

“Faithfulness in a World of Compromise,” Daniel 1:9-21

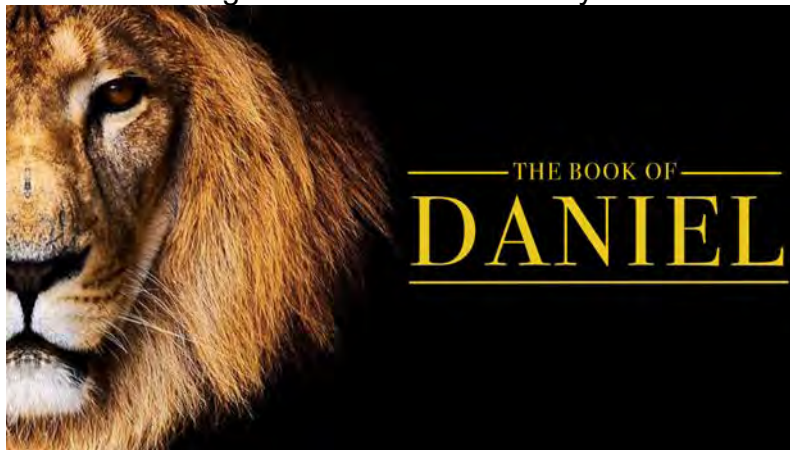
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Today, we live in a world of compromise. Compromise is very subtle. Compromise is a slow fade. It's like a sunset...it seems the sun is going down slow, but suddenly, it's dark before you know it.

Let me give you an example of compromise today. Today, there are people in our country who say they believe in the Bible; and yet, they stay in churches where the Bible isn't taught. Another example are people claim to have convictions about sin, until that sin is committed by their own children. Another example, are people say we must speak out against corruption, until it refers to their company, and saying something might cause them to lose their job. Another example are people who claim to have high moral standards sexually, until they get into a relationship with someone that they “really care about,” and lust takes over and they justify it by saying “we're in love.” Compromise. Yes, people talk the talk, until “walking the talk” costs them...then, they compromise.

We've seen compromise throughout scripture. In the Garden of Eden, Adam compromised God's specific instructions not to eat from a particular tree; and yet, he did and lost paradise. Adam and Eve, should have never been at the tree. Abraham comprised the truth and lied that Sarah was his sister and set up a pattern of generational lying in his family that lasted decades. Samson compromised with Delilah and lost his strength, his eyesight, and ultimately his life. David compromised by not being with his men in battle, so he could indulge in rooftop pornography that led to adultery, the murder of a man and the loss of his own child. Solomon compromised God's word by marrying multiple foreign wives and lost the Kingdom. Judas compromised his supposed love for Jesus for just 30 pieces of silver and lost his soul for eternity.

Compromise. It's a slow fade. Unless you recognize it and make up your mind that you will never give an inch or take the first step in compromising your principles and your trust in God's Word and His commands. Yes, many people compromise, but there are some people who won't and don't. Daniel was one of them. This morning we continue in our study of Daniel.



And we're going to see Daniel's “Faithfulness in a World of Compromise.” Vs 8.

Daniel 1:8-21

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.” 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.” 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. ¹⁷ 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. 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. ²⁰ And in every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters that were in all his kingdom. ²¹ And Daniel was there until the first year of King Cyrus.

Perhaps, outside of Jesus, there is no better illustration of an uncompromising man in the Bible than Daniel. He was a man who never wavered in doing that which was right in the eyes of God. And as we study this fascinating book, we're going to see that he never wavered for over 70 years, as he lived in a pagan country of Babylon, amidst pagan rulers and godless people. Daniel would never compromise. He couldn't be bought...he couldn't be intimidated, he never wavered.

Now, as we continue to break down this passage in Daniel 1, let's be reminded of what Matthew shared with us last week. You'll remember, the Babylonians conquered the southern kingdom of Israel and brought the best and the brightest to Babylon, about 900 miles, (which is modern-day Iraq) BTW...Babylon is a.k.a the land of the Chaldeans, if you hear that phrase. Now, this deportation would have taken been about four-months...a journey taken on foot. We saw this last week:



The first deportation occurred in 605 B.C...with two more loads of people being taken culminating in 586 BC, with the last wave. See the map. See the blue circles...



