

Temptation - The World

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[0 : 00] We're going to continue our series on sin and temptation tonight. And that was kind of like more of an intro text, what Ashley just read.! We'll probably be revisiting that next week, but I think it's really good.

Tonight we're going to talk about the world and what the world is. Last week John spoke on Satan, the identity of Satan and his purposes and his desires.

And this week we're going to talk about the world. And in 1 John here, the verses we just read, the word for world, it's not talking about the world in terms of like nature, creation, people necessarily. It's talking about the world more like a negative way. The way that the world is alienated from God because of its sin and because of the sinfulness of man.

And it has to do with the way of thinking, like an ideology. It encompasses false systems of religion, false ways of thinking.

[1 : 05] It encompasses a lot of different things. And flip over to Colossians 2 really fast. This is just another text to look at.

But the world and the devil and the flesh are the three things that we have to do with and fight against here in this life as believers.

And they're not necessarily separated. As I said a long time ago, they kind of work together in a lot of ways. It wasn't like today. It was the devil. And yet tomorrow is going to be the world.

It's all kind of in working together simultaneously to lead us away from God into sin. Colossians 2 verse 8. A great verse to kind of reference when we're looking at what it means.

Like the world, the cosmos. It says, See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit. According to human tradition.

[2 : 07] According to the elementary spirits of the world. And not according to Christ. And that word for captive means like robbing, plundering, taking away, taking away from.

And false ideologies and false ways of thinking, false worldviews can rob you of the joy that you're meant to have as a believer in Christ. And knowing Christ and walking with Christ, it alters how you think.

And if you do that, if you bind to another ideology of the world, you can miss out on so many things that Christ has for you. And living in sin.

And so, when it talks about philosophy here in Colossians, it's not just talking about like an academic class of philosophy. It encompassed a lot more back then.

More of like how you do life. The purpose of life. Who God was. How you lived every day. That's what philosophy really meant more than than like we would think of today.

[3 : 05] Our main text, though, is going to be in the book of Daniel. So, turn to Daniel chapter 1. I don't know many other books to look at that speak about how to be in the world, but not of it.

To be the people of God, but at the same time live in the midst of a very sinful and broken and fallen environment than Daniel. Some of us are just familiar with like Daniel's in the lion den, but you ought to go back and study this book at some point.

And really, ring it out. It's so rich and powerful. So, I'll give you a background. We're going to be in chapter 1. We're going to go through the first few verses.

We'll read through. Right now, we'll read 1 and 2. It says, 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 gave Jehoiakim, king of Judah, into his hand with some vessels in the house of God. And he brought them to the land of Shinar, to the house of his God, and placed the vessels in the treasury of his God.

[4 : 19] And to know what's going on a little bit, Judah, do you remember like there was at one point a united kingdom where David reigned as a king and there was this one nation.

And then his son Solomon reigned after that and it was one nation. After Solomon died, the kingdom split apart. There was ten tribes that went to the north and that was Israel. And their capital was Samaria.

And in the south, there was two, and that was Judah. And their capital was Jerusalem. The northern kingdom had been wiped out by the Assyrians before the Babylonians were kind of on the scene. So Judah remained. But Judah continued to rebel against God and not honor God in the way that they worshipped and with their lives. They confessed Him with their mouths, but their hearts were far from Him.

And God constantly sent prophets. He sent Jeremiah. He sent many other prophets to speak to them and say, this is not good. You're rebelling against God. You need to repent and turn back to God.

[5 : 22] And they continued on in their sin. They ignored all God's warnings. And finally, God gave them over. He judged them for their rebellion. And His instrument of judgment was Babylon. It was Nebuchadnezzar.

And this is around like 605 B.C., so a very long time ago. So you can go and read about Nebuchadnezzar, even just other literature outside the Bible. But he was a real guy.

And he took Jerusalem over, conquered the city, and took a lot of the things that were in the temple back to lay before one of his false gods, one of his idols, to kind of just say, you know, look what my God did.

And to mock the God of Israel. And so God was judging them for their rebellion. And just to know, like, also kind of what's going on in these first few verses, we'll read the next part right here.

And it says, the king assigned them a daily portion. Oh, excuse me. Let's give something I did. I apologize.

[6 : 31] No. Yeah. Okay. Yeah. In verse 3, we begin to kind of see, like, this system that Nebuchadnezzar had in place.

