

Dan02 - **When do you Commit? - Dan Ch 1**

When do you **COMMIT** - To Really Go **ALL IN** with God?

When do you **COMMIT** - To Truly **Follow** Him - To **do things His Way?**

When do you **COMMIT** - To **TRUST** Him - & **SERVE** Him
NO MATTER What your **Circumstances** look like

When do you **Make** a **Rock-Solid Commitment**
to **Follow** Jesus Christ - **No Matter** What?

When - Meaning **During** what **Circumstance** or **Situation** in your **life?**

I've had the **Great Blessing** - of seeing **people** make
All-In Commitments to **Follow God** - **No Matter What**

& I've been **Greatly Disturbed** - By seeing **people** so easily
Turn away from God - **Because something** didn't **go quite right**

My question today is - **WHEN** do **YOU** get **DECISIVE, DETERMINED,**
INTENT, & **RESOLVED** To Serve God no matter what?

Under **WHAT Circumstance** or **Situation** do you **Make Your**
Commitment to **Follow Jesus Christ** & Serve Him
with **NO Doubt** - & **NO Wavering**

The Question today is - **WHEN do you COMMIT?**

Let's Pray

In our last msg - We reviewed 350 years of Israel's History - & a Bunch of the greatest Historical & Prophetic books of the O.T.

& we finished with King Nebuchadnezzar STORMING Jerusalem - BY the Hand of God & in response to Israel's sin

& Nebuchadnezzar Ultimately Destroyed not only the city - but even the Great Temple of God

& in 3 WAVES Nebuchadnezzar took the Israelites - as Prisoners back to Babylon - to make them servants

& we learned that (probably) in the FIRST WAVE of those P.O.W.'s was a Young Boy - Who is the Main Character in Book of Daniel

Today - we want to put ourselves in that Young boy's shoes we want to try to SEE what he SAW & FEEL what He FELT

& we want to ask ourselves - would we make the SAME Commitment that Daniel Made - WHEN He made it

Let's set the stage - By again reading

Daniel 1:1–2 (NLT)

1 During the third year of King Jehoiakim's reign in Judah (southern tribes, last in the land), King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it.

2 The Lord gave him victory (notice) over King Jehoiakim of Judah and permitted him (God permitted him) to take some of the sacred objects from the Temple of God. So Nebuchadnezzar took them back to the land of Babylonia and placed them in the treasure-house of his god.

& During this SIEGE (in 3 waves) - MOST of the Israelites were Brought Back as CAPTIVES to Babylon

But Nebuchadnezzar had SPECIAL Plans for Israel's "Best & Brightest"

& as I read these next 2 Vs's - think a little bit about the HITLER YOUTH CAMPS of WWII

Daniel 1:3-4 (NLT)

3 Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, his chief of staff (esv - chief Eunuch), to bring to the palace some of the young men of Judah's royal family and other noble families, who had been brought to Babylon as captives.

4 "Select only strong, healthy, and good-looking young men," he said. "Make sure they are well versed in every branch of learning, are gifted with knowledge and good judgment, and are suited to serve in the royal palace . . .

These vs's let us know - Daniel was from a ROYAL family of Israel
He (& his friends) - we're Strong, Healthy, & Good looking
They were Well Educated - Gifted w/ Knowledge & Good Judgment
AND they knew HOW to ACT in the Royal Palace

& Notice - the word translated YOUNG MEN here Refers to boys Just Before - Puberty

Which means Daniel would've been 13-15 years old - at the MOST

& back home in Israel - He had it ALL going on
part of the Royal Family
Strong - Healthy - Good Looking - Educated . . .
AND he had MANNERS - (he had it ALL)

Now - Are you familiar w/ the Nazi "YOUTH CAMPS"

In these Camps The "Hitler Youth" were Indoctrinated in every way into the NAZI "World View"

Hitler took the best & brightest youth
& he transformed them into the Future NAZI Machine

He took them from their families - YOUNG & IMPRESSIONABLE

& Everything in those Camps were Designed
to transform those Young Boys - into the PURE NAZI Culture

& THAT - is EXACTLY what is going on here with DANIEL

Nebuchadnezzar took Israel's BEST & BRIGHTEST

& in Daniel 1:4(b)-5 we read (NLT)

4 . . . Train these young men in the language and literature of Babylon (Chaldeans - same thing)."