That's the land of Israel/Judah on the left and Babylon on the right. They're about 900 miles apart.

The Babylonians had a goal for the best and brightest who were taken in the first wave/deportation and that was to brainwash the people of Judah and turn them into Chaldeans. The first step in this brainwashing was to change their names and to begin to cut them off from their history and their heritage and to re-educate them in the ways of Babylon.

Wait a minute...that sounds like what's happening in our country today. Separate us from our past...don't teach history and if you do...change it to suit the woke agenda of the elites...and speaking of changing names...let's just change our gender and change our names...our pronouns and what bathrooms we get to use. Don't you ever think there isn't a brainwashing being attempted in our country today; No, we're not living in a foreign country like Babylon...but the Babylonians (the pagans of our day) are calling the shots. They run our universities and sit in the boardrooms of the fortune 500 companies and dance to the tune of Blackrock and Vanguard, Soros and Klaus Schwab. Oh beware...it's a slow fade and we better understand that the beginning of the process of brainwashing has been taking place in this country for the last 50 years.

For Daniel...they changed his name...wanted to wipe his past by teaching him the pagan ways of the Babylonian system. Next up...change their diets, what they put in their bodies. But this is a big no-no for the Jews. Scripture tells us in Leviticus and Mosaic Law that they have strict dietary laws, and this is where Daniel and his three friends drew the line. They said, in essence: "Ain't happening."

Daniel 1:8

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.

Church, this is so brave and so courageous of Daniel. Daniel was going to buck the system and when you buck the system, it can get really bad and that's where the faith comes in. And remember, faith is not believing in spite of evidence, that's superstition, but obeying in spite of the consequences. His motto could be stated: "I trust the Lord, come what may." Can you say that?
"I trust the Lord, come what may."

Church, we need to understand, when we have to choose between God's Word and the "king's food," the "culture's ways," we have to resolve: "Come what may, I'm not going that way." And that's what Daniel said. After all, he didn't have to be so blatant about the fact that the king's food would "defile him," (that could have come across as pompous or overbearing...but, it was the truth). You see, being faithful to the Lord in a world of compromise is to have an **unwavering boldness to always speak the truth.**

Daniel could have lied and said the king's diet might hurt his stomach, or not "agree with him," but he didn't. **He flat-out told the man in charge the plain truth...** I can't eat the King's food because it will defile me. Defile him? Why? Because it had most likely been offered to idols, and they can't eat meat offered to idols and they can't eat pork, because the Mosaic Law forbid it. Why was this the case? Because, for the Jews, even the food they ate or didn't eat, marked them as a separate people. They didn't eat what everyone else ate. They didn't wear what everyone else wore. Even the way the men wore their hair (long at the temples) was to mark them as Hebrews...Jews. Church, see it this way:

Romans 12:1-2

¹I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. ²Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

You don't compromise. You don't conform. And for Daniel...he was not going to conform to the Babylonian menu, what he had to put in his body. Church family, let me tell you something, the people who really make a difference in this world are the ones who are fearless in the face of difficulty and they're willing to do hard things. They keep marching when everyone else "tucks-tail" and runs. Don't conform. Stay godly. Because godliness, (listen), is not accident, it's a choice, which will lead to victory, even if it's only in the eyes of God. Resolve. That's what Daniel had. Do you?

Let me show you a picture of a modern-day Daniel.



That's Jonathan Isaac of the NBA Team, the Orlando Magic.

