



WEEKLY SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

Faithful Presence

Living in a Strange New Land

Daniel 1:3-17

EXPLORING THE SERMON

- What did you hear?
- What did you think or feel about what you heard?
- What is one thing you can take away from the sermon this week?

VERSES FOR MEDITATION AND REFLECTION

“But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine, and he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way.” Daniel 1:8

In these passages, we see Daniel and the other exiles from the tribe of Judah being forced to work in the king’s court in Babylon. These men are chosen because of their capability, confidence, and good looks, and are being trained and educated to help the Babylonian kingdom flourish. Daniel takes a stand by refusing to defile himself by eating the king’s rations, and requests that the guards allow them to be tested for 10 days eating only vegetables and water. We see this act of protest not as a loud, public protest, but a quiet, small act of resistance.

Daniel provides us with a model of personal integrity, engaging fully in the world in which he is placed. Instead of choosing to be *different*, Daniel chooses to proceed with *integrity*, seeking to creatively serve the interests of the king, the refugees, and the Babylonian people.

1. Discuss how it can sometimes be easier to be *different* in a culture or setting in which we don’t agree, than it is to act *creatively with integrity*. How can we strive to seek the good alongside others who don’t share our beliefs?
2. What unique opportunities might you have right now to be committed to the people and places you serve?
3. In the midst of a world that seems to be constantly crumbling around us, how can we keep a hopeful presence while maintaining who we are?

Heavenly Father, Thank you for being present to us as you were to your servant Daniel. Help us to seek creative, hopeful ways to serve you in the communities in which you have placed us. Amen.