It wasn't just, let's just wipe them out and kill them all. Let's absorb their culture into the Babylonian culture. I can't tell you, like, how many ancient cultures I've heard about or read about that existed. And they once were kind of like a proud and powerful people. But at a certain point, they were conquered and they were completely absorbed into a stronger country. Their language was lost. Everything was disappeared, in essence. So, it's very crazy in America, in and of itself, that Israel is even there today. It's nuts.

To see, like, it only has to do with God's grace and God's power that's preserved them. Because he has a plan to do some things at that point.

[7 : 34] And it says in verse 3, excuse me, yeah, yeah, verse 3. The king commanded Athanas, the chief eunuch, to bring some people of Israel, both from the royal family and the nobility, use without blemish and good in appearance, and skill in all wisdom, endowed with knowledge, understanding, learning, competent to stand in the king's palace and to teach them the literature and language of the Chaldeans.

The king assigned them a daily portion of food that the king ate and wine that he drank. They were educated for three years. At the end of that time, they were to stand before the king.

And among them, among these were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah of the tribe of Judah. And the chief of the eunuchs gave them names.

Daniel, he called Belshazzar. Hananiah, he called Shadrach. Mishael, he called Meshach. And Azariah, he called Abednego.

So that's going to be kind of our text. But again, like I said, Daniel is the perfect story to see what it's like to belong to God and to have a living, walking faith in the living God, but to live in a totally fallen and hostile environment.

[8 : 57] So we're going to look at a few things first. But first of all, it's important to have three points. But first, it's important for you to know what Babylon is.

And it's not just like an ancient city. A lot of the guys who have gone to war in Iraq, they can go and actually see a lot of the old ruins of Babylon and the palaces that are there.

It is a location, but it implies a lot more than a location. Some of you might remember a little Bible quiz here. Way back in Genesis, a long time ago, in chapter 11, God had commanded the people to

go and scatter and fill the earth and subdue the earth, and they refused. And instead, they built these massive towers to basically glorify themselves and show the power of their ingenuity. And they actually say, let us make a name for ourselves. A name for ourselves. So in a way, they were trying to show the glory of who man was. And God, remember, He scattered them. At that point, the world had one language. [10:08] And He scattered them, and He confused their languages, and they couldn't work together. So that was called the Tower of Babylon. And that's where we get Babylon from. And it means like to confuse or to mix or to mingle.

And Babylon symbolizes humanity's ambition to dethrone God and make their own name rather than to glorify God's name. It's basically like a worldly city where man tries to exalt himself in the position of God. So that's what it is. It's a way of thinking. It's an idea. It's not just a location. It's a location. It's saying, I'm not going to live for God. I'm going to live for myself. I'm going to make a name for myself. And so here's some of the points I have for you. The first one, and my goal here is to kind of expose kind of a process of the world around us, the fallen world, will try to put you through and expose you to as a believer. [11:11] And this is going to be a two-part thing. I'll probably finish this next week. This week, I'm going to try to focus more on your identity as a child of God.

Next week, it will be a little more, I don't want to say practical, but it will be like things like media or music, the kind of stuff that we are around all day, that kind of stuff, and how it's influencing us. But this is more about our identity as the people of God. So the first point is, the world will try to befriend you.

The world will try to befriend you. Look at verse 5. It says, The king assigned them a daily portion of food that the king ate and wine that he drank, and they were to be educated for three years. At the end of that time, they were to stand before the king. Okay? So this was a way of like indoctrinating these guys. And notice that, whether you know it or not, you've been indoctrinated your entire life.

[12:19] Like from, you know, when you started going to school, and the environment you were in, you were told what was important, you were told what to live for, have a good job, you know, get married, make a lot of money, be secure, provide.

That's what your goal in life is. And you're told that at a very early age. And that's what you kind of go along hearing. And some of you are even still hearing that today. So, in this text, Daniel and his friends are offered very rich food and all the privileges of being in like a Babylonian court, status, comfort.

And their hope is that they can indoctrinate them and kind of wean them off of their way of like belonging to the true God and make them actually think and act like Babylonians and basically just kind of absorb them.

And so, they, we might ask like a lot of nutritionists out there who try to like argue, well, with Daniel and his friends, they didn't eat the king's food and drink his wine and that's an argument for being a vegetarian or something.

And I'm like, what? That has nothing to do with that really. But in the text, you should know just like what's going on when it talks about the food. Because it kind of is a, they're making a pretty bold statement when they refuse to partake of this food.

