

**Read Daniel 2:1-23**

1. What troubles and disturbs us as a culture and as citizens in Toronto?

*The question is to warm up the conversation. The most obvious examples presently are the pandemic and the racial injustices in Western society.*

2. When King Nebuchadnezzar was disturbed, he abused his power to feel in control again. When his council of advisors were disturbed, they were helpless. When Daniel and his friends were disturbed, they turned to God for mercy. How do we as a society and as Christians in Toronto respond whenever we are "disturbed"?

*Our current society responds with an overreactive sense of justice and outrage. This has manifested in "cancel culture". Or else, there is vast polarization of views regarding the pandemic and racial injustice conversations. And opponents are castigated as bigots, ignoramuses, Marxists, or oppressors. Some Christians respond the same way. We are invited to respond with grace, humility, wisdom, and an irenic disposition towards those we disagree. And when we as Christians respond prayerfully, we must indeed pray to God to ask Him for wisdom, revelation, insight, for the words to say, for our attitude to be humble and truthful, to be considerate of the other, to not insist on our own voice but to listen first and to be slow to speak.*

3. In Daniel's doxology, he praised God for His sovereign control and wisdom over all things. How does this reality transform our Christian lives in Toronto?

*First, we can rest inwardly in our spirits and minds that despite how messed up everything seems to be, God will bless the mess that only He can in His timing and in His power. Second, we need not bear the weight and burden of our world but to entrust them to Jesus. Third, being unburdened, we can then help to carry our neighbour's burdens the best we can. Ultimately, because God is in control and that He knows what He is doing, we have freedom to be, we are released to do good works and not to solve or save anything.*

4. How can we as Christians speak prophetically and bear witness to the Gospel in a world that is constantly being disturbed?

*There is no straightforward answer to the question. The witness of the contemporary Church is compromised and we will be misheard and misinterpreted whenever we politically speak out as Christians. Instead, we must live our lives peaceably in local communities, gathered as a local church, in service to the needs of others, to outdo everyone in matters of good,*

*generosity, and sacrifice. The power of our witness begins in faithful grassroots living, and overtime society may pay attention to the Church's self-sacrifice.*