



Living for God in an Ungodly Culture

Ice Breaker: If you were on a show where you had to wear a mask, what mask would you choose?

Read Together: Daniel 1:1-6

The enemy uses culture to push his agenda. Pastor Jason reminded us from the beginning of his message that PEOPLE are not our enemy, they are victims of the enemy. Culture is not the enemy, sin is the issue that we have to address. The enemy is at work and he knows his time is short to push his agenda. Pastor Jason addressed how Satan uses culture:

1. To attack and shape your worldview.

Read Romans 12:2 together.

Discuss:

“We must allow the Word of God to confront us, to disturb our security, to undermine our complacency and to overthrow our patterns of thought and behavior.” - John Stott

- How are you challenged by this quote from John Stott?
- What ways do you see complacency in your life?
- Pastor Jason defined **perversion** simply as “the wrong version.” What things have you believed the wrong version of before Jesus showed you the truth?

The enemy will cause you to ask questions and cause confusion about what we believe.

Which of these questions have you asked most often?

- Who am I?
- Why am I here?
- Where am I going?
- What’s it all about?
- Is there a god? (Who is God?)
- How can I live and die happily?
- What are good and evil? (Is the Bible true?)
- What would I be willing to die for?

Culture moves and changes from decade to decade, year to year... as we have seen, month to month and week to week. The Word of God **MUST** be our foundation because It is unchanging. We can be confident in the security God’s Word offers.

2. To isolate you from other believers.

Daniel was taken away from his country and isolated from much of what he had known. Those in captivity were isolated from their own culture so that they would be vulnerable to “new ideas.” In the same way, the enemy wants to isolate us so that we don’t fulfill all that God has for our lives.

Discuss:

- Have you ever thought that you could do life on your own? What brought you back to community?

- How many people have you heard say that they love Jesus, but they don't go to church or they don't like other Christians?
- What things might we miss out on when we isolate ourselves from other believers?

“Church attendance is as vital to a disciple as a transfusion of rich, healthy blood to a sick man.”
Dwight L. Moody

Read together Hebrews 10:25.

3. To indoctrinate you with new truth.

Daniel and his friends went through extensive training to make them “Babylonian.” Definition of indoctrination: *“The process of teaching a person or group to accept a set of beliefs uncritically.”*

Please read Proverbs 9:10 together.

“We cannot continue to send our children to Caesar for their education and be surprised when they come home as Romans.”

Voddie Baucham

Discuss:

- What are some things that you have felt pressure to conform to in our culture?
- What are some new “truths” that you have heard in the past few years?
- What are some things that you have never heard before that are now prevalent in culture?
- If you feel comfortable, please share an example of a time when you were deceived and didn't know it. How did God bring you out of the deception?

4. To attack your God given identity.

In the Jewish culture, naming someone was not taken lightly. Their names meant something. “The chief official gave them **new names**: To Daniel, the name Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abednego.”

Daniel - “God is my judge”

Belteshazzar - “Protector of the king; Lady, protector of the king”

Hananiah - “Yahweh has been gracious”

Shadrach - “Commanded by Aku” (pagan moon God)

Mishael - “Who Is Like God?”

Meshach - “Who is like the moon God Aku?”

Azariah - “Yahweh is my helper”

Abednego - “Servant of Nego”

The enemy wants to rename you. God has given you an identity in HIM, but the enemy wants you to doubt that identity and be confused about who HE says you are.

Read Philippians 2:15 and Isaiah 43:1-3 together.

Pastor Jason encouraged us to make our knowledge of God's Word the most important thing in our lives. We need the solid foundation of knowing that what God has said is best. Knowing the Word helps us to recognize when culture takes a turn for evil. The problem with deception is that we don't know that we are deceived so knowing what God says will protect us from being deceived.

Pray together:

Father, please teach us YOUR way, from YOUR WORD. Help us to know the truth and follow it by the power of Your Holy Spirit. Please help us to see when we are deceived and come back to Your truth. Help us not to allow the enemy to steal our identity. Help us to see the ways that culture would lead us astray and help us to stay true to YOU and Your WORD. We need You to reveal all that You are so that we can be all that You made us to be. Guide us as we turn toward You this week. In the name of Jesus, Amen.