

YXYA SERIES

CULTURE KINGS



CULTURE QUEENS

JANUARY 2019

Hey everyone!

Welcome back to a new year of Crews! Hope you all had an amazing Christmas and New Year and that you're expectant and excited for all that 2019 has in store for us as a youth ministry, all our young people, and for you personally. Let's be believing that this will be a year full of breakthrough, salvation and praise reports from all of our lives!

Last year was an incredible year for us in Hillsong YxYA - we saw hundreds of young people make decisions to follow Jesus, we saw so many friends being invited to Crews and youth nights, and we heard so many praise reports of young people finding their place in church, making a decision to serve, and seeing their lives move forward because of where they were planted. I'm sure there were all kinds of praise reports from your Crew too, and I know we're all excited for what God's going to do in 2019!

We have so many amazing things planned for the year ahead, with gatherings, hang outs and Crews happening all over the country. We're kicking off the year with our Crews in homes and then Encounter Conference in February. We then have Young Leaders Lab in June, Summer Camp in August and then we're all gathering together for Young + Free Conference at the O2!

We've got 12 great months of Crews ahead of us this year, and we'll be covering all the usual topics of identity, relationships and the future, alongside some new topics that we believe are crucial for helping our young people to progress in all areas of life. As we head into this year, be encouraged that the weekly Crews you lead literally change the futures of the young people that you are interacting with, and that the potential of the conversations you have is enormous for changing their lives and the society that we live in.

To kick off the year we're going to be going through a series called 'Culture Kings', which is all about championing our young people to be kings and queens in their culture - believing that they can change society and encouraging them to push into those dreams to make them a reality. We'll be looking at three characters from the Bible who had this revelation, and talking about what we can learn from them as we seek to positively shape society.

Here are some questions to think about as you plan your Crews for the month:

- What does it mean to be a Culture King or Queen?**
- Why is it important that we should be wanting to impact culture as a young person?**
- How do we stay on track, and not let the culture of the day pull us away from what God's calling us to?**

**Have a great month,
Hillsong YxYA Teaching Team**

INTRO

We're going to start this series by looking at a Culture Queen from the Old Testament - Queen Esther. Although she was a Queen, Esther did not grow up in a royal family. In fact, when she was young, her parents passed away, she was brought up by her uncle, and she only became the Queen because the King needed a new wife. She accidentally ended up in a position of authority and responsibility, and her story ended up being one where she purposefully changed the culture around her and saved her people from the threat of genocide.

SCRIPTURE

Esther 4:14 "For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father's family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this?"

Esther 8:16-17 For the Jews it was a time of happiness and joy, gladness and honour. In every province and in every city to which the edict of the king came, there was joy and gladness among the Jews, with feasting and celebrating. And many people of other nationalities became Jews because fear of the Jews had seized them.

MAIN POINT

Esther wasn't born into a life of luxury, but she was still elevated into a place of high influence. Encourage your youth that regardless of the inadequacies they may feel, God can still raise them up.

Even though Esther was still a strong and courageous woman, she still had moments of hesitation and doubt. Take this time to remind your youth that its okay to be human, and to not let that from discouraging them from staying the course.

Take the time possibly read the book of Esther as whole to get a better grasp of the message God is portraying, encourage your youth to do the same!

QUESTIONS

- Looking at the theme of this month, how did Esther step into the role of culture Queen herself?
- How did Esther impact the culture in the community?
- What helped Esther keep on track even during times of doubt and hesitation?

INTRO

Martin Luther King Jr was probably one of recent history's most well known Culture Kings. His passion but non-violent protests helped raise awareness of racial inequalities, leading to political change, capturing the imagination and hearts of the people, both black and white. What made Martin Luther King Jr a Culture King, however, was despite the rise of other more violent and potentially more influential activists such as Malcolm X, Martin Luther King Jr always remained committed to the ideal of non-violence which eventually saw him gain both favour and influence in society.

