

# DARE TO BE A DANIEL

FACING THE LIONS IN OUR LIVES

## SERIES OVERVIEW: DANIEL

*"Names"*

Preacher: Pastor Dave Swaim

January 6, 2018

[Series Sermon Recordings](#)

[Discipleship Resources](#)

## SUGGESTED SUPPLIES

Note cards (or paper) and pens.

## QUESTIONS?

Email Abby

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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

HOW TO USE: *The three sections below (opening, sermon content questions, and application) represent the three connections we emphasize at Highrock: connecting to **God's People**, connecting to **God Personally** and connecting to **God's Purposes**. Select at least one question from each section or create questions that are more specific to your group.*

## WEEKLY CHECK IN

Use a few minutes at the beginning of your time to follow up on any action items shared from last week. Was there a **next step or application** challenge that they took on this past week? What did they learn about themselves and following Jesus?

## CONNECTION QUESTIONS

Choose ONE of these that fits your group, or modify it so that it will fit your group better. These can make great **opening questions** or **ending questions**. If you have had a really in-depth conversation, ending on a light note can help transition to concluding your time Together on a less intense question.

1. Go around and share what your full names (including a given name like Korean, Japanese...). Share about what one of your names mean if you know. Which name do you most naturally identify with?

## SERMON QUESTIONS

Use a **couple of the questions** below or make up your own. You can always begin with: "Do you have any questions about what you heard in the sermon this week?" Or, "What stood out to you from the Pastor's sermon?"

1. You have shared about the meaning of your names, now what are other names that you have been given over the years, or in your childhood which have stuck with you? Ex: Is there an endearing nickname that a loved one called you? And/ or, is there a more critical name which has stuck with you?
2. Can you relate to the sermon reference below? What names do you feel like the world imposes or ascribes to you? How do these names short change your value and worth?
  - a. **Sermon Reference:** *"In addition to the names we may have received from our parents, the world is ready to give us it's own names- defining us in it's own terms. Telling us what our real value is. And many times we start to believe those are our real names...Maybe you get called doctor, director, president, pastor, parent, professor. Those names can feel good, but become dangerous when we start to think that's who we really are. We start to assume some privileges- I should be treated in a special way because I am a little more special than everyone else. I am boss. My name ends in M.D, Esquire or Ph.D. That's who I am. And it's more than you are." Other names are less desirable. Maybe you are drop out divorcee. failure. That becomes more than an adjective - it becomes my identity, telling me why i'm not worth as much as others. "*
3. How do these names shape what you believe/d about your identity, your capabilities, your value, your worth?
  - a. **Sermon Reference:** *"You know the truth is that most of us have been given a lot more names than just the one we received at birth. Growing up some of you were told over and over that you were special. Precious. Wanted. Loved. And that confidence allowed you to overcome obstacles and push through resistance. But others of you were told that you were stupid. Selfish. Difficult. A disappointment. A mistake. And that became a self-fulfilling prophecy as you kept sabotaging yourself, never believing you deserved anything better."*
4. Pastor Dave shared this reflection, *"It's hard to believe that I could be beloved, and yet, that's my name. And God says it's who I really am whether I believe it easily or not."* How do you feel about owning that name, Beloved by God? Do you share in Pastor Dave's struggle to accept it? Why might that be?
  - a. What other names does God affirm about who you are in his sight? What scriptures remind you of who you are to God?
5. Together, re-cap Daniel's circumstances and the meaning of his given name. What was the significance of the babylonians changing Daniel's name? How was this a power move and how did Daniel respond?
  - a. **Sermon Reference:** *Daniel's new name was Belteshazzar, which was a direct challenge to his original name because it means bel, one of the Babylonian's false gods, protects his life. Trust him, it says. Obey him. Just cooperate. He will repay you. Every time they called his name, they were inviting him to submit. Just give in. Become one of us. It's so much easier. It's really nice. And then, to further lure Daniel to embrace this new identity as a Babylonian, they plied him with privileges. (Dan 1:5a) Daniel and the other young recruits were given food and wine from the king's private kitchen.*
6. As you have gone through different seasons of figuring out your identity, what names have you taken on? Have there been times when what you do, your title, your abilities, what you have etc. have taken the front seat in forming who you believe yourself to be?
  - a. In your experience how does that happen? Is it slow moving? As you consider those times, what are some flags that might help you spot when these false narratives about who you are are becoming the dominant voice?
    - i. **Sermon Reference:** *"Privilege can be intoxicating. It can become hard to resist once you get used to it. So sometimes satan discourages us with pains, but I've found that more often he distracts us with pleasures. It could be a big income, a big house, nice cars or fancy vacations. It could be security, comfort, affection or sex. It could be prestige and admiration from strangers. At first it feels like a gift - how can God be so generous with me? But slowly over time I start thinking "I deserve this!" I earned this. I like this. I can't live without this. This is what life is all about."*

7. What are some of the lies we believe that lead down the slippery slope of trusting what the world says about who we are rather than the truth of who we are in Jesus?
- a. Pastor Dave shared a few of the lies which we can get caught up in that distort the calling and intention God has for the way we should live our lives. Is there one that stands out to you? Why does it stand out?
    - i. What are the truths which God gives us which counter these lies?