5 The king assigned them a daily ration of food and wine from his own kitchens. They were to be trained for three years, and then they would enter the royal service.

You see - we can't just say - Well Daniel was taken Captive
to Babylon - & here is what happened to him

it's far too easy - to just say that - & continue on w/ the Story

Because - These are REAL people - with REAL Families
& Daniel is a REAL TEENAGER - experiencing REAL Trauma

Not only the Trauma of WAR

But **seeing his home destroyed, & all that he knows destroyed
& Being Dragged Away from his family as a P.O.W.**

& **very possibly seeing the death
of many of those he loved**

& **if his Family DID remain alive -
it was most likely the LAST Time he SAW them**

**Daniel was 15 yrs old & being forcibly torn away from his family
& taken as a P.O.W. into a foreign land**

& then **Put into
a Babylonian - Brain-Washing "Re-Education" Camp**

the **purpose of which - was to MAKE young Israelites
Think & Act & Feel Like Babylonians**

**Because it was Important Politically for Nebuchadnezzar
to have the BEST & the BRIGHTEST of Israel - SERVING HIM**

**& THEN - there is one more thing
that Daniel & his friends were about to Experience**

**After being TAKEN from their Families & their homes
& made SLAVES in a Foreign Land**

The **Bible implies it - but Historians Tell Us - Nebuchadnezzar
would've made these Young Teenage Boys - EUNUCHS**

Now - **Right there - all the men should be WINCING**

Not only did they **experience**
all the **TRAUMA leading UP** to **Babylon**

But **almost Certainly** - As **part** of their **Re-Education**
these **15 yr old boys** - would've **been** - **CASTRATED**

& for a **15 year old boy** - who **had EVERYTHING** Going for him -
to **LOSE it ALL** - **INCLUDING** His **Manhood**

THAT - is what **you call** - an **UNIMAGINABLE SITUATION**

& **my question** to you **today** is - **When do YOU Decide For God?**

When do you **make** your **All-In - No-Matter-What - Decision**
to **Follow God** & Serve him **ALONE** ?

Is it on the heels of **God DOING** something **Great** for you . . .

*Oh God, if you'll just Do THIS for me
If you'll just make my life BETTER . . .
Then I'll SERVE YOU FOREVER !!*

THAT is our **Selfish Human Nature** - & it's the **Exact OPPOSITE**
of **Everything** the **Bible Teaches** us

We're about to see Daniel
Make an **Incredible Commitment** to **God**
& **Take** an **Incredible STAND** for God

Right in the **Middle** of the **MOST Traumatic** string of **events**
a **young boy** could ever **experience**

For Daniel - it's NOT - God I'll Serve you - IF you do this or that

For Daniel it's - God I'll Serve You - NO MATTER what's happening

NO MATTER Where I'm At - Or WHAT My Situation is
I will Serve you - All-In - No-Matter-What

Because YOU, God,

Are GREATER than my TRIALS

You are GREATER than my CIRCUMSTANCES

You are GREATER than my Present DIFFICULTY

& So - I will TAKE A STAND for you God
in the Middle of My TRIALS

NOT - IF you'll do this or that for me

But because of WHO you ARE - in my Life

Do you get it?

