

## Group Discussion Guide

### PRINTER FRIENDLY VERSION

#### ***Thriving in Babylon* Sermon Series**

#### **“Hope That Leads to Courage” by Pastor Joel**

**Leaders, please choose the best question(s) for your group**

September 29, 2019

If you have questions, contact Pastor Ric, [joline@lefc.net](mailto:joline@lefc.net)

Below are some discussion questions relating to a recent sermon. These are provided so that your Life Group can discuss what was shared. Previous Weeks' Discussion Guides and Sermon Notes are available through the [Sermons under the Resources menu](#). Click on the sermon series and then the sermon you are interested in. You will see a paper icon under the sermon title. Click the icon to open the sermon notes. To listen to the sermon, click on the speaker icon.

#### **Context**

Last week: Daniel had resolved to serve God verses being the victim. He did not get disillusioned with God in the midst of evil's success. Our series is called Thriving in Babylon and the over-all focus is on how we can live for God even when the culture around us denies Him.

This week: Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah or Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego--whatever you choose to call them, each of these young men were pressed into the service of a King they despised, serving a nation that had taken them captive. However, just like Daniel, each of them were standouts in the service of the king, particularly bright and talented. Daniel 1:20 says “In every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king questioned them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in the whole kingdom.” They thrived in Babylon, despite their shattered dreams and under the leadership of Daniel these three would not waver from what God called them to be and Nebucadnezzar for the first time, acknowledged Daniel's God as the, “most high God.”

**Sermon Texts:** Daniel 3:1-28; Exodus 20:3-5; Psalm 71:1-24; Romans 8:31-39

## Discussion Questions:

**Spend a few moments re-capping the sermon. What thought, concept, text or phrase impressed you? How will this make a difference in your spiritual journey?**

1. Our culture is gradually developing an intolerance toward followers of Christ. What has your strategy been to engage the culture and yet remain true to core biblical principles? How do you discern these principles?
2. Idols today are mostly conceptual. Someone has identified safety, security, comfort, and convenience as primary idols of contemporary culture. What are some others? Within the safety of your group, can you identify some of your personal idols? How are you doing in facing them?
3. The courage to face the impossible odds our friends, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego faced, springs from a hope coming from a firm conviction based upon their experience of who God is (Psalm 71) as well as from spiritual friends like Daniel. How do we explain that kind of courage — even in the face of death? Do I have that same hope/courage? (Hebrews 10:23)

**Each one of us are surrounded by people in our relational world, our *Oikos*, who are watching our responses to situations every day.**

4. Have you ever had to take a stand for your beliefs in a hostile conversation or setting? How can we maintain a good relationship with our *oikos* and still take a stand for godly convictions?

## Pastor Joel's Take-Away:

Romans 8:31-38 Today our story is even better than the one of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. All of us are sinners. All of us have fallen short of the glory of God. Yet while we were lost, God sent his son Jesus to pay the penalty for our sins by dying in our place. But the story doesn't end in the grave because we serve a risen savior. Jesus rose from the dead, conquering death once and for all. And now nothing can separate us from his love if we accept him as our personal Savior. This is why we have hope and a future, because Jesus has saved us. Jesus has called us. Jesus has made us his own. He desires an individual, faith relationship with each one of us. No one can condemn us, no one can separate us from His love, no matter what happens. If our God is for us, who can stand against us? The answer is simple: no one! Do you have a personal relationship with the all-powerful God of the universe? If you do, how are you doing with respect to boldly sharing your faith with others?