

# Culture Matters

## Daniel

We are called to glorify God by reacting to culture with His Grace, Word, and People..

**Read** – Daniel 1.8-9, 14-16

**Intro – Culture Reactions** – Possibly my favorite part of a new year is watching **The Reaction**

- Reaction to **Roommates** – Walk into dorm room with grand plans of how to rule your 10x10 kingdom! What, roomie? No? Okay. – Clothes everywhere IS more fun...
- Reaction to **Corps** – Just trying to find a spot in the MSC for mid-day comas
- Reaction to **Dating** – Ending long distance so you just touch the person’s face; Watched crush fbook all summer so when they talk about internship, you KNOW...
- Reaction to **Campus** – new buildings, new organizations recruiting you
- **The Reaction** occurs because you’re being **thrown into new Cultures** (tossed into the water) and our **Culture Reactions** are so crucial that we’re spending the entire semester talking about them (sink or swim). Because no matter what culture we’re in...

**The Point – God calls us to a Culture Reaction that glorifies Him**

**Define the Terms**

- Definition: **Culture** isn’t how we **View the World**, it’s what we **Do With the World**
  - Not a **Lens**, but a **Lifestyle**; Not how we **Look** at world, but how we **Live** in it
- Definition: **Reaction**, not Response or Plan, bc it’s **what we do immediately**
  - “How do I React to what’s being done? How do I Live in reaction to Life?”
  - We have to define these terms because Culture Reactions define our world...
- **Ex:** I’m **hungry** but I don’t want to cook... so let’s create restaurants! I’m **too warm**... so let’s create A/C! I like **Yelling** at football... so let’s all yell the same thing!
  - I don’t think people are very important... so let’s make some of them our **sexual slaves**! I think marriage looks hard... so let’s just **live together**! I think marriage is hard... so let’s just **get divorced**! I don’t that person or that viewpoint... so let’s just tear down and **attack each other**!
  - The truth is, our world is full of the...

**Wrong Reactions**

- And when the **Reaction is wrong, people get Hurt**
  - **Ex:** In America alone 1/3 of kids (24mil) don’t live with their **dads**; about 1mil **abortions/yr** - 50% 24yr or younger; 1/5 college-age girls and 1/20 guys have been sexually **abused**; 7% adults suffer from major **depression**
  - **Rom 8.22** “For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now.”
  - **People are hurt - how should Christians react?**
- **Ex: My Dunn white board** – I lived in Dirty **Dunn** my freshman year, and one day my roommate and I decided we should leave a **whiteboard** on our door just in case someone wanted to **drop a note**. Unfortunately, rather than creating a lovely space of free speech, we created a **real-life YouTube comments section** complete with incredibly **creative curse word** combinations and **elaborate drawings** that generally involved someone’s mother. How did we react to our new whiteboard culture?
  - We tried **reasoning** with the vandals and put up a **Bible verse** about love, but that was quickly turned into a good chunk of heresy, so we wound up just **taking the board down** –

we talked about it, condemned it, and we withdrew

- Our world is groaning, and how do Christians react? **84% of Christians 18-29** said they had “**no idea**” **how the Bible applies** to their professional lives; Through some personal research, a local college minister told me **90% of A&M/Blinn students are disconnected from a Christian org/church** – no Direction & no Draw
  - **Rom 8.23** “And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.
- Christians are groaning w/the world, and many Christians either don’t react at all, or they talk about it, condemn it, and withdraw from it
  - This creates an empty space & a **vacuum**, and that’s useless. Instead...

### **God calls us to a Culture Reaction that glorifies Him**

- Our world is groaning in **marriages**, groaning in our views of **sexuality**, groaning in **stress** and **work**, so how do we react to these cultures? How can our CR glorify God?
  - We read earlier, Daniel was confronted with a culture that was groaning, and his CR was filled with **God’s Grace, God’s Word, and God’s People**
- **God’s Grace (1.9)**
  - Daniel was a **prisoner** being held against his will in a pagan culture, so how does he react? He started a riot? He organized an escape tunnel hidden behind a poster in his room? He condemned the king?
  - **He Reacted with God’s Grace** (underserved love).
    - **Ex: Word Association** – Group of people you immediately think of when I say “loving” – was it “Christians?” (Mormon Grandmas)
    - **2 Cor 5.20** “Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.”
  - **App:** We often react to culture by **condemning** it loudly – what if we spoke softly out of grace? What if we Reacted with God’s grace? People are hurt... let’s **react with the (GOSPEL)**, beg them to **reconcile**, let God work on the sin
- **God’s Word (1.8)**
  - Daniel didn’t just decide not to eat the food as a sign of protest or because it was “Secular” – he didn’t hold it up to his standard – **he held it to Scripture**
    - And when the world didn’t match God’s Word, did Daniel start critiquing the world? Did he set up a vlog/write on YouTube?
  - **He Reacted with God’s Word**
    - **Ex: Lecrae (video)** – Besides being hilarious on **Instagram**, Lecrae has been making rap music for years, providing the entire soundtrack for **my 6yrs in youth ministry**. But I don’t love Lecrae because of his vids and music – I love Lecrae because he saw a groaning culture in music, and instead of just talking about it, he **Reacted with God’s Word**.
  - **App:** Christians often react to culture’s problems by discussing what we don’t like – what if we reacted with **God’s Word**? People are confused... Let’s react with **correct interpretation** of God’s Word! **God’s answers/truth**, not ours
- **God’s People (1.15-16)**
  - Daniel didn’t close himself off in this process – he was unified with fellow believers and he invited non-believers to join.
  - **He Reacted with God’s People**
    - **Ex: Impact Ministry Fair** was awesome bc it allowed unity b/t ministries (amazed at extension cord sharing) and **unity is attractive**
  - **App:** Christians often **react by withdrawing** from the broken culture of the world or other Christians – what if we Reacted with an **attractive unity** between God’s People? People have been hurt by Christians... let’s react with community where people feel “**convicted but not condemned**”

- **Join Small Groups** and make them attractive!

#### **Our Culture**

- This is a new semester with new faces, new challenges, and new opportunities – **introductions are crucial**. Today, some of you are being introduced to Grace College while others are being introduced to a Grace College that looks different from last year's. I want to be clear if this is your 1<sup>st</sup> time or your 100<sup>th</sup>:
- This is our mission: **We want to answer God's call for a Culture Reaction that glorifies Him. We want to React with God's Grace/Bible/Church** (Inception!) And we want all of you to join us.