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# Ignite

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*“Dear Lord, we are grateful for Your love to each of us with Your covering and protection upon DUMC as a church. We cry out to You now, Lord, asking that You would revive Your church and rewire the culture, using the words of the prophet Habakkuk 3:2 ‘I have heard of Your fame; I stand in awe of Your deeds, Lord. Repeat them in our day, in our time make them known; in wrath remember mercy.’ Amen”*



## SERMON SUMMARY

**IMPACT Nation Now 2:**

# Shining like stars in the universe

Pr Dato' Dr Daniel Ho

## *Philippians 2:12-16*

*“Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Do all things without murmurings and disputings: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.*”

### **Introduction**

#### **Three important marks which enabled them to shine like stars in the universe:**

We are not making an impact as we should for the nation. What can we do? How we can make a difference? When Nebuchadnezzar took Daniel and his three friends to join the Nebuchadnezzar Academy, they were 15 years old. They made a difference in the Babylonian empire. How did they shine like stars?

#### **1. Rooted despite being uprooted (Dan. 3:16-18)**

Daniel and his friends are anchored in the God of Israel. They were exiled from their nation. They were clear with their roots despite trying to be uprooted by Nebuchadnezzar

They reminded themselves as to who they are by taking a stand (Dan. 1:8, 12; cf. Mt. 5:13-16) They were offered the best food in the kingdom. They refused and challenged to be tested for 10 days. We are salt and light of the world. An MP was disappointed that they were constantly being in problems.

They guard their identity by having regular fellowship with one another (Dan. 2:17, 18a) Daniel and his friends regularly prayed and fellowship. When the King had a dream, Daniel requested that he counselled with Hananiah, Mishaal and Azariah to seek God together.

They ground their destiny by studying the Scriptures (Dan. 9:1, 2; Ps. 119:105; Ps. 119:99, 100) The word of God grounds them. Daniel recognized the destiny of the Israelites. There are grander things to come. We must be rooted in the Bible. An MP shared

with Pastor Daniel how he was offered a bribe to “jump ship.” We must be unwilling to change character for cash. Once we accept bribes we are finished . The bible gives us clarity, confidence and destiny.

## **2 Immersed but not submerged (Daniel 1:3-5)**

The Babylonian empire was the leading empire in science, law and technology. They were the most advanced civilization. The Babylonians were out to change everybody in their Kingdom so that they were immersed by Babylonian culture.

Change of names (Dan. 1:7) to change their identities. They were given new names that represent Babylonian Gods. Daniel means “God is my Judge”.

The king wanted the Babylonians to be Immersed in their language and literature (Dan. 1:4b) so that they will eventually change their heart, mind and soul. They wanted to culturize the Israelite society.

The king even wanted to change their diet by offering food and wine (Dan. 1:5a). They were to be offered the pleasures of life. They were given food by the best of the best to dwell in all the luxuries the Babylonians. Don't let comfort and convenience affect us.

Ultimately, the Israelites were required to inculcate Babylonian mindset, worldview, values and lifestyles (Dan. 1:5b; Dan. 1:20) . The king knew that Daniel and his friends were more gifted than the Babylonians. We must be the best until they ask “What makes you more different?” They were willing to challenge the Babylonian system. We must be immersed in the culture we are in but we are different in Christ.

Daniel and friends offer a different set of worldview, values and emphases in life (Dan. 1:11-14; cf. Jn. 17:18, 16-17); that is, a life rooted in God. Many children from Malaysian churches forget about God once they return from overseas. There exists many “voices” in material on the internet about Christian scientists. There was a story of how a 10 year-old boy prayed “God, I want a bicycle. I want it at 8am tomorrow.” We must constantly ensure that our prayers are not selfish. We are not to panic but pray when presented with trials.

## **3 Fearing God more than fearing man (1 Peter 2:17; Proverbs 29:25)**

Daniel and his friend did not fear anyone but God. If we fear man, we will be intimidated.

We can see that they had total dependence upon God (Dan. 6:23b) When Daniel was thrown to the lions' den, he was not injured because he trusted God.

They had deep intimacy with God in prayer (Dan. 6:10) When the edict was passed not to pray to god, Daniel continued praying as he always did.

They used the word of God as a foundation and guide to life (Dan. 9:2, 3) The Bible must be central to our lives

They were unafraid to testify about God (Dan. 2:27, 28a; Dan. 6:26, 27) There is a God in heaven to reveal the mysteries of the world. When Daniel was saved in the den, King Darius recognized the God of Daniel.

### **Conclusion**

It is estimated that we have only about 5% committed Christians in the Klang Valley. If we are all committed to reach the community, the whole community will be impacted. It starts by impacting just one person. Never underestimate the power of one.

# **SERMON REFLECTION**

When I was young, I lived in Sitiawan, a small town in Perak and worshipped in the Tamil Methodist Church there. During the school holidays and on some weekends, the church would rally together and cook for 50 to 100 students. All the children will gather in the church hall to study, stay overnight on Saturdays and return home after the Sunday service.

