

McGregor Baptist Church
3750 Colonial Boulevard
Fort Myers, FL 33912
(941) 936-1754

James O. Holbrook
Senior Pastor

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Daniel1

THE CHRISTIAN, IN THE MIDST OF A NEW WORLD ORDER
“Displaced Persons”

One day, Daniel and his three friends woke up in a strange new and unfamiliar world. They were like displaced persons, having to adjust to a new world order.

A new foreign power, Babylon, had risen to prominence. It was a materialistic and barbarian kingdom, which revered only power and might. And in that might, she had conquered everything, which stood in her path of world dominion, until now she had become the first world-wide “empire,” Babylon, and her king Nebuchadnezzar, were ushering in a new world order.

One of Nebuchadnezzar’s conquests was Israel, the nation which the one true God had raised up, in order to spread His truth and to lead others to Himself. But Israel was in a backslidden condition and was an easy mark for Nebuchadnezzar. In fact, it says in verse 2 that the Lord God “gave Israel into his hand.” God actually used this heathen power to send a wake up call to His straying people.

Well, the Babylonians carried off the choicest citizens of Israel to their homeland. Among them was Daniel. And now he had to learn how to continue living for His God, in the midst of a new world order.

I can relate to Daniel because one day I realized that I am living in a strange and unfamiliar nation. The good old USA is not the same place of my childhood, nor even of my early adulthood. One day I woke up in the middle of a new world order.

I also feel like a “displaced person.” The very values and morality and idealism, which made America what she was, have drastically changed before my eyes.

We see **different values**. Free enterprise has given way to dependence on government for the solutions to all of our needs. **Rugged individualism** has given way to a “victim mentality,” where every group is demanding that the government ensure its rights. **The Christian work ethic** (“if a man will not work, neither let him eat”) has been replaced by a “welfare state,” where a frighteningly large percentage of the population are wards of the state, getting a free ride in exchange for their votes. **Christian charity**, to the less

fortunate, has been replaced by a benevolent government, who will meet everyone's needs by redistributing the wealth and magnanimously doling out "entitlements."

And those, who are still willing to produce, are taxed more heavily than ever, in order to support those who will not produce. Where my parents paid about 6 cents out of every dollar on income taxes, we now pay 30 cents. And if you figure all the other taxes, we pay half of our earnings on taxes. And if this bureaucratic system continues to proliferate, our grandchildren will pay 80% of their earnings to the government. And I can't call that "the land of the free" any more!

This increasing tax burden means that both mom and pop must work, to pay the freight. Which means no mom to come home to, after school. Which means that the teachings of values has been left to a government endowed and controlled public education system, which is not primarily teaching basic skills, but is being used to socially re-engineer the next generation. (That's why there has been such an increase in church schools and home schooling).

And our values have been changed. Abortion, once performed illegally by quacks in some back alley, is now funded and protected by the federal government. Homosexuality, once a punishable crime is now considered to be an alternate lifestyle and has turned into a militant movement with an agenda, approved by the government and protected by the law.

Listen, my friends, we are living in a new world order. Wake up! This is not the same place that it was for the first 200 years. **A group of barbarians has taken over** (in the words of Judge Robert Bork, Slouching Toward Gomorrah)!

It began with the 60's revolution, which demanded: a new morality (make that immortality), the tearing down of the establishment (all the institutions, which gave order to our way of life, including governmental and religious authority), and what they called the fairness doctrine (or equality for all—"egalitarianism"---as they saw it and called it).

These same campus radicals, Woodstock revelers, brassier-burners, communist sympathizers, and anti-war protestors have now grown up and taken over society. They are the CEO's in the media, entertainment, and politics.

They are now the controllers of the media, telling us how to interpret what is going on in the world. Yes, "Hanoi Jane" Fonda and her new husband, Ted Turner, now control much of the media and are determined to push their radical ideals.

The entertainers, who influence the moral values of most of our nation, are the same people who were demanding "the new morality" in the sixties. And now they are determined to create a new immorality, which completely does away with former standards of decency.

Why, two of the most prominent anti-American protestors and Communist sympathizers, of the sixties, now reside in the White House, leading our nation. Is it any wonder that they are selling out our jobs, our rights to private property, our military, yea, our prosperity to a one world “United Nations” conspiracy? They have finally admitted to the beginning of a “New World Order,” which unabashedly is trying to influence the way we raise our children, the way we can use our private property, and the way that we look at right and wrong, with their lofty pronouncements and edicts.