**1. Sermon Reference:**

- a. *“First days in Babylon the lie that Daniel faced was “maybe I can serve God without sacrificing much. Maybe I can bless others while still indulging myself.” “*
- b. *“The best way I can represent Jesus is just to have everyone think I’m really nice – and nice people don’t make waves or question the status quo”*
- c. *“Just mind your own business and don’t upset anyone so that you can be like Jesus.”*
- d. *“The LIE was that Jesus could still be king of the world without having to sacrifice. without having to risk. Without having to hurt. Without having to die. Satan offered him an appealing shortcut around suffering. The shortcut of success.”*

8. On a sheet of paper, take 5-10 minutes to write down on one side some of the false names which have defined you- or names who hold more power over your identity than you want. On the other side of the note card or paper, write down the names and identity that God would long for you to believe about yourself. After taking time to reflect individually, share some of your thoughts/ feelings about what you just wrote down.

- a. Where do you tend to look to for your identity/ affirmation?
- b. What are the lies that God is inviting you to let go of? What are the truths that God is inviting you to take hold of?
  - i. **Sermon Reference:** *“Friends do you know who you are? Have you looked to the world to tell you, your parents, your professors, your supervisor at work or your friends at school. They may not be able to tell you your true name. And they may want to give you names that will enslave you to them, like the Babylonians did.”*

9. Have you related to prayer the way Pastor Dave describes below? What would it look like to incorporate a time of remember who God is into your prayer/ devotional time?

- a. **Sermon Reference:** *“As we read Daniel, which I encourage you to do at home during this series, we’re going to discover that later on, one of the ways Daniel remembered that true identity was by spending regular time in prayer. For me, prayer is rarely about asking for stuff. There is some of that at times. But most days prayer is a time for me to remember who God is, and then, once I have that straight again, remembering who I am.”*

## APPLICATION/S

1. As a group, can you commit to reading the book of Daniel over the course of the sermon series?
2. How can prayer and remembering who we are as disciples of Jesus change our posture to the world and how it tries to define you? What does it look like to be free in Christ and take up the name Beloved?
  - a. **Sermon Reference:** *“I’m not safe to be a leader or boss unless I remember that first I’m a servant. I’m not safe to be a teacher unless I remember how much I still need to learn. I can’t GIVE generously to others, or give true attention to others, or dare to take risks unless I know that God will supply all I need, because I am beloved. It’s who*

*I truly am. It's my name. It's in those prayer times throughout the day that I decide again to be different than the world, and find the power I need to do it."*

3. What rhythms do you currently have which might inadvertently reinforce some of the worldly names having more influence than they should?
  - a. Consider your week, where in your day can you make space to begin to set a regular rhythm of prayer?
    - i. **Sermon Reference:** *"And who do you most want to be? Is that anything close to who God says you are? (Rev 2:17) You have a name - and identity given to you by the one who created you, and the one who knows you better than you know yourself. It is who you really are. Daring to be a Daniel begins by learning who you are from God rather than the world, and then committing to a regular pattern of prayer that helps you remember it, so that you don't listen to the lies all around you."*

## CLOSING

Summarize the key points of your discussion and encourage people to **share one action step** they could take during the next week based on what they have shared. **Take time to pray together.** Write those down and start next week by checking in with how it went, or better yet, check in during the week!

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## RESOURCES

### For Parents:

Pastor Dave noted the **Parent Cue App** that offers videos and easy spiritual conversation starters to help you remind your kids each week who GOD says they are. And we've got a life-long parenting program called **MILESTONES** that has seminars coming up to help you know how to nurture your child's faith. If you have questions about these, you can reach out to Pastor Brian, [Brian@highrock.org](mailto:Brian@highrock.org).

## SERMON SCRIPTURE REFERENCE

### Daniel 1:1-7

*"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."*

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## SCRIPTURE STUDY: 5Cs

If you are interested in studying the scripture more deeply, one way to study scripture is through using the 5 Cs. Read through the passage and move through each C. The goal is not to move through them quickly but to really consider each section. If you wanted to study the passage together, you, as the leader should take some time beforehand to complete the Cs and it can be helpful to have group members come prepared with the first 3 already considered. Then, as a group you can briefly talk over some of the points and

then have a longer conversation about curiosities and conclusions. This study tool will be posted within all of the discussion questions.

- **Context:** What is the literary context of the passage? What comes before? After? Context within whole book? Relation to main idea of section, book, testament, whole Bible?
- **Christ:** How is Jesus revealed here? If in OT, prefiguration, typology, prophecy, implications for Christ's person and work? How is he needed, anticipated, fulfilled?
- **Crux:** What is the main idea? Try and find a section of the text that states it and have reasons for why that is the main idea? How do the other points support it?
- **Curiosities:** What is surprising about this text? Controversial? Mysterious? Shocking?
- **Conclusions:** What are the implications for our lives? Application? How do we think, feel, and act in light of this text?