

The Importance of Knowing Your Culture

The Lives of Joseph and Daniel

Main Idea: The better you *know* your culture, the more intelligently you can *engage* your culture, with the hope that you will significantly advance God's kingdom during your lifetime. We see this in the examples of two O.T. characters: Daniel and Joseph.

1. EXAMPLE OF JOSEPH – By knowing his culture, Joseph skillfully advanced God's kingdom.

- A. Joseph's story – Where did he come from?
 - 1. He is one of the Hebrew forefathers.
 - 2. He had a gift that was despised.
 - 3. He was sold into slavery.
 - 4. He became prime minister in Egypt.
- B. Joseph's legacy – What did God accomplish through Joseph?
 - 1. Joseph saved the lives of many.
 - 2. Joseph preserved the nation of Israel.
- C. Joseph's discovery – How did Joseph learn his culture?
 - 1. God used the hard knocks of life.
 - 2. Are you willing to learn a new culture through the hard knocks of life?

2. EXAMPLE OF DANIEL – By knowing his culture, Daniel wisely advanced God's kingdom.

- A. Daniel's story – Where did he come from?
 - 1. He was born in Jerusalem.
 - 2. He was deported during the captivity.
 - 3. He was trained in the king's court, and while there finds areas of common ground.
 - 4. He became chief leader over the province of Babylon and over the religious leaders.
- B. Daniel's legacy – What did God accomplish through Daniel?
 - 1. Daniel led Nebuchadnezzar into a relationship with God.
 - 2. But it took patience.

3. CHALLENGE FOR US – We need to know and engage our culture.

- A. Start by reaching the culture you are in right now. *People generally have five objections to this...*
 - 1. "I don't like my job."
 - 2. "My job is unfair."
 - 3. "I don't like my boss."
 - 4. "I've blown it in the past."
 - 5. "I don't want to play political games."
- B. Continue by asking, "Are there other cultures God wants me to reach." It's especially important that we understand the emerging worldview of postmodernism.
 - 1. Postmodernism is a reaction against modernism.
 - 2. Postmodernism might be a help not a hindrance to reaching people for Christ.
 - 3. Postmodernism is like the worldview of the 1st century.
- C. Continue by actually helping postmodern people make decisions toward Jesus. This happens as you tell your story.
 - 1. The "modern" method of evangelism stressed confrontation and decision making.
 - 2. The postmodern method stresses relationships and telling your story.