



# WHERE IS GOD?

## BIG IDEA

When He seems absent God is working in bigger ways than you can see.

## SCRIPTURE

Read Daniel 1

## OPENER

Recall your first days at camp, college, or away from home for training. What was it like? What were you feeling? Do you have a funny or difficult story to share?

## QUESTIONS

1. John told a story about his Aunt's recent passing. He explained that even though he knows God is there, he has had moments of wondering why God allowed this to happen. Has anything happened in your life that has caused you to question where God was? Tell the group about that.
2. As a group consider writing down each person's trial and committing to pray for each other during this 4-week series. Let's ask God to help us see Him as bigger than each of these trials.
3. As you read the first chapter of Daniel what were the underlying themes/truths? Are these truths applicable to your life as a Christian?
4. Daniel "determined" to obey God at a time when God seemed absent. In this message did God reveal an area where you need to determine to live like God is watching? Share.
5. How have your Christian friends encouraged you to choose God's way?
6. Even as believers we tend to focus on situations that directly affect us. When that occurs how are you able to step out of your situation and identify God's work and His purpose?
7. What was the intent of the Babylonians by giving Daniel and his three Hebrew companions new names and three years of training? What is happening in today's culture that attempts to give Christians a new identity and an ungodly way of living? How can God's people resist the pressures that can "squeeze" them into conformity with the world?
8. Daniel and his companions were respectful toward their foreign authorities and therefore, when they had to ask for special changes in their diet to keep the law of Moses, the Steward accommodated their request. Why did the Babylonians allow these Hebrews to eat only vegetables and drink only water?



## TAKE AWAY

God is bigger than the biggest forces we feel controlling our lives.

Determine to live like God is watching, even when He seems absent.

You can choose big faith in your big God, even when He's unseen.

## REFERENCES

- Proverbs 16:7
- Psalms 59:16
- Matthew 4:1-11; 7:21-23
- Luke 18:27
- Romans 8:28; 12:1-2; chapter 14
- 2 Timothy 2:22

## WORD WEALTH

**Remnant:** The few people who remained faithful and who then gathered together after God scattered them into exile.

**Faithful:** Utterly loyal, firm in adherence to their beliefs.

**Conformers:** People whose lives are controlled by pressure from without. (Romans 12:1-2)

**Transformers:** People whose lives are controlled by power from within. (Romans 12:1-2)

## DIGGING DEEPER

- In thinking about Daniel chapter-one, contemplate and discuss the following statement: God would rather have His people living in shameful captivity in a pagan land than living like pagans in the “Holy Land” and disgracing His name.
- In Genesis Chapters 39-46 we read about Joseph, who in a strange land chose to remain faithful to God even though it cost him personally. Discuss the parallels to Daniel. In each case it took years of faithful living before God’s bigger plan was revealed. What are practical ways we can stay faithful during long periods of persecution and pain when God’s big plan remains hidden (and we can feel forgotten)?
- Daniel was rewarded with responsibility and honor in a new land. Do you think this made it easier to follow God or harder? Why?
- Is there a Christian brother or sister in your life who is going through a tough period, and probably is wondering why God seems absent? What practical, detailed things can you do to help them through, so they remain faithful and encouraged?
- Daniel and his three companions were part of a faithful remnant in Babylon, why did God place them there?