

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

For the week of June 14-20, 2020

“BELSHAZZAR DEAD! DARIUS TAKES THRONE”

GETTING STARTED

To the facilitator: As your group begins, use this section to introduce the topic. If possible, give a brief recap of the sermon.

Share a memorable point, a spiritual lesson, a personal application, a question, or something that challenged you from the sermon last Sunday.

What particular food have you missed during the quarantine? What makes this food special to you?

GROUP DISCUSSION

Read Daniel 5.

1. Considering the context that the Medo-Persian Army outside the city, why do you suppose Belshazzar held a feast at such a time? What are some impressions that you have about the character and priorities of this man?
2. *Discuss.* This chapter tells us that Belshazzar and his guests “praised the gods of gold and silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone” as they drank from the holy vessels from the Temple of God. The list isn’t incidental. What’s so significant about it? What does this tell you about the core beliefs of Belshazzar and his peers? About their values? How are these values reflected in our culture today?
3. When Pastor Nic says, “*We dishonor God when we lose sight of him in our celebrations,*” does it mean it is wrong to celebrate? What do the celebrations that we have say about what we live for and what is important to us?
4. *Discuss.* When Daniel spoke to the king, he was respectful but not afraid to tell the truth. In what circumstances is it difficult for you to maintain respect? In what circumstances is it difficult for you to speak the truth? Discuss some ways that you can speak the truth in love.
5. When confronted with the mysterious hand writing on the wall, Belshazzar is terrified. The queen encourages him to call for Daniel. When Daniel comes, he begins by giving Belshazzar a “sermon.” What are the key elements of what Daniel says (Daniel 5:18-23)? How is Nebuchadnezzar’s story different from Belshazzar’s?

6. *Share.* Belshazzar should have learned from what happened to Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 5:22) but he didn’t. Think of the spiritual lesson(s) (positive or negative) that come to mind, perhaps something from your parents, or a Christian friend, or an experience and share it to the group. What life lesson is God reminding you of?

7. [Optional] Read Luke 14:15-24. Jesus tells this story after someone says “Blessed is anyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!” Is this story an “answer” or “response” to that statement? What does this teach you about the kingdom of God? About what we live for? About the urgency with which we extend the invitation to others?

8. [NEXT STEPS]

This week, let us be reminded that the things that make us happy (that which we celebrate) symbolizes the things that we live for and whether God is there or not.

- I will be careful with pride and remember the holiness of God.
- I will strive to be conscious of the Lord in everything I do.
- I will seek to glorify God in the things that make me happy.
- I will be alert of opportunities to share Christ to others.

Don’t forget to:

- Go through the devotionals everyday this week.
- Have a regular daily time of prayer and reading of God’s Word.
- Commit 30 minutes a day for God’s intervention in this fight against the COVID virus.

CLOSING THE SESSION.

Close the session by taking the time to pray for one another. Consider the following as you pray:

- Pray for sensitivity to the Holy Spirit, to have a humble heart focused on Jesus.
- Take the time to pray for our nation, for peace and for the gospel to prosper during this time of the pandemic.
- Pray for those who are hurting, going through fear, worry and anxiety in the group.
- Pray for your unsaved family, friends and loved ones.