Hey, friend, wake up! “We, the people” of God, have been transported into a different society, right here in the good old U.S.A. The barbarians have taken over! And they seem to be more passionately involved in bringing about change than we are in upholding the truth! While all of this has gone on, 300,000 pulpits in our land have remained silent, and a lot of God’s people have been more concerned about who won the world series.

If we are going to continue to be the people of God, we are going to have to learn how to stand and how to shine! That’s why I’m going to be preaching to you from Daniel. He learned to stand and to shine for God, in the midst of a new world order.

From the inspired prophecies of the book of Daniel, we can learn that such a conspiracy for world control is sure to take place in the “last days” of human history. And from the example of Daniel, we can learn how to stand and to shine for God, in the midst of such troubled times.

Chapter 1 teaches us five things which can help us to shine for God, as “displaced persons:”

1. **RESIST THE BIG SQUEEZE.** (verses 4-7)

It says that Daniel and his three friends were given over to a Babylonian authority to be brain-washed--excuse me--“to be taught the knowledge and tongues of the Chaldeans.” As innocuous as that sounds, it means that they were being “conditioned” (reprogrammed) for life in this new world order, which was completely foreign to their background, as men of God.

We are in a similar situation. We are “in the world,” but we are not “of the world.” We are told, in Romans 12:2, to not allow ourselves to be “conformed to the world” system and its ways, like jello is made to conform to a mold. Or, as it says in a more modern version: “Don’t let the world squeeze you into its mold.”

“Now **what did the Babylonian world order want to change** about these Hebrew boys?” Quite a bit, you will find...just like our changing world order is continually trying to change us.

They wanted to change **the way they thought**. They wanted to teach them “the ways of the Chaldeans.”

The present world system wants to teach us how we are supposed to think. If you don't believe that, then just try to think about certain subjects in some "politically incorrect" manner, or in some way which is not riding the popular opinion wave. If you stay with the Bible teachings about sexual morality and sexual preference and alternate life styles, or about taking personal responsibility for your own life, or any number of other Biblical thoughts, you will find yourself being very out-of-step. And someone, often someone in authority, is going to try to change the way you think.

The Babylonians (Chaldeans) also wanted to change **the values they held dear**.

When it says that they gave them the king's meat and wine, you might say: "Yummy. Cuisine from the King's gourmet cook."

Well, not quite. It was actually meat, which had been butchered down at the local heathen temple. It had first been consecrated to some false god. Part of it was burned on the altar, and the rest was sold at the local meat market.

If Daniel and friends had eaten this, it would have defiled their consciences. They had been taught to not to have anything to do with these false gods, which were actually demonic.

Besides, there were certain kinds of meats, which were not "kosher" (or clean) to a Jew. Pork was one. And it was most certainly on an oriental king's diet. (Leviticus 11:44-47)

Do you see? They were subtly trying to break down Daniel's religious convictions....the values he held dear.

And the world order, in which we live, tries to turn us from what they feel are stubborn, intolerant, and unreasonable convictions. But we believe that these convictions are the truth, as revealed in God's Word, and they are important to us.

The new world order, in which Daniel found himself, also tried to change his name, or **his image**. They really didn't want these Hebrew young people to even be recognizable as the same folks.

Daniel was renamed Belteshazzar, which means "worshipper of Baal." Now Baal was a false heathen fertility God. Think of that! Talk about the world trying to reshape you.

Daniel's friends were renamed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Well, that's a little better. It did make them easier to remember (like "My Shack, Your Shack, and a Bungalow"). But these, too, were distinctly heathen names.

Listen, that new world order was trying to thoroughly “heathen-ize” these men of God. And our changing world order will try to change you, my Christian friend. And they will succeed, if we do not consciously resist!

Listen, the new world order has education, entertainment, the media, the arts...you name it. They even have some of the churches. They can be very persuasive.

And we can, as the people of God, be subtly reshaped by each of these, if we do not make up our minds, like Paul said, to “stand, and having done all, continue to stand” on our principles and convictions! We have to resist the big squeeze play!

We must also learn, from Daniel, to...

II. **CHERISH VALUES MORE THAN SURVIVAL.** (verse 8)

In light of all this squeeze play, by this new world order in the midst of which Daniel found himself, Daniel “**purposed in his heart** that he would not defile himself...”

He made up his mind that his values and principles and religious convictions were more important to him than his security and survival. For him, it would never do to adopt the slogan: “When in Rome, do what the Romans do.” He would have never said: “Better Red than dead.”