[13:43] To indulge in the food would be to like honor pagan gods because this food was dedicated to the gods of Babylon. And for them to eat of it would be like a way of honoring them in an Eastern, you know, ancient Near Eastern culture and then there today as well.

To share a meal with somebody is almost to make a covenant with them, like to befriend them. Say like, okay, we're cool. Let's share a meal together. And so, they were like, we're not going to do that.

It's symbolic. So, they refused to do that. And so, I've been trying to really think about the best way to approach this.

And I had a book, I don't know if I brought it up here with me, but I don't really need it. It's a book that I read a long time ago when I was in school. It was called The Paradox of American Power. And it was written by a Harvard professor called Joseph Nye. He wrote several books dealing with like diplomacy and international politics and war.

[14:51] And he was the former, I mean, in case you just think of just some other wacky dude out there, he had some pretty crazy experience. He was the former chairman of National Intelligence Council, assistant secretary of defense during the Clinton administration.

So, he knows a pretty good bit about foreign policy and diplomacy. And in this book, he talked about two kinds of power that nations or states or political leaders try to use when they want to go into another country and move that country towards something, just like we've done with a lot of the places throughout history, recently, Afghanistan, Iraq.

So, the two kinds of power are these, and these are helpful to know. We're going to make a spiritual connection to these. The first one is called soft power.

Soft power. It means the ability to obtain what you want through attraction, by use of your values, your cultures, your policies.

And you go and you try to influence the way they think about things. You teach them about democracy, that kind of stuff. And then another kind of power is called hard power.

[16:12] And that has to do with, like, obtaining what you want through military might, you know, air, land, sea, type things. And you, through a coercion, you try to bend them to your will through force.

So, soft power and hard power. An example is like, you know, America goes into a country somewhere, and they want to establish it and secure it and make it a democratic state.

That's kind of like their goal. So, soft power would be like, we come there, we try to educate them, we give them our entertainment, our movies, our music, our clothes, and try to show them, you know, what things are like, and kind of like begin to change their way of thinking.

And, on the other hand, hard power would be what? It would be like military force, like we've done in a lot of places. And usually, a political force uses both of those, both hard power and soft power, to accomplish that.

Two so-called successes would be South Korea and Japan, whether or not they're really successes. But they look very Western now as compared to what they did a long time ago.

[17:22] And Vietnam, not so much. So, we see where both were used there, and it failed. So, hard power and soft power is a good way to think about things we relate to the world and spiritual warfare.

But a spiritual application of this is that Satan is using the world system of like a Babylonian way of thinking. He's using both hard power and soft power in the world, and he's using them both against the church.

So, he really employs hard power. You could tie that in with like persecution, hostility. Nations like North Korea or China or Sudan, where believers are beaten, imprisoned, killed, exiled.

That would be, you know, hard power. Nigeria, places like that. People are facing physical persecution and death. That's the end there.

But, let's see. What's a lot scarier here is that Satan hasn't chosen to apply that power here at all.

[18:36] He's chosen something a lot more subtle. He's chosen to use a soft power approach with us here in America. And what is his scheme and what is his goal?

How does he apply this? Let me read you a quote by Charles Spurgeon. He said, Prosperity is much harder to bear than adversity.

As the finding pot to silver and the furnace to gold, so is prosperity to a Christian. Many a man will pass through trouble and praise God under it.

When he who has tried with no trouble will forget his God, decline in grace, and grow almost a worldly. Believe me, there is no greater trial than no trial.

And that's really profound. I know that to be true. Think about it. Like, the wealth and prosperity in America, that's certainly not a bad thing.

[19:40] Remember? Like, those things are not called good or evil. That's how we use them. And our fallen natures like to use those things to indulge in our own simple pleasures, to use them for evil and not good.

And so the enemy has, like, lulled us to sleep in our prosperity. We've fallen asleep in our liberty. Think about it. Which one would you rather have?

Someone's like, I definitely don't want persecution. Please don't send that my way. I'm pretty comfortable where I am. But if you want a closer walk with God, a lot of times, like I would think, if you come to me with, like, a sword or a dagger or a pistol, I'm going to run, like, straight to Christ.

You know, I'm going to, like, cling to Him. He's going to love me, protect me, give me peace. Even if I die, I'll die, like, holding on to Him. And, but, if you came up to me and, like, offered me on a platter everything that I could possibly want, everything that my flesh would enjoy, I might pause and think about it like, hmm, you know, that looks really good.