He refused to take a knee during the National Anthem when the George Floyd protests were happening back in 2020. He said this:

"I thought that kneeling or wearing the Black Lives Matter t-shirt doesn't go hand-in-hand with supporting black lives... I do believe that black lives matter, but I just felt like it was a decision that I had to make, and I didn't feel like putting that shirt on and kneeling went hand in hand with supporting black lives. I believe that for myself, my life has been supported by

the gospel of Jesus Christ, and everyone is made in the image of God... I think that the gospel of Jesus Christ is that there's grace for us, and that Jesus came and died for our sins and that if we all come to an understanding of that and that God wants to have a relationship with us, we'll see that racism isn't the only thing that plagues our society, that plagues our nation, that plagues our world, and I think coming together on that message, that we want to get past not only racism, but everything that plagues us as a society, I feel like the answer to that is the gospel." Jonathan Isaac, NBA Basketball Player

Jonathan was maliciously maligned for his decision, even though, technically, NBA rules prohibit kneeling during the national anthem. NBA commissioner Adam Silver didn't enforce it. Yet today, God has prospered Jonathan. He has \$17.4 million contract. His jersey is second in sales behind Lebron and he has started his own clothing line: Unitus:



here's some kids wearing it: tagline: True Greatness:



and recently...



His started his own shoe line called Judah, (his middle name), where he has bible verses on them. Jonathan is a modern-day Daniel and he chose to do the hard thing...come what may...and God blessed him.

Church family, I want you to think back with me to when Daniel and his three friends were ripped from their parents' arms in Israel. They were lads...teens. Can you imagine... I thought of Hamas

coming in and ripping the families apart in Israel on October 7th. The horror of all of that...the thoughts of never seeing your family again. But in the midst of all of that...Daniel and Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, they RESOLVED. I believe they reverted back to what they had been taught by rock solid parents. Parents who had trained their children for such a time as this.

Mom and dad how are you raising your kids? Are you preparing and training them to do hard things? To have resolve? Listen parents, you will either purpose in your hearts to do this...or you won't. It's that simple. And you'll do what matters to do. People do what they want to do. So, you'll either go the way of least resistance and compromise and stick a screen in their hands 75% of the time you're with them, (so you can go do your thing), or you will take that brief window of time and pour the things of God into them...renewing their minds...so they can know the will of God. Yes, you'll either raise kids who are entertained, or who are equipped. I promise you the schools aren't going to do it.

Mom and dad, if your children don't begin to exhibit a resolute character when they're let's say: 8...I promise you, they won't have that kind of character when they're 18. Charles Spurgeon said it this way...and I believe this applies to kids as well:

“He who does not serve God where he is, would not serve God anywhere else.” Charles Spurgeon

Parents, last thing on this subject: if you're not expecting your children to do something simple like chores, or learn to have the ability to tell themselves, “No,” or to tell the truth, or to be kind, to be respectful, to be honorable...when they're little...I promise you, they won't magically embody these characteristics as a teenager. You will have waited too long. Not Daniel's parents. Not his friends' parents. I'm convinced they started young and didn't waver in teaching their sons to have RESOLVE.

Well, the chief of eunuchs saw this resolve in Daniel. Watch...

Daniel 1:9

⁹ And God gave Daniel favor and compassion in the sight of the chief of the eunuchs

Let me quickly point out what Matthew showed us last week... It's highly possible that Daniel and his three friends had been made into eunuchs (castrated). Why was this potentially true? #1 Because they were serving in the King's palace around the King's women... #2, who do we know that was over them? Ashpenaz, the “Chief of the Eunuchs.”

Here's the important thing...Church what we just read is a phenomenal phrase: “And God gave Daniel favor and compassion...” God did it...not Daniel. This whole situation was wrought by God and because of God's favor, His mercy and grace...Daniel succeeded. That's the sovereignty of God. But there is also man's responsibility. You see, Daniel had to be prepared for the moment. The moment could not be bigger than him. He was ready/prepared...and this happened because of the training of his parents as he grew up in Judah...so, the moment came...he didn't wilt. He HAD ALREADY DECIDED BEFOREHAND HE WOULD NOT DEFILE HIMSELF. He had made up his mind: NO COMPROMISE.