It MATTERS - WHAT Daniel's Background is

Because when we see him TAKE HIS STAND for God

We HAVE to know the circumstances he MAKES that Decision in

Otherwise - we'll have the tendency to think - *Well sure, Daniel took a Stand for God - But Me - I'm in a REALLY hard situation*

<p><u>Really?</u> - Have you <u>found yourself</u> as a <u>Castrated P.O.W.</u> in an <u>enemy "Re-Education Camp"</u> <u>Lately??</u></p>
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Because THAT is where Daniel is AT - When we see Him
Make the Commitment that STARTS the Book of Daniel

So - as we **read** the **rest** of **Ch 1** - Allow it to **COME ALIVE**
within the **Picture** we've just **painted**

First We have **the NAMES** of **Daniel** & His **3 Friends**

Daniel 1:6 (NLT)

6 Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were four of the young men chosen, all from the tribe of Judah (ruling families).

But - as **PART** of their "**Re-Education**" - Their **names**
are **going** to be **CHANGED** to **Babylonian Names**

Daniel 1:7 (NLT)

7 The chief of staff (ESV - Eunuchs) renamed them with these Babylonian names: Daniel was called Beltshazzar. Hananiah was called Shadrach. Mishael was called Meshach. Azariah was called Abednego.

Notice the **New Names** the **Israelite boys** were **given**

Daniel - Beltshazzar = comes from the name "**BEL**"
which was the **chief BABYLONIAN GOD** (*means: Bel protect*)

Hananiah - Shadrach = Comes from the **SUN god - Shad**
(*means: Inspired by Shad - the sun god*)

Mishael - Meshach = Means: ***Who is like Shach*** (Not B.Ball player)
Shach is another **Lunar god** of **Babylon**

Azariah - Abednego = **means: Servant of the shining one**
a ref to the **Babylonian god - NEBO**

No Hebrew Names - No references to the **Hebrew GOD**
Only Babylonian Names - w/ **Ref** to all **Babylonian gods**

Now - Here it is - right here

The Question is - WHEN do YOU Make Your Commitment?

When do You decide to take a stand for God?

Is it - When things are going great & God is blessing you?

Or is it - When you are in the Midst of Great Difficulty?

Daniel - as a Young boy

Had been Traumatized by WAR, DEATH, & DESTRUCTION

& Taken as a P.O.W. - Put into a

Brain-Washing - Re-Education Camp - & CASTRATED

Right THERE - is where Daniel Makes HIS COMMITMENT

Right THERE is where Daniel becomes RESOLUTE

**Right THERE is where Daniel DECIDES - He is going
to Serve God - No Matter What comes his way**

Right THERE is where Daniel Makes the Decision of his LIFE

Right THERE is where the Direction of Daniel's Life is SET

NOT in Blessing - & NOT Conditioned Upon

God doing ANYTHING for Him

But Right - in the Midst of TRIAL - & TRAUMA - & DIFFICULTY

& RIGHT THERE is where WE Must

Make The Commitment of our LIFE

To Follow & Serve Jesus Christ - No Matter WHAT

LOOK at the First FEW WORDS - of Daniel 1:8 (NLT)

8 But Daniel was determined . . . - - [repeat]

Look at how the other translations put it

But Daniel **RESOLVED**

But Daniel **PURPOSED IN HIS HEART**

But Daniel **DETERMINED IN HIS HEART**

But Daniel **MADE UP HIS MIND**

Right THERE - IN the THICK of IT - THAT is where Daniel Made His Decision to Serve God Alone - NO MATTER WHAT

Would YOU ??

Is **THIS** where **you would Make** your **COMMITMENT** ??

Or - When things get Difficult - do you turn:

to your **OWN Course of Action**?

to your **OWN Ideas** - To Your **OWN Feelings**?

to your **OWN Plan**?

Can I just tell you something please . . .

ANYONE can make an **ALL-IN Decision** to **follow God** -
when **everything** is **going great** - & their **life** is on **cruise control**

The Question that Daniel's **Life SCREAMS** out to us is -
WHAT Commitment will you **make** "**In The Fire**"

Will you take your stand to serve God "No Matter What"

When everything looks **bleak**

& **NOTHING** is **going Right** for you??

THAT is when **DANIEL** Made **HIS Commitment** - &
THAT is when **WE** need to make **OUR Commitment**

& **Listen** - Our **Commitment** to **Serve God** - **No matter** what
ALWAYS starts in the **SMALL** things!!