So it's very, very, very subtle. So it's the things of the world, a Babylonian way of thinking, like, to help us forget about living for God and then forget about our identity as the people of God and live for ourselves and indulge in ourselves and build our own kingdoms and build up our own names rather than God's.

[21 : 08] So, the Babylonian way of the world will try to lure you in and get you to do that. Turn to James 4 real fast. We're constantly bombarded by a message that says that Christ is not enough.

We have to have Christ plus all this stuff to be happy. Turn to James 4, verse 4. Remember, part of the tactic is the world wants to befriend you, just like we see in our story here.

James 4, verse 4. James is telling them how it is. He says, You adulterous people, do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God?

Therefore, whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. James was written a very long time after Daniel and his buddies were in Babylon.

But they knew this. They understood this truth. But hundreds of years before James wrote that, so what did I say? No. We won't compromise. We will not give in to this.

[22 : 26] We're not going to worship your gods. We're going to remain who we are. So, if you remember, eventually, they bargained with the king, verses later, and say, give us vegetables and all that kind of stuff, and we'll see who does better and performs better, and they actually do.

So, the king is cool with that. So, we are the people of the living God, and we can't be friends with the world. The world is not really wanting to be your friend.

It's wanting to lure you in and destroy you. So, that's the first point, is the world will try to befriend you. Secondly, second point is, the world will try to tell you what is important.

And you need to kind of hold your hand in Daniel, so go back to Daniel, and just kind of keep your hand there. We're going to flip back and forth there throughout the night. But, back in Daniel. So, the world will try to tell you what is important.

It said, the king commanded Athanas, the chief eunuch, to bring some of the people of Israel, both of the royal family and the nobility, used without blemish, of good appearance and skillful and all wisdom, endowed with knowledge, understanding, and learning, and competent to stand in the king's palace, and to teach them the literature and language of the Chaldeans.

[23 : 51] So, they only got the very best. They got these really young, strong, educated, part of the nobility of Judah to come and be in the court, and in hopes of, like, changing their worldview and absorbing them into a Babylonian way of thinking by teaching them the literature and the language of the Chaldeans.

So, what's kind of, what can you learn here about the Babylonian way of thinking, as opposed to what the people of God should live for and think?

And it is this, and it's so true. Satan in the world will tell you that your beauty, your youth, and your intelligence are the most important things to live for.

And, that's why you see all these people on TV just trying to, like, extend, you know, trying to live it up like they were their teens and, you know, young adult life when they're 50 and 60.

the world will tell you that youth, beauty, and intelligence are the most important things. And that's what you should vigorously devote your life in, to being in those things.

[25 : 01] That's what the world will teach you. You should pursue those things. So many of you are stressed out, depressed, and lonely because you're trying to prove yourself to others and to yourself as well.

And so many of you have bought into that lie. And, the more and more you can think with a different worldview that this is not who I am. I'm not to live this way.

These are not the things that are important. Youth, beauty, and intelligence are all going to fade.

Every one of you pretty girls in here, you know, you might not look so pretty when you turn 80.

You know, and eventually when you die, you're definitely not going to be looking pretty. Okay? If something can be taken away from you, it's not worth living for. That's what I tell people all the time.

If it can, it's not worth it. If you can, but if you can be in a prison and be beaten and tormented and even killed, they can't take Christ away from you.

[25 : 58] That's like worth living for. Christ is, is the only valuable thing that will last. And it can't be taken away from you. And He won't leave you. He won't let go of you either.

So, your youth, beauty, and intelligence are not the most important thing. So, what I'm going to do here, right now, I'm trying to be careful in my language.

I'm trying to just show you that I care, that I'm not just trying to deliver a sermon. It's the kind of talks that I have to tell people every day, occasionally share with a girl, and I have to preach this to myself every day.

but, I'm going to address this girls and guys separately. But first, I have some harsher stuff for the guys, hopefully, later.

But, for girls, you need to understand, you've heard this probably many times, but I don't think a lot of you understand that your worth is not in your outward appearance at all.

[27 : 06] But the world would have you think that way. You're concerned with so many things. I talked to a girl that I'm really good friends with, and I think that she leads a lot of women here, and Christ Family, and on campus.

And she told me a while back that probably eight out of ten girls really, really are self-conscious about going to wait. They're always thinking like, man, I just don't, I don't look good.

I'm constantly, I constantly be dieting and exercising just to slim down. And, like, glamour and fashion, some of you spend hours in front of a mirror.

