

One Kid's Faith

Dan 1:1-21

(Zeke Flores, Some material from "The Faith of a 15 Year Old" by Mark Copeland)

Intro *Hard to miss some shining examples of faithfulness in the OT*

- A. We've looked at Joseph, Joshua, Jehoiadah
- B. Now we come to Daniel - Just a kid really, but a kid with faith!

I. SOME BACKGROUND

- A. Bleak day for Judah - **Dan 1:1-2**
 - 1. Beginning of captivity for southern kingdom
 - 2. King Jehoiakim taken along with some of the precious items from the temple.
- B. Young men selected for special training - **Dan 1:3-7**
 - 1. Chosen for handsomeness and intelligence
 - 2. Would receive choice food, advanced training
 - 3. Among the chosen: Daniel, 3 others - Names changed
 - a. Daniel (God is my judge)
(1) - } Belteshazzar (Bel protects)
 - b. Hananiah (The Lord is gracious)
(1) - } Shadrach (inspired by Rak - the sun god)
 - c. Mishael (Who is what God is?)
(1) - } Mescach (Who is what Shach is? - moon god)
 - d. Azariah (The Lord helps)
(1) - } Abed-Nego (servant of Nego)
 - 4. Some might have seen the situation as an opportunity to move up, compromise, blend with the enemy.
 - a. How did these respond?

II. DANIEL MAKES A DECISION

- A. He "made up his mind" (vs 8) or "purposed in his heart"
 - 1. He simply made a commitment, a rare trait today
 - 2. He wouldn't "defile himself" with king's food
 - a. Perhaps bothered his conscience? **1 Cor 10:18-20**

III. HOW DANIEL REMAINED TRUE TO HIS COMMITMENT

- A. He did it with politeness - **vs 8b**
 - 1. He "sought permission" - No demands, but with respect for those with authority over him.
- B. He did it with God's help - **vs 9**
 - 1. Like Joseph, God granted Daniel favor in others' sight
- C. He did it with persistence - **vs 10-11**
 - 1. He didn't give up after the first refusal. Instead he tried something else going to the official directly over them.
- D. He did it with willingness to test his faith - **vss 12-16**
 - 1. He was confident enough in God to know that His way was the right way and Daniel was willing to "lay it on the line."
- E. The results of his faith:
 - 1. God blessed Daniel and his 3 friends! - **vss 17-20**
 - 2. Daniel continued official service for 70 years - **vs 21**
 - a. He eventually became a "big shot" in the kingdom - **Dan 2:48**

IV. WHAT LESSONS CAN WE LEARN?

KEEP YOUR COMMITMENT TO THE LORD BY...

- A. Being polite
 - 1. Seems like such a little thing but there is never a reason to be rude or arrogant.
 - 2. Inconsiderateness aggravates a situation rather than helps it
 - a. **Prov 15:1, 18, James 1:19-20, 1 Pet 3:15-16**
- B. Seeking God's help
 - 1. Without God, any effort is more likely to fail
 - a. **Psalm 127:1**
 - 2. God seeks those who are loyally His.
 - a. **2 Chron 16:9**

C. Being persistent

1. “If at first you don’t succeed...” Don’t give up when you hit a roadblock!
2. Remember what Jesus said regarding asking, seeking, & knocking (Matt 7:7-11) or persistent praying (Luke 18:1-8).
3. Persistence is something everyone needs if they intend to endure.
 - a. **Prov 24:10, 16, James 1:2-3**

D. Being willing to test your faith.

1. NOT talking about testing God but being willing to stretch yourself to trust God more.
 - a. God challenged His people to do just this
(1) **Mal 3:10**
 - b. So does Jesus - **Matt 6:31-34**

V. **SOME APPLICATIONS:**

A. School kids -

1. Peer pressure is tough – Will you have the faith and politeness of Daniel?

B. College bound kids –

1. Away from home 1st time, REAL freedom but NOT freedom to sin – Will you seek God’s help?

C. Adults in the workplace –

1. Your faith will be tested! Tempted to compromise your convictions, slide ethics under the rug, put the job before everything else – Will you pass the test like Daniel the kid?

D. When you feel spiritually wrung out and lethargic

1. Hard to serve God when you just don’t feel like it!
2. Maybe others around you don’t give you much support – Will you have the persistence of a young Israelite?

Conc *Everyone can make a commitment to the Lord ... and keep it!*

- A. Be polite, seek God’s help, be persistent and willing to have your faith tested!
- B. **INV.**