

Small Group Discussion Guide

for leaders (see below for participants' guide)

Gathering Time

- Make sure newcomers are welcomed and engaged in conversation
- Offer a snack and drink if the setting is right (i.e. a home)
- Arrange seating so everyone in the group can see each other

Getting Acquainted

- **This week we're discussing how to stand strong in the face of negative pressure to conform. As we get started, reflect on your own tendencies. Are you more of a conformist or non-conformist? Share an example that's typical of your response to pressure.**

Discussion Starter Video

- To view the video, go to christchurchil.org/future-you-videos. Choose the title, COMMUNITY. If you open the video in Vimeo, there is a download option to get the video onto your computer. Or you can just play it from the site without downloading.
- The videos are designed as discussion starters to be used at the beginning of the Bible Exploration.

Bible Exploration

- **In this week's sermon, we focused on the social and legal pressures that came against Daniel and his friends, and what gave them strength to stand on their convictions. Think about the various situations they faced in Daniel 1-6, and reflect on the pressures they would have felt to conform to the prevailing culture around them.**
 - NOTE: If you've been participating throughout the *FutureYou* series, this probably feels redundant, but challenge yourself to see these accounts through a fresh lens in this final week.
- **Which situation from Daniel 1-6 would have been most challenging for you?**
- **Have you ever found yourself in the midst of a negative prevailing culture and felt pressure to conform? How did you respond?**

- **What difference do you think it made that Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego had each other? Give examples.**
- **Do you have the kind of relational connections in your life that give you strength to stand against negative cultural pressures? If so, how do you cultivate those connections? If not, how could you get started developing them?**
- **If you're having this discussion in a small group, that's a good start! Share with the group one way you're experiencing negative pressure to conform. Spend time encouraging and praying for one another in these specific areas.**

Prayer

- Invite the group to participate in a time of “conversational” prayer. Each person may pray as often as he or she wants, but only 1-2 short sentences on one topic at a time. This lowers the barrier of participation for people unaccustomed to praying with others.

Wrap-Up

- Be sure to end the formal conversation on time.
- Thank newcomers for joining you, and invite everyone to the next meeting.
- Encourage people to linger for a few minutes, and do your best to have a personal interaction with each individual before he or she leaves.

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for participants

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- Which situation from Daniel 1-6 would have been most challenging for you?
- Have you ever found yourself in the midst of a negative prevailing culture and felt pressure to conform? How did you respond?
- What difference do you think it made that Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego had each other? Give examples.
- Do you have the kind of relational connections in your life that give you strength to stand against negative cultural pressures? If so, how do you cultivate those connections? If not, how could you get started developing them?
- If you're having this discussion in a small group, that's a good start! Share with the group one way you're experiencing negative pressure to conform. Spend time encouraging and praying for one another in these specific areas.

Prayer

- As a group, have a time of "conversational" prayer. Each person may pray as often as he or she wants, but only 1-2 short sentences on one topic at a time.