 5-Day Devotional: Standing Firm in Babylon



### Day 1: Refusing to Consume What Defiles

**Reading:** Daniel 1:1-21

**Devotional:** Daniel and his friends faced immense pressure to assimilate into Babylonian culture, yet they drew a line at consuming the king's delicacies. Their refusal wasn't about food—it was about maintaining their identity in God. Like Jesus in the wilderness who declared that man lives by every word from God's mouth, Daniel understood that what we consume shapes who we become. Today, we face similar pressures to consume the world's offerings—entertainment, discourse, values that contradict Scripture. What are you consuming that might be compromising your faith? Daniel's resolve began with a decision of the heart. Where do you need to draw a line and choose what truly nourishes your soul?

## **Day 2: Faith Built in the Ordinary**

**Reading:** Daniel 6:1-10

**Devotional:** When Daniel learned that praying to God was punishable by death, he simply went home and prayed as usual. His faith wasn't a response to crisis—it was built through decades of consistent practice. The text tells us he prayed "as was his custom since the early days." Daniel's enemies could only trap him by using his faithfulness against him. What a testimony! When testing comes, we don't rise to the occasion; we fall to our level of preparation. Daniel was ready because he had been practicing faithfulness every single day. Is your prayer life consistent enough that it would be noticed if outlawed? Faith isn't built in emergencies; it's built in the everyday moments of choosing God when no one is watching.

## **Day 3: Standing When Others Bow**

**Reading:** Daniel 3:1-30

**Devotional:** Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego faced a defining moment: bow to the golden statue or burn. Everyone else compromised, but they stood firm. Their stand wasn't just against idolatry—it was against a statue built in direct defiance of God's revealed truth. The culture demanded conformity, but they chose consecration. The beautiful truth is that when they were thrown into the fire, Jesus met them there. Their obedience didn't exempt them from suffering, but it meant they didn't suffer alone. Where is the culture around you demanding you bow? What compromises seem easier than standing alone? Remember: those who stand for God never stand alone. The fourth man in the fire is still present with those who refuse to compromise.

## **Day 4: Your Ripple Effects Matter**

**Reading:** Daniel 6:11-28

**Devotional:** Daniel's faithfulness didn't just save him—it caused a pagan king to declare God's greatness to all nations. Meanwhile, his accusers' sin destroyed not only themselves but their families. This sobering reality reminds us that our choices create ripples far beyond ourselves. Your faithfulness or unfaithfulness affects your spouse, children, friends, and community. Daniel understood that his life had weight, that his decisions would either raise others up or drag them down. As you gain more responsibility—in marriage, parenting, leadership—those ripples expand. The secret sins you think harm no

one create waves of destruction. But consistent faithfulness creates waves of blessing. What ripples are your choices creating today? Who is being affected by how you live when no one is watching?

### **Day 5: Humble Confidence in God's Promises**

**Reading:** Daniel 9:1-19

**Devotional:** After seventy years in exile, Daniel studied Scripture and discovered God's promise was about to be fulfilled. His response is remarkable: he prayed with humble confidence. Though Daniel lived blamelessly, he confessed "we have sinned" and appealed not to human righteousness but to God's mercy. He reminded God of His own promises, asking Him to act "for Your own sake" because God's reputation was at stake. This is how we pray—standing on God's promises while kneeling in humility. Daniel knew Scripture well enough to hold God to His word, yet humbly enough to depend entirely on grace. Are you in God's Word enough to know His promises? Do you bring them before Him in prayer? Like Daniel, we can approach God's throne with confidence, not because we deserve it, but because He is faithful to His word.