



Notes | April 28, 2024

Play Different: How do we honor God in a culture that does not?

Everyday we have to decide *who* or *what* we put first in our lives. What we *choose* is what we *honor*. We are called to serve God and to worship Him alone, but what do we do when things get complicated? How should we respond when culture expects us to put other things before God? How do we know if we should relax, refuse, or remove ourselves from a culture that is not rooted in biblical truth? Throughout this week's message, we dive into these questions by studying how Daniel and his friends faithfully refused Babylon's cultural ideals, remained rooted, and worshiped God alone.

Key Scripture | Daniel 3:16-18

"Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego replied to the king, "Nebuchadnezzar, we are not in need of an answer to give you concerning this matter. ¹⁷ If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to rescue us from the furnace of blazing fire; and He will rescue us from your hand, O king. ¹⁸ But even if He does not, let it be known to you, O king, that we are not going to serve your gods nor worship the golden statue that you have set up."

Related Scriptures

Daniel 3:1-6, 3:24-28, 6:7, 6:21-23, 6:26-27, Matthew 5:13-16, James 1:5, Joshua 1:9

Icebreakers:

Q: What is something you dislike that a lot of people really like? (restaurant, coffee order, a smell, etc)

Q: What is a dessert or snack you cannot refuse?



Key Thoughts and Reflections:

I. Anything that takes God's place in our heart is an idol. Just like Daniel, God calls us to refuse bowing down to anything that violates God's truth.

Q: What are the things in your life that compete for your full attention?

Q: Where do you see or experience things that conflict with God's truth?

Q: Are you putting God's place in your schedule behind other things? Is your calendar serving an idol?

II. We can honor our relationship with God by protecting our relationship with Him.

We can remain rooted in God's truth while we refuse the lies of culture.

Q: What does it mean to you when you hear "rooted in God's truth"? What does that practically look like in your life?

Q: Name one way you can strengthen your faith against the lies of culture and the temptation of idolatry.

Q: Where do you have influence to use God's word to shape a culture?

III. If we are unable to remain rooted in God's truth and cannot refuse the culture around us, we have to remove ourselves from a culture that dishonors God and His truth.

Q: Have you ever stepped away from something because it conflicted with your values? How did you come to that decision?

Q: In your day to day life, where is it increasingly difficult to be a faithful "exile in Babylon"?

Q: Have you ever lacked the courage to remove yourself from a situation that dishonors God?

Get Practical

Thankfully, we do not have to do this alone! We do not have to discern whether to relax, refuse, or remove ourselves alone. We can use God's Word to guide us! With the power of the Holy Spirit, we can honor God in every circumstance! Pray through these questions this week:

- Where is God calling me to influence a culture by His truth?
- Are there areas in my life that I struggle to refuse, and should I consider what my relationship with God would be like if I remove myself from those areas?