

**Life Group Notes**

**Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2021**

**Speaker:** Andy McCullough

**Title:** Daniel: Living as Exiles – Through the Gate

**Passage:** Daniel 1: 1 - 7

Daniel and his friends walk through the gate into Babylon. They are in pain and in shock. They will be a minority in a pagan culture. How are we going to keep the faith surrounded by such powerful unclean gods? How are we going to keep ourselves pure? What will we do when everyone else is bowing down to idols?

We are all like Daniel. As Christians, we are in a minority and under enormous pressure. As our children walk through the school gate. Many of them might be the only Christian child in their class. How will they cope surrounded by things that threaten their faith? As our university students walk through the gates of the university. How on earth are they going to keep themselves pure, full of faith? As the vast majority of us walk through the gates into our places of work, we are in exactly the same position as Daniel and his friends. None of this is new. The Bible is very clear that Christians are WEIRD (1 Peter 1:1, John 18:36, Hebrews 11:13).

What can we expect to learn from Daniel?

1. Courage. Daniel was a very courageous person.
2. Spirituality. Daniel was a very prayerful person.
3. Wisdom. Daniel was a very wise person.

Where do these qualities come from? They come from God. God is with Daniel and his friends as they walk through the gate in Babylon. He joins them in their exile.

Courage comes from Him. Dynamic spirituality comes from Him. Wisdom comes from Him.

Jesus Christ shows us how God is with us in our Babylons. He knew pressure, intimidation, enemies, bullying, darkness. He gives us the Holy Spirit to be present with us. He is with you! Giving Courage. Bestowing his presence. Giving Wisdom.

**Questions:**

1. In what ways does your faith feel under pressure? How do you find it difficult to be a Christian?
2. What is the thing about the culture we live in which scares you the most? Be honest – no one is going to judge you!
3. In what areas do you need courage? How can we pray for you?
4. In what areas do you need wisdom? How can we pray for you?
5. We all hear God speak to us in different ways. How do you hear the voice of God? How can you grow in this area?
6. What is God saying to you and what are you going to do about it?

**Reminder Note:** Please invite your group to join us for the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations this Sunday at JMA. Tea and coffee will be served as usual from 10am and then our meeting will start at 10:30am – We'll have a brief look back at our history and Sean will be sharing a summary of things now and our vision moving forward. After the meeting, there will be free hot food and entertainment including bouncy castle/slide and live music. Please encourage everyone to stay around for the afternoon to celebrate all God has done, is doing and will do amongst us!