Listen, Daniel didn't try to play politics with Ashpenaz. He didn't have to concoct some sort of scheme to try to get out of this predicament. No, he just stayed locked in...trusting God...waiting for Him to move on His behalf. Do you understand...brothers/sisters, when you and I try to do it our way...if we try to compromise...like for Daniel saying something like... “Hey dude... I'm allergic to this food...” God won't use that. In fact, in my experience, God will let you do it your way and remove His divine protection from the whole situation. Daniel stayed resolute. I'm not eating this food against God's commands! But the chief of eunuchs was afraid...

Daniel 1:10-13

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." 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."

Ashpenaz was like: "Look, I like you Daniel...you're a straight up guy...but I'm not going to lose my head over you. This plan isn't going to work." So, Daniel gets turned down. So, will he pitch a fit...stage a protest, try to burn the palace down...shouting and chanting: "No vegetables, no peace!" No, Daniel is calm, cool and collected and he uses his head...he offered the #2 guy...the steward who worked for Ashpenaz an alternative...an alternative that I believe God put in the mind of Daniel.

The bottom line for Daniel is this: You see, you can change our names and make us learn all of the ways of Babylon and your false gods...but you can't make us take into our bodies that which would defile us before God Almighty. We answer to Him, not to you. Daniel told him the truth and church, I'll tell you something...see it on the screens...

The more you tell the truth, the stronger you'll get!!

Listen, when you lie and try to manipulate to "worm your way out" of a tough situation, you'll get weaker, not stronger. And over time, you will become hardened and conniving. Look at the political situation in this country. Look at the lies and the deceit. Look at how our courts, our judges are filled with such corruption...bought and paid for, if you ask me...people who will do anything for money and power. They'll compromise all day, every day, for money, power and prestige.

I want to remind you of a verse in Isaiah...that was written to the nation of Israel...God's chosen people...but it still applies to us today...for we are adopted into the family of God by our salvation:

Isaiah 43:2

²When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you.

Take heart...stand for truth...don't compromise and watch God work. What would the steward do?

Daniel 1:14

¹⁴ So he listened to them in this matter, and tested them for ten days.

Now, let's think about this entire situation from a realistic point of view. Daniel and his three friends were going to be eating vegetables for 10 days...and that was supposed to make them bigger and stronger in appearance versus the guys eating tons meat and protein? No, that doesn't make sense. No, this was going to be a "God-thing." Can you see that? Daniel knew that and his friends were going to have to trust God to make them stronger and "fatter" (healthier) with just vegetables. This would be a miracle, and they knew it. And they also knew, they could die. But they will not go against God!

Can I ask you a question? Do you believe God will do supernatural things in your life if you trust Him? He certainly can. Listen, it's not hard for God to do anything that He wants to do if it accomplishes His will. He's looking for faith. He's looking for trust. He's looking for obedience. But so often, we circumvent God's provision because of our lack of faith and obedience.

You see, here's the issue. Most people fear man more than they do God. Daniel knows he could make the King angry and it could kill him, but he's not backing down. He's ready to pay the price, come what may.

But what about us? Will you compromise...after all...if you say that God made only two sexes: male and female you may offend...make someone upset or mad, be accused of showing a "lack of love," all because you won't compromise...play the game...it's a guy, but he wants to be called a girl. That's not helping anybody. Lies don't help a single soul. But the truth will. The truth will set you free. The best thing we can do is tell the truth and help the person deal with the truth of who they are and walk them through the darkness of their confusion into the light of the truth and embrace God's plan for their lives. The question is: will we trust the Lord, or will we worry more about what man may do to us. That was Daniel's dilemma. Well, here we go...

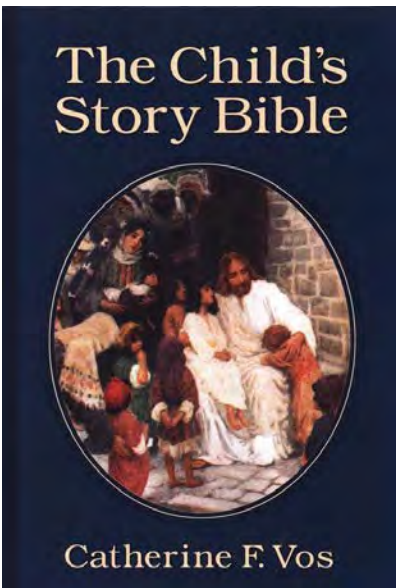
Daniel 1:15-17

¹⁵At 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. ¹⁶So the steward took away their food and the wine they were to drink, and gave them vegetables. ¹⁷As for these four youths, God gave them learning and skill in all literature and wisdom, and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.