Some of you spend so much money just to make yourself really pretty on the outside. Here's a journal from a girl from, like, the late 1990s.

She said, this was like her goal. I will try to make myself better in any way I possibly can to help with my budget and, with my budget, making money from babysitting.

[28 : 18] I will lose weight. I'll get new lenses. I'll get a really good haircut, good makeup, new clothes, and all the accessories. That's like, kind of like a, that's what her goal was, just to, in her life, was to do that at that point.

all kind of magazines for teenage girls that are indoctrinated with this stuff at an early age and they're told this is the most important things.

They're told things in, like, magazines, like Teen Magazine. I've never read one, so don't think that, but, like, I've seen them around. I know they exist.

And, they'll, they talk about, like, the latest fashion styles and beauty tips and the celebrity gossip, all that kind of stuff, just to, to suck you right in.

And, they have these questions, like, they send into these, magazines, where they, there are things like, you know, my mom won't let me wear makeup, like all my other friends and my face looks so dull.

[29 : 23] What can I do to look more pretty? And, I'm like, oh, just, you know, wash your face and exfoliate. like, that's not going to help.

Because, there's a deeper problem there. All that's revealing, I mean, you're, you're told that from a very, very early age. And, all it reveals is that so many of you are self-conscious and insecure and you feel invisible and you have to, like, make yourself visible.

And, some of you are depressed and lost because you feel that way. but, I want you to, to hear this word from Proverbs 31, 30.

I'll read it to you and then we'll turn to a different placement. It says, charm is deceitful and beauty is vain but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised. That's very, very powerful.

We've got to just commit that on the memory and every time, every morning, just think about that. A woman who fears the Lord, respects the Lord, knows the Lord, is to be praised. We'll turn to 1 Peter 3 really fast.

[30 : 34] Some verses for you to meditate on. 1 Peter 3, verse 3. It says, Do not let your adorning be external, the braiding of hair and the putting on of gold jewelry or clothing you wear, but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit which in God's sight is very precious.

That's amazing. That's beautiful. That's something that can't be taken away from you. It's the work that God has done inside of you and He's made you who you are and you found your identity in Him.

And because He says, you belong to me and I love you, you don't need to care about what any guy thinks about you at all or what anybody says about you. You're accepted in your love because of

Him.

I read a really tragic story about a woman in 1980 named Judith Bucknell. She was like a lot of women today.

She wasn't like her struggles weren't unusual. She struggled with all the stuff that most people do, getting old, getting fat, getting married, surviving, making enough money.

[31 : 59] That's the kind of stuff that she had to deal with every day. She wasn't a prostitute. She didn't sell drugs. She wasn't on welfare. So a pretty normal woman.

She exercised. She wore designer clothes. Had an apartment that overlooked the San Francisco Bay. She had a lot of friends or so-called friends.

She had a lot of acquaintances. And in 1980, she was 38 years old and she ended up being homicide victim number 106 in Miami.

She was murdered during the summer. She was stabbed seven times and then she was strangled to death. And she kept a diary of her very, very lonely life.

And this is how we know. This is what she was seeking, you know, to be loved by a man. This is what happened. She says, I'm alone and I want to share something with somebody.

[33 : 04] Where are all the men with the flowers and the champagne and the music? Where are all the men who call and ask for a genuine, actual date? Where are all the men who would like to share more than my bed, my booze, and my food?

I would like to have it in my life. Once before, I pass through my life in a kind of sexual relationship which is a part of the loving relationship. I see people together and I'm so jealous and I want to throw up.

What about me? What about me? What is going to, who is going to love Judy Buck now? I feel so old, unloved, unwanted, abandoned, and used up and I want to cry myself to sleep every night.

That's, a lot of you, you feel that way. And, her heart died long before she was murdered. That's the, that's the truth.

And that's what a continual indoctrination into the world and giving in to sin and what sin looks like, that's like what it will lead to. It leads nowhere.

[34 : 13] It leads to, to misery and death. And, you need to be told that your value is not in your outward appearance. It's, it's in the hidden portion of the heart. It says that God formed man from the, from the dust, from the earth.

And he will go back to that. I will and you will. And, there's something, there's a spiritual significance in that. And it's to say that your, your, your worth and your value to God is not in your outward appearance.

Because you're going to go back to the dust. It's something else. It's just who you are. It's your, your spirit inside. And here God's made you. So, don't buy into those, those lies.

