

## **LIGHT IN DARKNESS**

### ***Week 1: Stand Out***

#### ***Daniel 1:1-21***

#### **Introduction:**

- A. Imagine being taken against your will and finding yourself in a place where everything is different.
- B. This series is about a group of young men who found themselves being taken against their will to live in a foreign land where their faith would be tested.
- C. These young men faced various challenges and obstacles where they had to decide whether they would remain faithful and be a light for God in the midst of their dark surroundings or compromise their faith.

#### **DANIEL AND HIS FRIENDS FOUND THEMSELVES IN A DARK PLACE (vs. 1-7).**

- A. Nebuchadnezzar was one of the most powerful kings over one of the greatest empires in world history.
- B. Nebuchadnezzar attacked Jerusalem as an instrument of God's judgment (Jer. 20:4-6; 25:1-11).
- C. Nebuchadnezzar took captive some of Judah's brightest young men and wanted them to forget about God and His ways. He isolated, indoctrinated and integrated them into the ways of the Babylonians.

**TRANSITION:** Sometimes our first reaction to being in dark places is frustration and complaining. Daniel and his friends teach us something very important when we find ourselves in dark places.

#### **WE CANNOT CONTROL OUR CIRCUMSTANCES BUT WE CAN CONTROL OUR RESPONSES TO THEM (vs. 8-14).**

- A. Daniel and his three friends could not do anything about being in Babylon. It was beyond their control.
- B. Daniel and his friends chose to stand out and be a light by not engaging in what everyone else was doing.
- C. Daniel and his friends did not choose the easy way out (Exo. 34:15; I Cor. 10:20-22). They did not try to justify eating the king's food and blending in.

#### **THREE THINGS TO REMEMBER IF WE WANT TO STAND OUT AND BE A LIGHT IN DARKNESS:**

- A. We cannot allow ourselves to blend in (Rom. 12:2; I Pet. 1:15-16).
- B. We cannot wait until a defining moment to decide to be a light in darkness (Psa. 119:9-11).
- C. We can have the right attitude and approach (I Cor. 13:1-3; Rom. 12:18).

#### **CONCLUSION:**

- A. There will be times in our lives when we find ourselves in dark places. We cannot control that.
- B. What we can control is how we respond when we find ourselves in darkness.
- C. We can either blend in and be like everyone else, or we can stand out and be a light for the Lord.