



SERIES: STEADFAST

TOPIC: DEFEATING THE PRESSURE TO CONFORM – PASTOR ALTON TRIMBLE
BIBLE STUDY & LIFE GROUPS: WEDNESDAY, JULY 17, 2019

PROVERBS 17:3 *“Fire tests the purity of silver and gold, but the Lord tests the heart.”*

Life Lesson #1:

- Before every blessing there’s always a testing.

1 THESSALONIANS 2:4 *“We speak God’s message because God tested us and trusted us to do it. When we speak, we are not trying to please people, but God, who tests our hearts.” (NCV)*

Philippians 2:13 (NLT) *“For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases Him.”*

Life Lesson #2:

- God tests us with stress before he trusts us with success.

DANIEL 1:7 *“The boys were all given new Babylonian names: Daniel was renamed Belteshazzar, Hananiah was renamed Shadrach, Mishael was renamed Meshach, and Azariah was renamed Abednego.”*

Daniel (God is my Judge) renamed Belteshazzar - Bel protects me

Hananiah (God is Gracious) renamed Shadrach - after moon god

Mishael (Who is like God) renamed Meshach - pagan god Aku

Azariah (God has helped me) renamed Abednego -servant of Nebo another pagan god

DANIEL 1:5,8 *“The king ordered that the young men should eat the same food and wine served at the king’s table while they were being trained. After that they were to become servants of the king of Babylon... But Daniel resolved not to defile himself by eating the royal food and wine, and he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way.”*

There were three reasons Daniel refuses to conform here in this situation.

1st A health reason

2nd A cultural & national reason

1 TIMOTHY 4: 3-5 *“False teachers will order people to abstain from certain foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving, For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, because it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer.” (NIV)*

MATTHEW 15:11 “You are not defiled by what you eat; you are defiled by what you say and do.” (NLT)

3rd This was a spiritual attack!

There are four qualities that God loves to bless in people’s lives.

FOUR (4) QUALITIES GOD LOOKS FOR IN YOUR LIFE

1. INTEGRITY- He never forgot who he was.

DANIEL 1:8a “Daniel resolved not to defile himself...”

ROMANS 12:2 “Don’t conform yourself to the values of this world. Instead, let God transform you by a complete change of how you think. Then you will be able to know the will of God...” (TEV)

2. DISCIPLINE: He controlled his ego & his appetite

DANIEL 1:8b “Daniel made up his mind not to eat the food and wine given to them by the king.” (LB)

ROMANS 6:13 “Do not let any part of your body become a tool of wickedness used for sinning; instead give yourself completely to God... because you want to be a tool in the hands of God used for his good purposes.”

3. COURAGE: He was willing to stand alone

EXODUS 23:2 “Never follow the crowd in doing wrong, and don’t be swayed in your testimony by the mood of the majority.” (GW/LB)

1 CORINTHIANS 16:13 “Stand true to what you believe. Be courageous. Be strong!” (NLT)

4. HUMILITY: He was tactful with authority

DANIEL 1:8-1,18-19 “Then Daniel asked chief official for permission to eat other things instead. Now God had given the chief official great respect for Daniel. But he said, ‘I’m afraid of my lord, the king, who ordered that you eat his food and wine, And If you aren’t as healthy as the others, I fear the king will have me beheaded! So next, Daniel talked it over with the guard appointed to look after Daniel and his three friends. Daniel offered a suggestion: ‘Just test us for ten days on a diet of vegetables and water. Then see how healthy we look compared to the young men eating the king’s food. Then you can decide whether or not to let us continue eating our diet.’ So the attendant agreed to try Daniel’s suggestion. At the end of the ten days, Daniel and his friends looked healthier and better nourished than any of others in the king’s training program. So after that, the guard let them eat their own food... When the 3 year training program was completed, all the young men were brought to King Nebuchadnezzar, who talked with each one individually. None impressed the king as much as Daniel and his 3 friends. So they were each promoted to positions in the king’s service.”

HOW TO MAKE A CASE TO AN AUTHORITY?

1. Develop a reputation for being responsible.

“...the chief officer had great respect for Daniel.”

PROVERBS 22:29 *“If you do your job well, leaders will notice, and you will serve before kings.” (CEV)*

2. Be humble not belligerent.

PROVERBS 25:6 *“When you stand before the king, don't try to impress him and pretend to be important.” (TEV)*

3. Don't be deceptive or manipulative.

2 CORINTHIANS 4:2 *“We reject all shameful and underhanded methods. We do not try to trick anyone, and we do not distort the word of God. We tell the truth before God, and all who are honest know that.” (NLT)*

4. Appeal to their goals & interests.

5. Choose the right place, time, & words.

PROVERBS 16:21 *“A wise, mature person is known for his under-standing. The more pleasant his words, the more persuasive he is.”*

I'm never persuasive when I'm abrasive (TEV)

6. Trust God if they reject your appeal.

WHAT GAVE DANIEL THE COURAGE TO STAND ALONE?

FOUR (4) things you need to remember when pressured to conform.

- I have Jesus *with* me.
- I have the Holy Spirit *in* me.
- I have the promises of God *to* me.
- I have God's family *around* me.

2 CORINTHIANS 6:14-7:1(Mes) *“Don't become partners with those who reject God. How can you make a partnership out of right and wrong? That's not partnership; that's war. Is light best friends with dark? Does Christ go strolling with the Devil? Do trust and mistrust hold hands? Who would think of setting up pagan idols in God's holy Temple? But that is exactly what we*

are, each of us a temple in whom God lives. God himself put it this way: I'll live in them, and move into them; I'll be their God and they'll be my people. So leave the corruption and compromise... I'll be a Father to you and you will be my sons and daughters! With promises like this, dear friends, let's make a clean break with everything that defiles or distracts us, both within and without. Let's make our entire lives fit and holy temples for the worship of God!"

Discussion Questions

1. What has the enemy destroyed in your life in an attempt to destroy you?
 - Please Explain
2. What victories have you experienced after going through these horrible losses?
 - Please Explain
3. Can you recall a specific test that you successfully overcame and consequently were blessed?
 - Please Explain
4. What stressors are testing you right now?
 - What is the success that will result from your overcoming them?
5. What labels has the enemy tried to get you to embrace?
 - What are God's labels for you that you embrace instead?