It's very easy to do. You're told that every day. And so guys, like the next, it's, it's, it's for us. A lot of the girls do what they do because we tell them that's what we like and that's what we expect.

So I, I think the blame goes all the way back to us. It's, it's completely our, our, our issue to deal with. Some of, some of us spend hours looking in front of the mirror.

[35 : 19] They might be in the weight room and not in the glamour room. We, we watch ourselves work out. We, we like how we look. There's, there's two different kinds of guys. A lot of times there could be more, but there's one time that they're going live is just to work hard to, to stay athletic, um, to show off and, uh, to get a good job and a good looking wife and make lots and lots of money.

And that's what they're indoctrinated with. And they, they vigorously pursue those things with everything that they are. And their, their ego is to conquer the world and conquer women and their power hungry and they're bent on making a name for themselves.

So, God despises that. He hates that. And if you keep going that way, um, it's going to end in your eternal ruin. Uh, your, your kingdom is made of sand and your glory is fading very, very fast.

Um, I'm only 29. I already feel like, man, I can't do nothing like I used to do. No, I know Nathan feels it and a lot of us who are a little older than you guys are already, are already feeling it.

We're not even have gray hairs yet and we're feeling it. So, those kind of guys, you should know, like, women are not like toys for your amusement. They're, they're beautiful.

[36 : 33] They're actual people and they're creating the image of God and you're to, to love them and honor them and protect them and not to use them for your own entertainment and amusement. Um, it really is aggravating and I have a hard time dealing with guys like that and I have a hard time

loving guys like that.

Um, that's probably like the hardest time for me to sit down and actually share the gospel with. And, um, turn to this, Jeremiah 9, a verse, a verse for you guys and for everybody else too, but, uh, Jeremiah chapter 9, go to verse 23.

So, what is, so what is, what is God, what does He value in a man? Jeremiah 9, verse 23. It says this, Thus says the Lord, Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth.

From these things I delight, declares the Lord. So, a man who knows God, a man who fears God, loves God, walks with God, and wants to live and die for God.

That is what a man is. So, that, that one power-hungry, egotistical man, there's another kind of a breed that really develops, particularly like in an amusement-centered culture, is the lazy and apathetic man who, his goal is just to abuse himself to death.

[38 : 18] To always have, he's the guy who spends hours sitting in front of Xbox, watching TV all day. That's his goal, just to get home and do that. To get my stuff done, just isolate myself.

And, I don't want problem with nobody, I just want to chill and just be relaxed for the rest of my life. And, those guys, you should know that men were not made for that.

You weren't made for laziness and sitting on your butt all day. Men were made to work, fight, labor, and conquer for God and his kingdom.

To go out and to live for him and to share the gospel and to lead others to him, to serve him for the glory of God.

Another verse I'll read to you if you don't have to turn there. It's worth going back and reading. It's in 2 Samuel chapter 10. And in this text, David is starting to be surrounded with a lot of different enemies and he sends his main dude, Joab, who is a pretty awesome dude.

[39 : 24] He's a warrior if there ever was one. And he took some pretty beastly guys with him and they went to the battlefield and they were surrounded on both sides. And Joab told him, his buddy, he said, you take some men and go fight those guys.

I'll take some men and go fight those guys. And if you need help, I'll come help you. And if I need help, you come help me. And this was his line. And I say this because this should be our mentality for the kingdom of God.

Very awesome verse. I think people should memorize. Guys should memorize. They knew what they should do and they trusted in the sovereignty of God and they just went right at it.

This is what he said. And this is what he told his guys. He said, Be of good courage and let us be courageous for our people and the cities of our God. And may the Lord do what seems good to him. That was kind of like his thing. Let's go and let's go and let's do battle for our people and the cities of our God. That's what we are made for.

[40 : 30] We are made to live, to work, to conquer and live for the kingdom of God. Not to waste hours sitting on our butts watching television and playing Xbox. So there's two different kinds of guys there in a lot of ways.

I'm sure there's others, but there are two that I see a lot. And which leads us to our third point. We'll deal with some more of that other stuff later about how the world tries to indoctrinate you and tell you what's important.

Number three, the world will try to make you forget who you are. The world will try to make you forget who you are.

And I'll go back to Daniel. Daniel, I'm going to look at verse six and seven here. It says, Among these were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah of the tribe of Judah.

And the chief of the eunuchs gave them names. Daniel, he called Belshazzar. Hananiah, he called Shadrach. Mishael, he called Meshach. And Azariah, he called Abednego.

