

# THE NEW NORMAL

## Discussion Notes

### RESOLVED

Something that has changed from our situation in April and May is that we are all in different situations now - some of us are back in the office and life looks fairly normal, others of us are back in self-isolation. So, take a moment to go around and find out how people are doing in the 'new normal'.

Philip suggested that some common responses to our current situation are anxiety, excess and apathy.

- Do you agree and if so which of these do you resonate with?

Read Daniel 1 together.

- Does anything stand out from this passage? Anything you hadn't noticed before?
- What similarities are there between Daniel's new normal and ours?

Philip explained how the Babylonian empire forced Daniel and his friends to change their names from names about God's goodness to names about the Babylonian gods.

- What is our equivalent today to them having their names changed by the Babylonians?
- What in our new normal are the pressures to just go along with what everyone else does?

Philip also explained how Daniel had a 'but faith', not a 'so faith'. He could've experienced all the pressures of being in captivity and decide he would just along with it. Instead, he said 'but despite all of these pressures, I will still worship God and follow him.'

- What does a 'so faith' look like in coronavirus time? What does a 'but faith' look like?
- What about in general life in normal times?

Verse 8 says, "but Daniel **resolved** not to defile himself with the royal food and wine, and he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way."

- What can we do practically as individuals to 'resolve' to follow God in our new normal?
- What lifestyle changes can you choose to make in this time (eg. finance, prayer, devotions, disciplines, morality, rhythms of life, attitude to work/study, language, alcohol etc.)
- What can we do as a Hub to support each other in this?

Finally, Daniel asked for the Babylonians to put their choices to the test so they could **prove** God's faithfulness to them.

- Do you have any examples from your life when God has proved his faithfulness in a similar way?
- What practical tests could you devise to see the difference that trusting in God, no matter what the circumstances, makes?

We are all experiencing this new normal in different ways, so you might find it helpful to break down into smaller groups to pray together, especially if you are meeting online with breakout rooms. Spend some time reflecting on the challenges you are facing and pray that we would have resolve to face up to the new normal with God.