

Backbone – Study in Daniel

- Called to have a backbone

4 Men who had spiritual backbone

- Daniel – Ruled by God
- Hananiah – one who is what God is
- Mishael – God has favored
- Azariah – God has helped

4 men given Babylonian names

- Daniel = Belteshazzar
- Hananiah Shadrach
- Mishael = Meshach
- Azariah = Abednego

Of the 4 Kings in this story

2 Babylonian Kings

- Nebuchadnezzar
- His son / successor Belshazzar

2 Medo-Persian Kings

- Darius – title – lord
- Cyrus – one who possesses the sun

Kings:

Represented a worldly system / A pagan culture

Significance of Daniel & 3 friends

Represented the Kingdom of God in the midst of this worldly pagan system

Dan. 6:3

Then this Daniel (ruled by God) distinguished himself above the governors and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king gave thought to setting him over the whole realm.

Ruled by God

An excellent spirit

- Daniel's connection with God produced an excellence
- Produced a life in Daniel that was over and above his surrounding culture

- We live in a culture where each is encouraged to form their own standards of morality
- Called to rise above the culture

If we're going to rise above the culture / We need backbone

Paul the apostle said:

"Endure hardness as good soldiers of Christ"

- What does the church in America have to endure?
- What persecution do we face here in Crossville?

Daniel 6:4

"Then the presidents and princes sought to find occasion against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find none occasion nor fault; forasmuch as he [was] faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him."

When you stand up for Christ – people will try to find fault in you

- We can physically stand = Physical spine (backbone)
- To spiritually stand for Christ = Spiritual spine (backbone)
- Regardless of the cost
- Truly standing up for Christ will cost us something

It may cost us:

- Social standing
- Friends / Family
- Job

Fairly unlikely here in Crossville it'll cost our life

Matt. 5

11 Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake.

Blessed = Supremely fortunate – happy – well off

Often we equate blessed with material things

Not the Biblical/Scriptural definition of blessed

Look at what Jesus says is blessed Matt. 5

Supremely fortunate, happy and well off are those:

*Who are the poor in spirit,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

*are those who mourn,
For they shall be comforted.*

*Are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
For they shall be filled.*

*Are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

Re-read vs. 11 & 12 with our new definition of **blessed**

Supremely fortunate, happy and well off.....

.....are you when they revile and persecute you and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. ¹² Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven,

- The church in America must develop a willingness to stand up and have some backbone in order to counter the prevailing culture

Daniel 3:1-6

Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was sixty cubits and its width six cubits. He set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon. 2 And King Nebuchadnezzar sent word to gather together the satraps, the administrators, the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. 3 So the satraps, the administrators, the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces gathered together for the dedication of the image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up. 4 Then a herald cried aloud: "To you it is commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, 5 that at the time you hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, and psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, you shall fall down and worship the gold image that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up; 6 and whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.

Dancing to the world's music