[41 : 39] So this isn't just like a cool thing. I don't know any name. You know, we can go to some countries, you know, other places in the world, like give me an American name. What an American name? It's not like a cool thing like that.

This is another way of like indoctrinating them and changing the way they thought. Taking their minds off of God and who they were as the people of God. It was a way of brainwashing foreigners to the ways of Babylon.

And think about this. These guys were part of the nobility of Judah. They were like the royal, you know, of that royal line. And as people who are saved and who know Christ, we are part of like the nobility of Christ.

We are joint heirs with Christ. We are a part of a spiritual, far greater nobility than something this world could offer. And that's who we are. And their names, there's a Hebrew name connecting them to the living God, the true God.

And Daniel means Yahweh is our judge. Pretty powerful. It means like God will always do what's right at all times.

[42 : 50] those are the name he was given means Baal, protect the king, the false God. He was given that name. Hananiah means Yahweh has been gracious to us or has been good to us.

Shadrach, the name he was given was called command of Akut, another pagan god. Mishael, it says, it means who is like our God or who is equal to God or Yahweh.

His name Meshach was called Abednego, a servant of Nago who was the god of vegetation. And Azariah means Yahweh has helped us.

And so they were given these new names to basically change who they were to make them think differently because their names reminded them every day, like, I belong to the living God.

I serve the true God. I'm a son of the real God, the living God. And so they changed their names.

So, what's profound here, guys, is like, there's many, many other people that are taken, you know, thousands of Jews were taken into captivity in Babylon.

[44 : 13] many of them. And only these names are the ones recorded or remembered by people that wrote these down, you know, and told.

It's the ones that Daniel wrote later. And so, it means that they were just like absorbed into the Babylonian culture. They became like Babylonians. And that's very, very scary.

Years and years later, okay, like hundreds of years later, Cyrus conquered Babylon. He was from, you know, the Persian, the Persian king, the Medo-Persian empire. And part of his policy was like, let all the other people go back to their homeland.

And that's a good way to control them, you know, cooperate with them, give them, you know, back their homeland. As long as they like show homage and give us money and respect us and obey our commands, that's cool, but let them go back to their homeland.

So, he allowed all the Jews to go back to Judea and to Jerusalem. And that's where you get the books of like, you know, Esther, Nehemiah, Ezra, that's where those books kind of come into play.

[45 : 23] And in Nehemiah, something really crazy you could pick up on is that he noticed that a lot of the children that were there, they didn't even know the language of Judah.

they had been taught the language of all these other nations that were in and they had broken God's law about intermarrying because that was the way of God preserving his identity.

It's like, it'd be like a believer marrying a non-believer today. And eventually, like your kids don't know, like the language of the living God, they speak the worldly language and the language of, you know, building your own kingdom, the language of Babylon.

And this is what he said, Nehemiah 13:24, he says, half of their children spoke the language of Ashdod and they could not speak the language of Judah, but only the language of each of the people.

So, the point here is like, will you last? And, will you last? Will you remain the people of God or will you be absorbed by the culture and ideology of the world of the Babylonian way of thinking?

[46 : 39] Fraternity people, sorority people, will you be renamed? Will you take on a new name? Like, yeah, this is who I am most of the time. They call me this and that's who I really am.

I find my identity in that persona or in that way of thinking, you know. People in the military, who's going to influence who? You know, a lot of people are going to go there and I'm going to be Jesus in that place and maybe three months later, they're like, man, I made a bad call.

They're influencing me far more than I'm influencing them. And years and years now, when you look into the future after school and all that, will you be speaking like the language of the people of God or will you be totally off?

The world is that deceptive. It'll pull you right in. It's very, very good. It's so subtle. There's things that look good, but they're not God. It's not the blatant things.

It's the things that are not evil in themselves that we turn into evil. So, don't be renamed. Don't be absorbed in the Babylonian way of thinking. Last text we'll look at, Deuteronomy 7.

[47 : 49] Deuteronomy 7. Turn there. And like I said, guys, next week we'll try to look at some more of the everyday things that we engage in that the world, the system of the world, and Satan uses to actually change the way we think.

Deuteronomy 7. And you should know like in this context God is speaking to the people of Israel that he's brought out of Egypt. But they were God's chosen people.

At that point he chose that nation to manifest himself to and to give us commands to not necessarily to save them all because a lot of them were about against God and were killed but to manifest himself as God to them.

