

Life Group Leader Handout

December 27, 2015

Message Title: “Now God”

Pastor Joe Garofalo

Scripture—Daniel 1:1-8

In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. 2 And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with some of the vessels of the house of God. And he brought them to the land of Shinar, to the house of his god, and placed the vessels in the treasury of his god. 3 Then the king commanded Ashpenaz, his chief eunuch, to bring some of the people of Israel, both of the royal family[a] and of the nobility, 4 youths without blemish, of good appearance and skillful in all wisdom, endowed with knowledge, understanding learning, and competent to stand in the king's palace, and to teach them the literature and language of the Chaldeans. 5 The king assigned them a daily portion of the food that the king ate, and of the wine that he drank. They were to be educated for three years, and at the end of that time they were to stand before the king. 6 Among these were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah of the tribe of Judah. 7 And the chief of the eunuchs gave them names: Daniel he called Belteshazzar, Hananiah he called Shadrach, Mishael he called Meshach, and Azariah he called Abednego. 8 But Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself with the king's food, or with the wine that he drank. Therefore he asked the chief of the eunuchs to allow him not to defile himself.

Main Idea—

We compromise thinking it will ease the pressure of a situation, but it only weakens our resolve.

In the Book of Daniel, the Prophet and his buddies were expected to compromise when captured and brought to Babylon—or face execution. They were expected to “conform” in the following ways: their jobs, their identities (they were given new names), their education and their diets.

But Daniel **resolved** not to compromise. Four “consequences” to that:

- It was costly
- It made him bold
- It gave him and spirit of excellence
- It resulted in God’s favor

Application—

- Can you recall a time where you resolved not to compromise something (Ie. a principle or ideal)? What was the result?
- Can you recall a time when you did compromise?
- Is there something you are resolving not to compromise in the new year?

10 WINTER FELLOWSHIP IDEAS

By Rick Howerton

Fellowship is so much more than events. I sometimes describe biblical fellowship as “a common lifestyle shared by people with common values, making similar sacrifices, and experiencing common communal experiences.” People who live a life of biblical fellowship are authentic and vulnerable with one another, meet one another’s needs, and do life together--truly. Bible study groups who enjoy biblical fellowship can honestly say that they have shared laughter and tears. This kind of fellowship seldom happens if the only time a group gets together is for group meetings. Gatherings away for the group time are essential if the group is going to experience transformational fellowship.

The following are a list of options that may be helpful to you and your group as you brainstorm ideas of things you can do together this winter.

Gather around a bonfire for snacks and conversation.

Go on a snow skiing adventure

Host a game night to unleash everyone’s competitive side

Have a viewing party for the NCAA men’s basketball Final Four.

Enlist group members to open their homes for a progressive dinner

Go sledding in a local park

Attend a concert together

Host a karaoke night

Enjoy a movie at someone’s home or go to the theater together

Get together to watch an awards show on television.

When planning a time of pure fellowship, it’s important to consider the make up of your group. Obviously, sledding or skiing is probably not for all groups! But a game night is certainly something everyone can participate in. Try to figure out common interests, too. Does a particular movie often get quoted at your meetings--that’s the one to watch together! However you do it, fellowship outside of group meetings is vital in making your small group successful. Have fun and let me know what social stuff you do!--Cindy