Tell me: what matters most to you? Your popularity? Your survival? Your advancement in your career? Your political aspirations? Or do you cherish your values more?

If you and I are going to represent our God, in the midst of this changing world order, we’d better settle which side our bread is buttered on! God has never been able to use a spineless, namby pamby “go-along” person. God only uses men, who hold their convictions dearer than life itself.

There is an old saying: “If you don’t stand for something, you will fall for anything.” God does not want His children falling for just anything. So we’d better learn to stand on our convictions.

The worst days of the churches history were days, when religious leaders went along with the powers-to-be, while selling-out their values, convictions, and their precious Lord’s teachings. We are again being called, by the world system, to compromise and tolerance of all sorts of evil.

May God give us the grace and courage to purpose in our heart that we will not be compromised, no matter what the cost.

Life is short, at best. And we are all going to stand before the judgment seat of Christ. May it not be with shame and regret that, under the pressure of our world system, we sold Him out. May we instead hear Him say: “Well done, good and faithful servant. You have suffered with me. Now you will reign with me” (eternally)!

But there is a third all-important lesson, which we must learn from Daniel, if we are to be a blessing in the midst of a new world order. We must...

We must be above reproach, in our methods. We must be “wise as a serpent, yet we are to be a blessing in the midst of a new world order. We must...

III APPROACH THINGS WITH DECENCY AND ORDER. (verses 9-12)harmless as a dove,” our Lord Jesus tells us.

Daniel is a perfect example of this. He did not act “holier-than-thou.” He did not act religiously contemptuous. He did not take on a “persecution complex.”

If God tells you to be a virgin, until you marry, you can believe that you will have a happier marriage and be a better mother.

If God tells you not to defile your mind with pornographic filth, you can believe that you will have a sharper mind and less nagging guilt in your later years.

If God tells you to discriminate carefully, when it comes to choosing your companies, you can be sure that you will have a better and more uplifting social life.

If God tells you to be honest in business and in reporting your taxes, then you can be sure that He will prosper you as a result of that.

If you believe that a certain policies will leave our children with an impossible burden of taxation, then you can trust God to take care of you now, while you refuse to elect those, who promise you the moon but who would put the future into jeopardy.

I believe that the trouble with many, who have talked about values and convictions, has been that it is all talk. We must be willing to live by our convictions. We must be willing to stand by them. And, if necessary, we must be future into jeopardy.

Our nation was born of such courage. Our Christian forefathers said: “No taxation without representation.” “Give me liberty or give me death.” “He that is willing to give up his liberty for some temporary security, is worthy of neither liberty nor security.” And they were willing to “risk their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor,” on those convictions!

My friends, I believe that we are living in “the last days” before that time, when the godless forces become so strong that Jesus must return, to forcibly set up His kingdom on earth. We do not know how long it may be. But we’d better count on having to take a stand on our values and religious convictions, And we had better make sure that our faith is not all talk. We’d better be willing, like Daniel, to put our faith to the test.

One last lesson from Daniel 1. We must...

4. **MAKE A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION FOR AS LONG AS WE CAN**
(verses 17-21)

All of this story must have gotten back to the king. He met with the four men of God and was impressed with their wisdom and understanding. It says that “he found them ten times better (in their counsel to him) than all the magicians and astrologers that were in his realm.”

That king recognized that these men were men of character and convictions. They could not be bought nor sold. They did not sell out to a party line. They were not “magicians,” or spin-doctors, who could put a twist on any situation in order to save their slimy skins. They were not astrologers, living by their wits or consulting occult powers for their wisdom.

He knew that here were four men, who could make a positive contribution to his kingdom. He may not have agreed their strange religion nor gone along with all of their quaint customs. But he knew that they could be trusted.

Ok, my friend, if there ever was a day for Christians to shine, it is today. The darker the days, the brighter can be our testimony. The more corruption that there is in our government and society, the more we will be needed to give leadership and direction. The more that family values break down, the more people will look to us for an example and hope in their own families. The more moral confusion there is, with all of the frustration which follows, the more needed we will be, to show people that there is a better way.

I truly believe that God allowed Daniel and his friends to be placed in the midst of that new world order, so that they could make a difference and so they could delay the natural corruption and decay, which is inevitable in any world order.

So God has allowed us to live in these challenging days of the changing world order, in order to make a positive contribution. We are not displaced persons. We have been placed here for such an hour as this!

May God help us to “Dare To Be A Daniel.”