

Week 6: Resisting Compromise 10-12-14
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Daniel 1:1-8, 16, ESV

In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with some of the vessels of the house of God. And he brought them to the land of Shinar, to the house of his god, and placed the vessels in the treasury of his god. Then the king commanded Ashpenaz, his chief eunuch, to bring some of the people of Israel, both of the royal family and of the nobility, youths without blemish, of good appearance and skillful in all wisdom, endowed with knowledge, understanding learning, and competent to stand in the king's palace, and to teach them the literature and language of the Chaldeans. The king assigned them a daily portion of the food that the king ate, and of the wine that he drank. They were to be educated for three years, and at the end of that time they were to stand before the king. (Perhaps they learned about: Abercrombie & Fitch, Amazon.com, AMC theaters, Bath & Body Works, Best Buy, cable television, cafe mocha latte, caffeine-free, cell phones, Chili's, Cracker Barrel, Cuisinart, Dockers, drive-thru, Dr. Phil, e-mail, E-Bay, Facebook, fat-free, George Foreman Grill, K-Mart, Happy Meals, Healthy Choice, homepage, Home Depot, infomercials, IRA, John Grisham, junk mail, khaki, Kinko's, Land's End, laptop, Laser Tag, Lexus, Lowes, Martha Stewart, McDonald's, MTV, Netflix, Olive Garden, Oprah, Pampered Chef, Panera Bread, Playstation, Ray Bans, shopping malls, Starbucks, Tablets, Visa, Walmart, Weight Watchers and "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?"

Among these were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah of the tribe of Judah. And the chief of the eunuchs gave them names: Daniel he called Belteshazzar, Hananiah he called Shadrach, Mishael he called Meshach, and Azariah he called Abednego. But Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself with the king's food, or with the wine that he drank. Therefore he asked the chief of the eunuchs to allow him not to defile himself... So the steward took away their food and the wine they were to drink, and gave them vegetables."

-Daniel 1:1-8, 16, ESV

The Book of Daniel has a couple of great stories you may have heard about:

- three men are thrown into a fiery furnace and survive because a 4th man is in there with them!
- Daniel was thrown into den of hungry lions but they don't eat him because an angel closed their mouths
- And then there are woven in several more subtle stories of 4 young men not compromising their faith in the living God.

Today is week 6 of our series: **More than Survivors: Learning to Thrive Spiritually**

The word for today is **Compromise**.

Compromise: to accept standards that are lower than desirable

If we want to be more than survivors, to rise up above the world we live in, we have to learn not to compromise our beliefs in God:

“Joyful are people of integrity, who follow the instructions of the LORD. Joyful are those who obey His laws and search for Him with all their hearts. They do not compromise with evil, and they walk only in His paths. You have charged us to keep Your commandments carefully” -Psalm 119:1-4, NLT

Here are some compromising statements:

- “Come on, it's not that bad, is it?”
- “A little won't hurt you!”
- “Everyone else is doing it!”
- “If you love me...”

So, how did Daniel avoid compromises in his life?

1. He didn't compromise his Convictions (food)

- He and his friends didn't eat the royal food for three years!
- “Nobody back home would know about it” but Daniel would. What happens in Vegas **stays** in Vegas! But not for Daniel...
- Often times our temptations to compromise will be when no one else is around! Remember your convictions.

Illustration: Sonny wouldn't eat bacon at my house!

2. He didn't compromise his Calling (visions from God)

- The King had a terrible dream and asked his wise men, magicians, enchanters to not only tell him the meaning of it but what the dream was. Nobody could do it, except Daniel!
- The reason? He and his friends prayed to God

Daniel answered and said:

“Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, to whom belong wisdom and might. He changes times and seasons; he removes kings and sets up kings; he gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding; he reveals deep and hidden things; he knows what is in the darkness, and the light dwells with him. To you, O God of my fathers, I give thanks and praise, for you have given me wisdom and might, and have now made known to me what we asked of you, for you have made known to us the king's matter.”

-Daniel 2:20-23, ESV

- Daniel could have remained quiet about his source of understanding, but he didn't. When the king asked for his interpretation Daniel replied,

“There are no wise men, enchanters, magicians, or fortune-tellers who can reveal the king's secret. But there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and he has shown King Nebuchadnezzar what will happen in the future. Now I will tell you your dream and the visions you saw as you lay on your bed.” -Daniel 2:27-28, New Living Translation

- **The** astrologers and magicians said nobody on earth except the gods could reveal the truth that the king wanted:
 - Revelation of unknown things, like the future, can only come from God / the Bible
 - As humans they didn't have the ability to know 'all things'
 - So how do astrologers, fortune tellers, palm readers and the like know things? **Must be demonic!** Just sayin!!!

3. He didn't compromise his **Commitment** (*his prayer life*)

- Another king on the throne: Darius
- Daniel is high up in the gov't and people are jealous, but no scandals!

- They try to turn his commitment to God against him:

“O King Darius, live forever! All the high officials of the kingdom... are agreed that the king should establish an ordinance and enforce an injunction, that whoever makes petition to any god or man for thirty days, except to you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions.” -Daniel 6:7, ESV

What did Daniel do? What would *you* do?

“Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before” -Daniel 6:10, ESV

- Under pressure, the choice to please people or God, he chose God
- He stayed true to his commitment

Have you chosen Jesus? How much are you committed to him?

Daniel:

- Was committed first to God (belonged to Him)
- Then to his friends (he includes them in his decisions)
- Then to his job (he worked for the Babylonian gov't)
- Today, are we committed to our spouses, our family, our church, etc.?

Daniel was committed 24 / 7 / 365. Every day, every week, every year!

4. How did Daniel not Compromise?

He remembered Who he belonged to

- If you are a follower of Jesus, remember who you belong to:

"Once you had no identity as a people; now you are God's people. Once you received no mercy; now you have received God's mercy." -1 Peter 2:10, NLT

“Do not be deceived: No sexually immoral people, idolaters, adulterers, or anyone practicing homosexuality, no thieves, greedy people, drunkards, verbally abusive people, or swindlers will inherit God’s kingdom. And some of you used to be like this. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.” -1 Corinthians 6:10-11, Holman Christian

Standard Bible

God loved you and I so much, He saved us through our faith in Jesus. Now live for him. Avoid Compromising situations that will pull you down. Surround yourself with friends who have your convictions. And stand firm in your convictions. You can do it with God’s help!