

Devoted Part 2 - "A Challenging Invitation" (7-25-21)

Review: Last week new series on Devotion - No matter the difficult circumstances and the hostile culture around us, our character is what determines the course of our life!

1) Saying Yes means saying No

Daniel 1:5 (ESV)

(5) 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 . . .

(8) 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.

Note: Why not eat the food & wine?

- **Not Kosher** - either not butchered properly and/or unclean animals
- **Offered to Idols**

Exodus 34:10, 12, 14-15 (ESV)

(10) And he said, "Behold, I am making a covenant. Before all your people I will do marvels, such as have not been created in all the earth or in any nation. And all the people among whom you are shall see the work of the LORD, for it is an awesome thing that I will do with you . . . (12) Take care, lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land to which you go, lest it become a snare in your midst . . . (14) (for you shall worship no other god, for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God), (15) lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and when they whore after their gods and sacrifice to their gods and you are invited, you eat of his sacrifice

Note: Saying yes to one means saying no to all others!

Marriage - a committed yes, means a no to everyone else!

Devotion to Jesus - a committed and faithful yes to the Lord, means saying no to everyone else!

Titus 3:3 (ESV)

(3) For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another.

Note: Devotion doesn't mean we are better than others, it's an honest acknowledgment of who we are when left to ourselves

Titus 3:4-7 (ESV)

(4) But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, (5) he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, (6) whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, (7) so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Note: Devotion doesn't save us, only Jesus does that. It's a loving response to a wonderful Savior!

Titus 3:8 (ESV)

(8) The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent and profitable for people.

Note: Devotion is the right response to our loving God, and it is good and profitable for us!

2) Challenging yourself means critiquing others

Daniel 1:8-10 (ESV)

(8) 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. (9) And God gave Daniel favor and compassion in the sight of the chief of the eunuchs, (10) and the chief of the eunuchs said to Daniel, “I fear my lord the king, who assigned your food and your drink; for why should he see that you were in worse condition than the youths who are of your own age? So you would endanger my head with the king.”

Note: The minute Daniel starts acting on his devotion it impacts those around him!

- “Look what your devotion might cost me” - **Ashpenaz** (chief of the eunuchs)
- Daniel considers the chief eunuch’s concern & seeks to address it while remaining devoted!
- It’s not an obstinate response, but a faithful & wise response . . .

Daniel 1:11-13 (ESV)

(11) Then Daniel said to the steward whom the chief of the eunuchs had assigned over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, (12) “Test your servants for ten days; let us be given vegetables to eat and water to drink. (13) Then let our appearance and the appearance of the youths who eat the king’s food be observed by you, and deal with your servants according to what you see.”

Note: Daniel holds his ground while being respectful to the authority he’s been placed under!

Notice everyone challenged by Daniel’s devotion:

- **Ashpenaz** (chief of the eunuchs)
- **Melzar** (steward)
- **Youths** - Other captives in training

Notice the tight rope Daniel walks: give in or stand strong

Consider what are you more prone to do:

- Worried about offending others so you compromise your convictions?
- Enjoy “standing strong” so you bully/shame/argue with others!

Titus 3:9-11 (ESV)

(9) But avoid foolish controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels about the law, for they are unprofitable and worthless. (10) As for a person who stirs up division, after warning him once and then twice, have nothing more to do with him, (11) knowing that such a person is warped and sinful; he is self-condemned.

Note: Am I faithfully devoted to Christ - or just to being right?

- Healthy devotion will invite & inspire others!
- Personal Example - Brandon Chesbro & workout / eating habits

1 Timothy 4:7-9 (ESV)

(7) Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather train yourself for godliness; (8) for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come. (9) The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance.

Healthy devotion to the Lord will invite & inspire others!

3) Personal Devotion is an Invitation to Others

Daniel 1:11-12a (ESV)

(11) Then Daniel said to the steward whom the chief of the eunuchs had assigned over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, (12) “Test your servants for ten days . . .

Note: Daniel’s companions chose to participate, and it changed the course of their lives . . .

Daniel 1:14-16 (ESV)

(14) So he listened to them in this matter, and tested them for ten days. (15) At the end of ten days it was seen that they were better in appearance and fatter in flesh than all the youths who ate the king's food. (16) So the steward took away their food and the wine they were to drink, and gave them vegetables.

Note: The difference was clear to others, and their devotion was encouraged and supported!

Daniel 1:17 (ESV)

As for these four youths, God gave them learning and skill in all literature and wisdom, and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.

Note: What God provides for those who trust Him will always be better than what we can accomplish on our own. But it will cost you something!

Daniel 1:18-19 (ESV)

(18) At the end of the time, when the king had commanded that they should be brought in, the chief of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. (19) And the king spoke with them, and among all of them none was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. Therefore they stood before the king.

Note: When we bow only to the Lord, we can stand before kings!

Conclusion: Daniel’s devotion still speaks - will I be inspired to say yes as well as all the no’s along the way?