



Notes | April 14, 2024

## Play Different: How do we live wisely in a complex world?

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Culture is shifting at a rapid pace. It's difficult to navigate how to live out the values of Christ in a world that preaches everything else. People have abandoned Biblical standards of marriage. People have lost the value for human life. There is gender confusion, mental health issues, depression, fear, justified hate, and the list goes on. The book of Daniel tells the story of God's people living as exiles in an ungodly place and time. It is a playbook for us today. At this point the nation of Israel had rejected God. They wanted their own king just like everyone else. This denial of God and desire for earthly treasures led to them being overtaken by Babylon. All their customs would be overtaken and replaced with worldly ones that were very foreign to what God had wanted for His people.

### Key Scripture | Daniel 1:1-4

In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. <sup>2</sup> And the Lord delivered Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, along with some of the articles from the temple of God. These he carried off to the temple of his god in Babylonia and put in the treasure house of his god. <sup>3</sup> Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, chief of his court officials, to bring into the king's service some of the Israelites from the royal family and the nobility— <sup>4</sup> young men without any physical defect, handsome, showing aptitude for every kind of learning, well informed, quick to understand, and qualified to serve in the king's palace. He was to teach them the language and literature of the Babylonians.

Additional verses: 1 Peter 2:11, Philippians 3:20-21, Daniel 1:6-7, Jeremiah 29:4-7

### Icebreakers:

Q: What was your favorite video game growing up?



## Key Thoughts and Reflections:

I. The Israelites did not want God to be their King. They wanted an earthly one like the other nations. When you trade God as your king you get everything that comes with an earthly one.

Q: Do you struggle with wanting what other people have?

Q: Has there ever been a time in your life where you took control of a situation rather than letting God handle it? What happened?

Q: Have you ever fully trusted God with a decision or situation? How did it turn out?

II. Daniel and his friends were raised and disciplined in Jerusalem for years. They knew how to live for the Lord.

Q: Do you have a personal or family mission statement that reflects Biblical principles?

Q: Have you created a friend group that pushes you toward God rather than away from Him? Who?

Q: Do you feel like you grew up in a house that pointed you to Jesus or pointed you to Babylon?

III. Daniel and his friends were exiled into Babylon where the king wanted them to take on Babylonian traditions.

Q: How do you define what is good in your life versus what is evil?

Q: Is there something in your life that you struggle letting go of that is from "Babylon"?

Q: Where do you look for help/hope when you feel pressured to live like you are from Babylon?

## Get Practical

We are not living in a "Jerusalem". We are exiles in "Babylon". The world doesn't always share our values, but it is important to know what your values are. Take this week to pray and write down a family/personal mission statement. This can be a Bible verse, three values you want your family or yourself to live by, or a list of truths you want to live out!