And in the same way, believers are the people of God. We are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession. This is who we are.

So we need to understand a lot of it is an identity thing. We must understand who we are. You have to be told every day this is who I am. I belong to Christ. He bought me with his blood.

[49 : 01] I'm a part of his body. He's my savior. I love him. I want to follow him and live for him. This is who I am. I'm a new creation. The old is gone and the new has come. You have to think that way every day.

And if you don't, you're going to begin to buy into this thing that your worth and your value and all that is found in another place outside of God, the one who actually listen to this.

This is Deuteronomy 7, verse 6 and 9. Yeah, verse 6 through 9. It says, For you are a people holy to the Lord your God, set aside, you know, set aside for God.

The Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of this earth. It is not because you were more than number than any other people that the Lord set his love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all the peoples.

So in other words, it wasn't how cool you are. It wasn't what you could do. It wasn't how beautiful you were on the outside. It didn't matter. It didn't matter. That's not why God chose to set his love on you.

[50 : 20] Verse 8, But it was because the Lord loves you and is keeping the oath he swore to your fathers that the Lord has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery and from the hand of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt.

Know therefore the Lord your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations.

the Lord has, I mean you should know this as well, like slavery in Egypt and Moses and Pharaoh and all that, they were types and prefigures of a greater slavery like their bondage in Egypt was a picture of a greater slavery that every human has and that's the bondage of sin.

We all have that and Pharaoh, you know, pretty bad do but nothing compared to Satan. So in the same way we were slaves, we were slaves, to sin, we were dead in sin, we were rebels against God, hostile towards God, God only had wrath focused on us and we were, it says in scripture that we belong to the devil.

We did his will, we carried out his will before we were in Christ. And it says that he brought us out with a mighty hand and redeemed us. And he did that through Christ.

[51 : 43] So he bought us, he delivered us out of slavery and death and gave us himself, gave us Christ to be our all in all and he can't be taken away from us.

And he did this purely out of grace. We did not deserve it, just like we just read here. Purely out of grace. He loves you, not because you're awesome and cool.

He loves you just because he chose to for no other reason. Because it brought him favor and it glorified him to love something that was so unlovable. And it's not that God just is love or has love or is loving.

It means that he is in his very nature, he's love. He defines love. So therefore he is loving. It comes out of who he is. And the Lord saved us and called us his people.

And we're to live for him. We're not to be absorbed into the culture and way of thinking of Babylon in this world. And it's going to be an everyday fight.

[52 : 47] It's not going to be over until Christ comes back and cleans house. So we need each other. We need to be reminded of these truths. So next week we're going to talk more on the things that surround us every day and try to prepare a difficult thing.

Pray for me and John as well as we kind of tread this line between law and grace. You know, like we can't be like, hey, stop doing that.

Stop doing that. Stop it. That's not the point. There's some things that can be used for the glory of God and we need to be aware of those things. And some things we should stay just blatantly away from. And so we'll talk about some of that next week.

So yeah, let's be the people of God and encourage each other, remind each other about who we are every day. And so let's pray and then we'll just kind of respond to just the time of singing. And Father, you are worthy to be praised. You are worthy to of our lives and our energies, everything we are.

[53 : 59] And even if you led us to death, you're worth dying for and shown to be magnificent in the way we die. and Father, if we have you, nothing can take you away from us.

You're holding us with your powerful right hand and no one will snatch us out of your hand. And if we're in Christ, we cannot be condemned.

Father, we praise you for not just leaving us in darkness and in a place of misery in the world. But for calling us out and saving us, bringing us into the light and making us your people, making us your children and delighting in us and giving us new names as your sons and your daughters and help us to be reminded that Lord and the price that it was to bring us to that place, the precious blood of Christ.

And he bought us and purchased us with his own blood. And we are his and we are the church and we belong to him exclusively, not to have any other lovers.

And Lord, we are also called to each other and we need each other to remind ourselves of the gospel every day and to fight the good fight that's in front of us.

[55 : 28] And Lord, help us to remain your people and to live like your people while we are here on this earth until you come back or you take us to be with you, to set our minds on the eternal and the unseen rather than the seen and the temporal, to be strangers and pilgrims and aliens and travelers in this earth and not to become settlers.

And to keep our hope and our joy fixed on Christ. And Lord, we love you and praise you. Thank you for your word that reveals this truth to us.

And may we just continue to think of these things tonight and in the coming days. In Christ's name, Amen.