The students came from all walks of life, from those who were not interested in studies, to the best students in school. All came together just to study (or attempt to!) I remember how some of the church members who were teachers would volunteer their time to help students with their homework. At times, the students

will help each other. For those who didn't teach, they helped cook a meal for all the students and helpers. The bond and relationship formed by the constant fellowship among the students and volunteers grew stronger. Over the months, many students improved in their studies. Seeing this, parents who were pre-believers began to send their children to the church services as well.

Looking back 30 years later, many students who were not interested in their studies eventually entered universities. Some students thanked my mother and the teachers who were involved. Church members fondly remembered the times where the church came together to cook and clean the place up.

I am grateful to have witnessed how the church impacted the community then.

*Contributed by Abbey Thangiah, PJN1*

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# APPLICATION

**Note to Word facilitator:**

*As you prepare for this session, this is a great time to pray that the Holy Spirit will guide you to use the questions efficaciously. You can select, modify or entirely create your own questions, according to the needs of your CG, especially if you feel that there are too many questions than required for the allocated time. The questions below are crafted with a certain flow in mind. You could use these towards the end or insert them in between your own sermon reflection and summary.*



**Suggested Icebreaker Question** (for Welcome that would link to the Word time)

- Pop quiz:
  - What is your full name in your IC? If you are called differently now, why so?
  - What does your name mean?
  - What is the weirdest & coolest name you have ever heard? Why do you say so?
  - If you could rename yourself, what would it be?

- How was your life at 15 years old?

[Note to Word facilitator: The above are sample questions that you may ask your CG. Feel free to add in more questions. The idea is to lead your CG during the Word time to reflect on the burdens that they may have for our country.]

### **Suggested Word Introductory Question:**

From a scale 0 (zero influence & impact) to 10 (maximum influence & impact), how do you rate Christians and the Church's influence and impact in our society? Why do you rate it this way? Do provide some examples and reasons?

### **Suggested questions linked to each main point:**

#### **Rooted despite being uprooted (Dan. 3:16-18)**

- How do we stay rooted in Christ?
- Other than politics, what other ways do you see yourself being influenced (or as some would say "brainwashed") by other cultures? ( eg: music, literature, arts, business).

#### **Immersed but not submerged**

Have you drawn the line?

- Do you recognize when you are being influenced into the culture of your company/circle of friends that is different from what you're used to? Is it something that you're ok with?
- What have you done that stands out from your circle?

#### **Fearing God more than fearing man**

- How do you depend on God?
  - Do you pray and read the word of God? What verses come to mind when you are faced to defend your faith?
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**Question Bank** *(Extra questions you can use to bring discussion further as you see fit):*

- Do you change the way you talk in the company of church members/schoolmates/colleagues? Why?
- How should we respond to the challenge of drawing the line, especially when the matter is seemingly trivial to the world? (Just one drink/ Contributing to gossip)
- The Babylonians were “all out” in changing the lifestyle of the Israelites (food, drink, lifestyle and culture). Have you been in such a situation? How did you stand out?
- How has the story of Daniel and his friends inspired you?
- When was the last time you shared your God-story with your friends? Why did you do it?
- Share a story of how you have personally or as a cell group been engaged with the community to be an influence and impact in society? How can we increase our influence, impact and witness so that we see true and lasting change?



## **WHAT'S YOUR STORY?**





### Story of the week...

*“Our loving Father in Heaven did not leave me behind. At the close of 2019, I dedicate myself to the Lord, and prayed for the Holy Spirit’s guidance to enable me to better serve the Lord. My thoughts were perhaps a wider scope of support work at the Ministry I am currently serving at DUMC. The Holy Spirit prompted me through an inner voice within, to join a CG (Cell Group). I prayed and asked the Lord to guide me to a CG....”*

- Stephanie Lim, PJN3

\* Read the rest of Stephanie’s story on [dumc.my/blog](https://dumc.my/blog)