It **ALWAYS** starts in the **SMALL** things - **NOT** the **Big things**

The commitment these **boys** made **didn't start** with
the **Fiery Furnace** - **It started with a CHEESEBURGER !!**

Their **ALL-IN Commitment** to God **didn't start**
with the **big** - **public heroic** "**Fiery Furnace**" Day

It **STARTED** - **When** they were **offered** their **First CHEESEBURGER!**

& **their Decision** about that **CHEESEBURGER**
Prepared them for **their Decision** about the **FIERY FURNACE !!**

Let's re-read all of DANIEL 1:8 (NLT)

8 But Daniel was determined not to defile himself by eating the food and wine given to them by the king. He asked the chief of staff (eunuchs) for permission not to eat these unacceptable foods.

You see - **the Cheeseburger** of **the World**
Was **Unacceptable** - **according** to the **Law of Moses**

& Daniel Grew Up - Serving God THRU the Law of MOSES
& his **EATING** was **PART** of His **SERVICE** to God
AND part of His **WORSHIP** of God

& So Daniel **BEGAN** His **All-In Commitment** to God
RIGHT THERE - Over a **Cheeseburger**

Daniel - Buddy - Come ON . . . Don't get all worked up over a CHEESEBURGER - Have you SEEN the situation your in ?

God just let you get CASTRATED - & Now you don't want to eat a CHEESEBURGER - Cause you're afraid you'll OFFEND God

Get over man, Have a Cheeseburger & DEFILE yourself a little bit

WHAT'S the Cheeseburger in YOUR Life right now??

What **Small thing** are you **Allowing** to **DEFILE** your life **because** you've **convinced** yourself - it's **NO BIG DEAL**

after all - **God's not doing** anything **Great** for you **right now** - so you **ought to be able** to **Defile** your **life a little bit**

What's the Cheeseburger in your life Right Now?

In the Midst of an **Extremely Traumatic Situation**

Daniel Made a Rock Soild Commitment - to Serve God ALONE
NO MATTER What the **Situation**
NO MATTER how **Seemingly SMALL** the **issue** was

Even if it was **JUST** - About the Food

NEXT - & **I think** it's **VITALLY Important** - that we see **HOW**
Daniel Went About **Keeping** His **Commitment to God**

He **didn't start** w/ some **Offensive**, **Dramatic**, **Look-At-Me** - **action**

Look at V.8 again - it says *Daniel asked the chief of the Eunuchs for permission not to eat these unacceptable foods*

Daniel wasn't **making a scene** - He wasn't **throwing a Fit** - He **didn't** start a **FaceBook Campaign** or call a **Christian Rights Attorney**

HE made an **All-In Commitment** to God - & then He **Respectfully approached** the **guy** who **recently made him** a **EUNUCH**

& he **simply ASKED Him** for **permission** to **not eat** the **Cheeseburgers of Babylon**

& **God MOVED** - On **Daniel's Behalf**

Daniel 1:9 (NLT)

9 Now God had given the chief of staff both respect and affection for Daniel.

BUT - it also **presented** a **Problem** for the **Chief of Staff**

Daniel 1:10 (NLT)

10 But he responded, "I am afraid of my lord the king, who has ordered that you eat this food and wine. If you become pale and thin compared to the other youths your age, I am afraid the king will have me beheaded."

Nebuchadnezzar's Primary motivation for his people was the **threat of DIVORCE**

As in - *"I'm gonna Divorce your head from your body"*

I saw a cartoon - about a High Office in our country & the question was asked - ***What do you think about Be-Heading*** - & the answer was - ***Well, right now I think I Be-Heading out to play some GOLF***

Well - **that's not** how **Nebuchadnezzar felt** about it

He **would DISPATCH** your head **SO FAST**
You **wouldn't know it** till you **SNEEZED**

& the **Chief Eunuch** was **well aware** of that

& so **Daniel Proposed a Plan** - that would **Bring God Glory**

Daniel 1:11–14 (NLT)

11 Daniel spoke with the attendant who had been appointed by the chief of staff to look after Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.

