

## Learning Matters

**Vision:** To explore a biblical perspective on education and learning and reflect on how we can better support lifelong learning in our own and others' lives

### Daniel 1:1-6; 17-20 – Learning in exile

#### Questions to discuss:

1. How do Daniel and his friends end up being educated by the King of Babylon, considering they have been captured and taken away from their home, country and family?
2. What do we learn from Daniel and his friends about the attitude we should have towards opportunities for learning that we have?
3. How did the education that Daniel and his friends receive help them to fulfil God's plans for them? Use any examples from their later life that you remember.
4. What can we learn from this passage about the importance of learning?
5. What challenges do children and adults face in our community in their learning/education? How does God want us to respond as the church? What specific actions could we take?

#### Act of Love

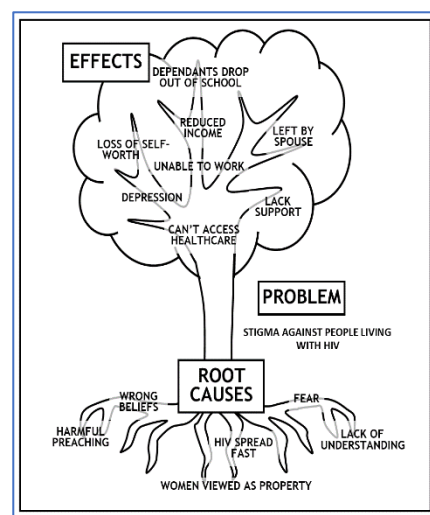
Prayerfully reflect on and choose one thing you can do in your community to help a group of people who are currently struggling to access education – or to support a school, organisation or individual who is already helping them.

#### Going deeper:

Watch the Bible project video [https://youtu.be/Gab04dPs\\_uA](https://youtu.be/Gab04dPs_uA) (4:30 minutes) and use that as a springboard to read the wisdom literature in the Bible (Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Job).

**Problem tree:** explore more deeply one of the issues you have identified related to education/ learning in our community.

- a) Draw a tree similar to the one here (right) and write the issue in/ by the trunk of the tree.
- b) List the effects that this issue has as the branches. One effect might lead into others.
- c) Analyse the causes of the issue and mark as the tree roots. For every cause keep asking 'but why?' or 'what causes that?' to dig deeper, adding deeper and deeper roots.
- d) Then turn the problem tree into a solution tree. Using a different colour, write the opposite of every statement on the tree– the trunk becomes the goal and the branches and roots become the changes that need to be achieved.
- e) Reflect on what you have learned and how you can take action to turn around some of the root causes to achieve the goal you want to see.



**Summary for facilitator:**

Although Babylon had conquered the Israelites, Daniel and his friends rigorously applied themselves to the education and training they were offered, without ever compromising their faith. Daniel and his friends become 'ten times better' in 'every matter of wisdom and understanding' and are appointed to high positions in Babylon where God can use them very powerfully to transform the country

The Bible is clear about how vital education is - not just for children but likewise for adults. The education that Daniel received enabled them to grow in their natural gifts. It helped them rise to positions of influence where God could use them to shape entire nations.