*“There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you.”*

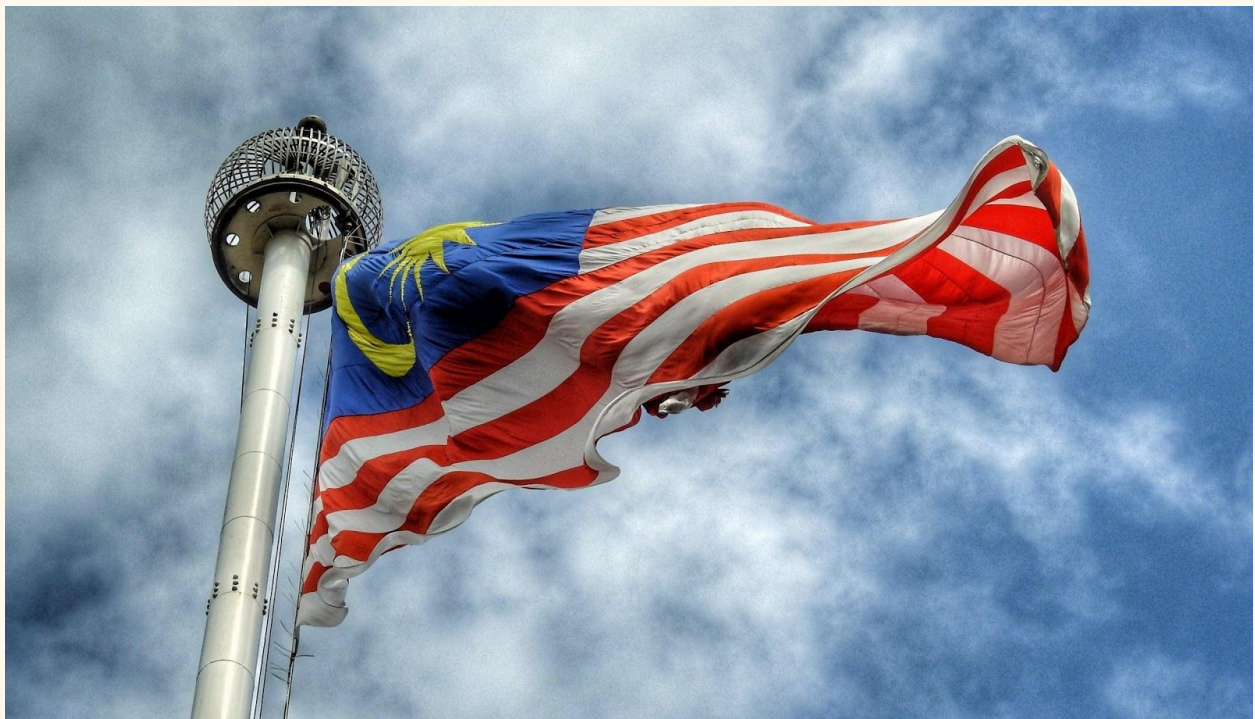
- Maya Angelou

If you or your CG member(s) has a story to share related to today’s Word or any other story that speaks of His goodness, **share their/your story** [\[HERE\]](#)



# PRAYER

**Note to CGL:** You (or someone you assign this portion to), may lead by praying OR reading these prayers together as a CG during worship.



## Today's Prayer

*Pray for God's forgiveness if we do have lukewarmness in our churches, that we care-less about what God's business is, and we care-less about the heartbeat and*

*purpose of God for this generation and nation, and we care-less about the voice of His correction and exhortation. Pray that we will be “hot” again for Jesus and keep our spiritual fervency.*

*Pray that the Ministry of Health will continue to strengthen its core capabilities to prevent, detect and respond promptly and effectively to all public health threats and that they will take priority actions recommended by the World Health Organization.*

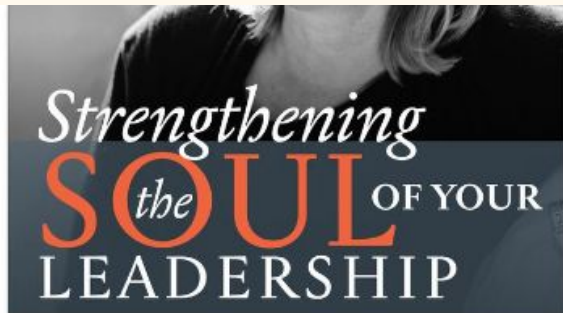


## **OTHER RESOURCES**

*Below are some links to resource you. Do **CLICK** on the images below!*

### **FEATURED**

*In view of our current changing landscape that affects us individually and corporately, here are some featured resources for you this month!*



**Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership ...**

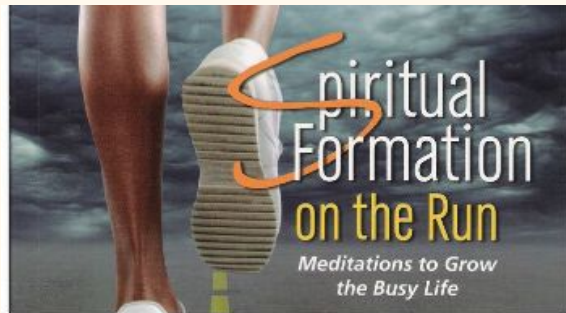
30 minutes on average

[transformingcenter.org](http://transformingcenter.org)

Ruth Haley Barton

Prayer & Spirituality

Podcast



**Spiritual Formation on the Run**

188 pages

[kairos2.com](http://kairos2.com)

Alex Tang

Prayer & Spirituality

E-Book (Free)

**The Lausanne Movement**

**Workplace Ministry**

9 clips (8 minutes average)

[lausanne.org](http://lausanne.org)

Mission Vocation Work

Video Series Course

## OTHER RESOURCES

*Discover a host of other resources curated for you here!*



### **DUMC STORIES**

*Be blessed by a compilation of inspiring DUMC Stories that you can share with others!*