12 "Please test us for ten days on a diet of vegetables and water," Daniel said.

13 "At the end of the ten days, see how we look compared to the other young men who are eating the king's food. Then make your decision in light of what you see."

14 The attendant agreed to Daniel's suggestion and tested them for ten days.

Guys - when we make a Commitment
to **Serve God ALL-IN - No Matter what**

We **don't have** to be **JERKS** - & we don't **have to Start**
Intentionally OFFENDING People around us

Like Daniel - We can **Respectfully Suggest** a Plan
that is **Designed** - to **Ultimately Bring God GLORY**

**In the Midst of the most Trying & Difficult circumstances -
Daniel Made his Commitment to Serve God ALONE**

**& he BEGAN his commitment in the SMALL THINGS -
the things that others didn't even think MATTERED**

& God KNEW One Thing - FOR SURE

If Daniel would KEEP His Commitment in the SMALL things
He would KEEP His Commitment in the LARGE Things

& it's EXACTLY The SAME - For you & I

& God BLESSED the COMMITMENT of Daniel (& friends)

Daniel 1:15–16 (NLT)

15 At the end of the ten days, Daniel and his three friends looked healthier and better nourished than the young men who had been eating the food assigned by the king.

16 So after that, the attendant fed them only vegetables instead of the food and wine provided for the others.

Daniel's First Commitment Test - PASSED with Flying Colors

Daniel - & His Friends - Committed to Serve God ALONE

In the Midst of the most Trying Circumstances

& God's Blessing - & God's Protection - FOLLOWED

Daniel 1:17 (NLT)

17 God gave these four young men an unusual aptitude for understanding every aspect of literature and wisdom. And God

gave Daniel the special ability to interpret the meanings of visions and dreams.

GOD Gave them - UNUSUAL Aptitude - & SPECIAL Ability

**Which was God's DESIGN - to Give these young boys
BOTH His Blessing & His Protection as they GREW**

Which we Immediately Begin to see

Daniel 1:18–21 (NLT)

18 When the training period ordered by the king was completed, (3 yrs) the chief of staff brought all the young men to King Nebuchadnezzar.

19 The king talked with them, and no one impressed him as much as Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. So they entered the royal service.

20 Whenever the king consulted them in any matter requiring wisdom and balanced judgment, he found them ten times more capable than any of the magicians and enchanters in his entire kingdom. (the beginning of God's Blessing)

21 Daniel remained in the royal service until the first year of the reign of King Cyrus. (referring to a time when Daniel was - 80 yrs old)

What an incredible START - For Daniel - & his Friends

What an Incredibly Difficult set of circumstances

To Make your ALL-IN - No Matter What - Commitment to God

So . . . What about YOU?

When DID You Make your

ALL-IN - No Matter What - Commitment to God?

Or . . . have you??

Are you struggling - to MAKE that commitment - Right NOW?

**Are you in a Situation right now - Where it makes PERFECT SENSE
(To You) - to BEND A Little - to just DEFILE your life - a LITTLE**

**& do you think you Deserve it -
Because you've had it - Pretty ROUGH?**

Please - SEE the Critical Crossroad that you are AT

SEE what HANGS in the Balance

SEE that God is Watching, & KNOW He will Respond Accordingly

**& then - Take a DEEP BREATH - & MAKE YOUR COMMITMENT
Your ALL-IN - No Turning Back - No Matter What - Commitment**

Don't Vacillate - Don't Negotiate -

Don't Rationalize - Justify - Defend - or Excuse

Just MAKE Your COMMITMENT !!

Make your Commitment:

To Follow Jesus Christ - No Matter What

To Serve Him - No Matter What

To Choose His Way - No Matter What

& NO MATTER What your Circumstance or Situation

God will MEET you there

God will BLESS you there

God will USE your life - for His GLORY - RIGHT THERE

Let's Pray