Who gave them ability to learn? God did. Think about it. You understand, these young men were given a totally pagan education. They had no choice but to learn it...but they didn't have to live by it. They chose to live by God's word, not man's word. Problem is: for so many of our young people today, they aren't prepared for our pagan culture. They go off to secular colleges and many of them get destroyed. Their foundation wasn't strong enough.

Listen, I don't have a problem with our young people learning say, "the theory of evolution." That shouldn't throw them off...knowing that God created everything in six days...not some random explosion in space. I see it like this: like a chemist handling poison, to discover their properties...you have to handle them very carefully...you just don't let it get on you. And that's how I see so much of what's being taught today. Our young people have to handle it...but you just don't let it get on you. And that comes by way of a strong foundation in Scripture to be able handle (have the spiritual rubber gloves) so as not to be hurt by the poison.

Mom and Dad, do you children have a strong foundation in Scripture? Do you expect your children to read the Bible? You should! Are you reading the Bible to them? We're doing the chronological Bible study here at the church (see the app or go online to sign up)...but, for those families with really small children, may I recommend this Story Bible.



Pam and I used this story Bible with all of our kids, and you can get it at CBD.com for \$21. It's an excellent resource for those with young children...and will help you teach and train them.

“Training and education are very important, but they are no substitute for the ability and wisdom that only God can give through His Word.” Warren Wiersbe

You see, you and I can have all the learning of this world...and be totally ignorant...just look at the so-called “educated” elites who run Harvard, Yale and Princeton. They think they're so smart...but they're puppets...they can't even say what Hamas did to Israel was evil. But, for Daniel, he would become the vehicle of God's divine revelation about how it's all going to end. God gave Daniel divine prophecies of the End Times to come...and we'll see that as we go along in this book.

Well, it's time for the inspection by the king. It's “exam day.”

Daniel 1:18-20

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. ²⁰ And in every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters that were in all his kingdom.

This would have been so nerve-wracking, don't you think? I mean, just because you serve the Lord, it doesn't mean you won't be put into some tough situations. Imagine, being perhaps 17 or 18 years old by this time...standing in front of the most powerful man in the world...a man who could snap his fingers, and off comes your head. Yet, these 4 young men are unwavering-trusting **TOTALLY** in God.

BTW, you know it's interesting...Daniel never would compromise his faith, even though he would serve in the King's court...not just Nebuchadnezzar's but others as well...ending with Cyrus.

Daniel 1:21

²¹ And Daniel was there until the first year of King Cyrus.

If you study the history of Daniel's service, he would serve through the reigns of Nebuchadnezzar, Darius, Belshazzar and finally, Cyrus... Church, that's 70 years of service. And let me tell you, seeing the mention of Cyrus reminds me that it was this King...the King of Persia who would be the one who allowed the captives of Israel to return to their homeland. I love this depiction of them heading home...



God gave Daniel such amazing influence, influence that I believe directly led to the decree of King Cyrus to send the people back to their homeland and ultimately to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem under Nehemiah. Do you understand the magnitude of what I'm saying? Because of the uncompromising faith of Daniel, a teenager, an entire nation's future would be changed forever.

Are you compromising? Daniel didn't. Oh, it will take courage and boldness and trust in God and His Word. It will take great faith that will be tested...but a faith that can withstand anything this world has to offer, when you put God in the equation. Don't compromise! Trust in the Lord...let Him take your life and do with it as He pleases, and watch what He does...your life will be, like Daniel's and his friends, "ten times greater" than all of the others of this world.
