
HEROES OF THE FAITH

PART 5 · DANIEL

It's All About God

Life is not about you! It's not about pleasure or possessions; the goal of life is not prestige or power or politics or popularity or any of those things. It's not about anything that the world values.

The goal of our lives should be the glory of God.

For everything comes from God alone. Everything lives by his power, and everything is for his glory. To him be glory evermore. Romans 11:36 (TLB)

Until you understand this one eternal truth, then life is never going to make sense. Life is all about God! (Matthew 22:37-38)

Background on Daniel

The book of Daniel is split into two sections:

- + Chapters 1-6 – stories about the life of Daniel
- + Chapters 7-12 – a series of apocalyptic visions about the rise and fall of succeeding empires. The final focus is on God's judgement of the enemy and the glorious future kingdom awaiting God's people.

Daniel Was An Expat

Daniel was deported as a captive when Nebuchadnezzar conquered Jerusalem in 605 B.C. Daniel lived most of his life in Babylon, he didn't live in Israel for very long, he was about 15 years old when he left Jerusalem.

When he was taken to Babylon they changed his name from Daniel to Belteshazzar.

Daniel and his friends were selected as young men who were good prospects for leadership positions in the government and subsequently indoctrinated into Babylonian life.

No Compromise

Daniel was chosen for a three-year training course to prepare him to enter the king's service. Part of his preparation involved eating the king's delicacies that conflicted with Israel's dietary laws.

- + Daniel refuses (Daniel 1:8)
- + God showed Himself strong (Daniel 1:15;17)

Under pressure to conform Daniel chose to serve God first and God blessed him (Daniel 1:19-20).

Your yes to God means saying no to other stuff.

God is looking for a generation that won't compromise – a generation of people that are radically different from those around them and are unashamed of the gospel of Christ and are prepared to change the world for Christ, influencing and challenging society's norms, forgoing what the world has to offer for the sake of the Kingdom.

When we don't compromise – it puts us in a place of authority in the spiritual realm that then gives us access to earthly authority.

Not Crippled by Fear

King Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon was a serious megalomaniac (Daniel 2:5-6).

The Bible says Daniel spoke to him with wisdom and tact. He asked the king's officer, "Why did the king issue such a harsh decree?" then Daniel says I'll do it; I'll interpret the king's dream.

Daniel's response – faith filled prayer (Daniel 2:16-19).

When the pressure comes – when fear starts to raise its ugly head, there is a decision making moment. Will we be crippled by fear or will we turn to God. Will we push fear aside to embrace faith.

The person who knows that life is all about God holds on to faith.

Living for God Means God Get's the Glory

Daniel comes to the king and straight away gives God the glory (Daniel 2:27-28).

Daniel is rewarded by Nebuchadnezzar – he placed him in a high position and lavished many gifts on him (Daniel 2:48) – He made him ruler of the entire province of Babylon.

If the devil can't get you to compromise your faith then he will have one last crack at you through a more subtle means – power and privilege.

You see why God gave the interpretation to Daniel wasn't just to save him – it was to put him into a place of authority so God's kingdom could reign. God gave Daniel the interpretation so that Nebuchadnezzar – this all powerful king would be humbled in the presence of a mightier king!

Conclusion

Daniel realised his life was not about him but fearlessly, with no compromise or glory seeking, served God alone. Through trial or temptation Daniel served God and others without compromise, and was not crippled by fear but instead he always turns to God in faith.

A life of no compromise, a life of faith and not fear, a life that gives God glory is made possible as we allow Holy Spirit to have His way in us and through us. If throughout life we hold to the truth that life is not about you – it's all about God, we live empowered by God to allow Him to have His glory.

Discussion Questions

1. What's your favourite story in Daniel's life? Why? What character traits stand out to you?
2. At the age of 15 Daniel showed strength, courage and was not willing to compromise. In what areas of life is it easy for you to compromise your faith? What can you do to change this?
3. Fear often cripples people's faith. Daniel was put into some very testing situations where death seemed imminent. What enables people to push fear aside and embrace faith?
4. When things are going well this can be the time when we drift away from relying on God or we may even take the glory. Are there situations in your life where pleasure, treasure, power or plaudits have sidetracked you? What are some ways to ensure God gets the glory?
5. Pray for one another that we would be a generation of people that are radically different from those around us, unashamed of the gospel of Christ and are prepared to influence and challenge society's norms, forgoing what the world has to offer for the sake of the Kingdom