As we continue to look through the Bible's Culture Kings, today we want to focus on Daniel, whose story we find in the Old Testament. The Bible tells us that Daniel was a man of integrity who gained the admiration, respect and love of the unbelievers in his circles of influence. His consistency in refusing to waver on what he believed to be true, even under the intimidation of Kings and rulers, helped him to cause a major shift in society at a time when people were worshiping all kinds of false Gods.

SCRIPTURE

Throughout the book of Daniel we see him using every situation he was faced with as an opportunity to bring God to light whilst seeking to implement change. For example, in

Daniel 2:27

No wise men, enchanters, magicians, or astrologers can show to the king the mystery that the king has asked, but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, and he has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days. These deliberate actions caused the King to recognise that Daniel had the spirit of a holy God within him which after interpreting another dream led to the King to praising and honouring God as the Most High.

MAIN POINT

Too often we can think that we are not old enough to impact and influence society in a meaningful way, however, the Bible tells us that even as a youth Daniel was a Culture King, refusing to compromise on what he believed to be right and rejecting the King's food and wine, deeming it a defilement to God. This display of courage and faithfulness to God at an early age is what epitomised Daniel's life.

In all of the situations Daniel was faced with, he could easily have manipulated his power and ability to interpret dreams to gain both honour and wealth. However, in the face of adversity and even death, Daniel stood firm in what he believed to be true and interpreted each and every dream according to God's Word.

The Bible tells us that even when he was in the lion's den for refusing to pray to the King, Daniel's consistency and obedience to God is what resulted in the King worshiping God, and even better, ordering that all of the people under his control were to worship God too.

QUESTIONS

Ask your young people today, what does it take to be a Culture King/ Queen like Daniel, and how can consistency help influence change?

INTRO

Deborah is a prime example of someone who had a vision from God and who stepped out to positively help shape the culture and community she was a part of. Deborah was not only the only female judge in Israel but she was also a prophetess - a messenger of God who God delivered messages or visions to, in order for Him to communicate to humanity. She was an inspirational figure in the Bible, and by reading through her story we can learn some keys for how we can be Culture Kings and Queens in our world.

Deborah had been given a vision by the Lord that would help bring victory and freedom to a society which had been oppressed for around 20 years. She chose not to listen to the societal norms and listen to the message which God had laid upon her heart, which would lead her to go into a battlefield, a place where women were typically not seen. She trusted that God would fulfil His promise to His people and therefore shared the vision with Barak who would be a vessel in changing this narrative! You can read about this story in Judges 4.

SCRIPTURE

Judges 4:14 **14** Then Deborah said to Barak, "Go! This is the day the Lord has given Sisera into your hands. Has not the Lord gone ahead of you?" So Barak went down Mount Tabor, with ten thousand men following him.

MAIN POINT

A vision or a God dream doesn't necessarily have to be something which you literally dream about or audibly hear God's voice say to you. More often it's up to you to trust that the dream or desire which you've had in your heart works for good and gives glory to God. In Judges 4:9 Deborah reminds Barak that the honour of this victory would not be his but rather would be God's. If your dreams and desires to change aspects of this broken world are to ultimately glorify God, then they too are God visions and dreams!

Vision is so important if you want to change your world. In Proverbs 29:18 the Bible literally tells us that 'where there is no vision, the people perish.' Having vision allows you to have goals and gives you guidance so you are aware of what you are working towards. Deborah had a vision which would help a nation, and without that vision it's possible that Barak would not have stepped into battle nor would the people have overcome their oppression.

Your dreams and visions to change culture are not too big for your God. Nor is your socio-economical background, nor is your age or anything that you might think could hinder positive change. Our minds can only come up with a small fraction for what the Lord can truly do. Societal norms were not able to dictate what Deborah could do for her to aid her society through God, and neither should they stop you from being a Culture King or Queen in your world.

QUESTIONS

Today ask your young people what they can learn from the story of Deborah, and how they can choose not to allow culture to throw them off from the dreams they have in their heart to impact society.