

# Welcome to the JUNGLE

# DIGGING DEEPER

## CHOOSE YOUR CHARACTER

JANUARY 15

God cares about the stand you take privately than the stand you take publicly.

Work through the following questions and scriptures on your own, and get together with your running partner, life group, or friends and family to talk through what you are learning.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. If you could meet anyone in the world for dinner who would it be and why?
2. This last message spoke to the character flaw of hypocrisy: "behaving in a way that is inconsistent with stated beliefs or values". What form of hypocrisy gets under your skin the most and why? In what way(s) have you exhibited this character flaw in your own life?
3. Take the time to read through all of **Daniel 1** and answer the following questions:
  - Describe Daniel's character in this chapter.
  - How do you see his character displayed in how he interacts with the "chief of the eunuchs"?
  - How does God respond to Daniel's actions?
  - How would you have acted in this situation?
4. Martin Luther King Jr. said, "The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy." How have you experienced your own character tested like Daniel, where you were faced with the question of either succumbing to the systems around you that were contrary to God's ways, or being faithful to His ways? What was the outcome?
5. Read **1 Peter 1:13-19, 2:12** and answer the following questions:
  - Make some observations about this passage (What does the text say):
    - Who is talking?
    - What is the circumstance?
    - Any repeated phrases?
    - What surprised you?
    - What stood out to you?
  - Make some interpretations (What does the passage mean)
    - What questions do you have?
    - Summarize the passage in 1-3 sentences - what are the main points?
    - What do you learn about the nature and character of God as you read this?
    - What do you learn about yourself and your choices?

- Now make some applications (what's my response)
  - How do you respond to what you are reading?
  - How does this apply to your life?
  - What is the central truth that you could put into practice from this?
  - Who could you share this with for the sake of encouragement?
- 6. Why does it matter so much how we act publicly?
  - What opportunities are there in your life currently to stand firm in your faithfulness to God, while also loving and seeking the good of those around you who don't know Him or are deeply opposed to Him?
  - If you can't think of any, in what arenas might God be calling you to get out of your comfort zone and engage in a way that is reflective of 1 Peter 2:12?
  - End your time praying for the strength and wisdom to do this in a way that brings glory to God.

## KEY SCRIPTURE

**Daniel 1** In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. 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. 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 — 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. The king assigned them a daily amount of food and wine from the king's table. They were to be trained for three years, and after that they were to enter the king's service. Among those who were chosen were some from Judah: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. The chief official gave them new names: to Daniel, the name Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abednego. 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. Now God had caused the official to show favor and compassion to Daniel, but the official told Daniel, "I am afraid of my lord the king, who has assigned your food and drink. Why should he see you looking worse than the other young men your age? The king would then have my head because of you." Daniel then said to the guard whom the chief official had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, "Please test your servants for ten days: Give us nothing but vegetables to eat and water to drink. Then compare our appearance with that of the young men who eat the royal food, and treat your servants in accordance with what you see." So he agreed to this and tested them for ten days. At the end of the ten days they looked healthier and better nourished than any of the young men who ate the royal food. So the guard took away their choice food and the wine they were to drink and gave them vegetables instead. To these four young men God gave knowledge and understanding of all kinds of literature and learning. And Daniel could understand visions and dreams of all kinds. At the end of the time set by the king to bring them into his service, the chief official presented them to Nebuchadnezzar. The king talked with them, and he found none equal to Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah; so they entered the king's service. In every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king questioned them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in his whole kingdom. And Daniel remained there until the first year of King Cyrus.

**1 Peter 1:13-19** Therefore, with minds that are alert and fully sober, set your hope on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at his coming. As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.” Since you call on a Father who judges each person’s work impartially, live out your time as foreigners here in reverent fear. For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.

**1 Peter 2:12** Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.

## TAKE A NEXT STEP

1. Daniel knew how to operate in challenging circumstances because He knew the Scriptures, and therefore, the very heart of God. We cannot walk in wisdom apart from regularly sitting with God and listening to His Word. If you don’t have this regular practice, find others to walk through this Study God outcome together: <http://www.gatewaychurch.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Study-God-outcome-final.pdf>. Also consider joining a community group that regularly engages in Scripture together.

## FOR THE PARENTS

Hey, families! Here’s a look at what we’re covering with your kids so you can help them continue to grow at home during the week.

### ***THIS WEEK***

This week, kids hear about what happened when Jesus was baptized by John.

- **THE BIBLE: We can follow Jesus.**
- **THE BIG IDEA: John 1:29-42**

### ***ASK THIS***

Because sometimes you and your kid need a conversation-starter that isn’t, “So . . . how was church?”

- **In what ways do you follow Jesus?**
- **How can you show someone else what it means to follow Jesus?**

### ***REMEMBER THIS***

This month, your kids are memorizing the Bible verse

**Matthew 6:33 (NIV)**, in case you want to work on them together.

**EC: “But seek first his kingdom...” Matthew 6:33a**

Elem: “But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”

Matthew 6:33 (NIV)

### ***NEXT WEEK***

Next week, kids will hear about how Jesus began his ministry by calling the right people to work together with him.