

Undivided Loyalty

Icebreaker:

Have you ever put so much time or energy into one part of your life (like a relationship, a job, or a hobby) that other important areas started to get ignored? What did that cost you?

Discussion:

- 1) *Daniel has just seen his homeland destroyed and is now living under the authority of a powerful king who gives him food he is not supposed to eat.
What kinds of pressure (emotional, physical, or social) do you think Daniel was feeling in that moment?
Daniel 1:3-5, 8*
- 2) *Daniel refuses the king's order, even though many people from his nation had already abandoned their commitments to God.
Why do you think Daniel chose to stay faithful when others did not?*
- 3) *If you were in Daniel's position (far from home, under authority, and at risk) what do you think would have been hardest for you?
Would you have spoken up, stayed silent, or gone along to make life easier?*
- 4) *In everyday life, compromise often looks like the easier or safer option.
What practical steps can help us stay loyal to God and his Word when giving in feels more convenient?*

Edification:

- It is not hard to believe that Daniel had grown up hearing the stories of old from a synagogue in Judah. Perhaps even how David stood before Goliath when no one else would. It is evident to see that the other Hebrew boys he associated with had a similar resolve (**Daniel 3:17-18**). Through both community (though very small) and personal faith, Daniel stood with resolve when the Word he had been taught and loved so much was challenged with compromise.
- What many would likely struggle with the most, is being deferential to the authority of a King who could make life miserable in a hurry. In our modern day, where comfort is king, we are often quick to stand-down when the proverbial "La-Z-Boy" is pulled out from under us. (**John 19:12-13**)
- You will not be faithful to that which you do not nurture consistently. In other words what you pour your life into will be the very thing you remain true to, even when it is inconvenient.
- When we develop an inherent love for God's Word we will by virtue stand for it in adverse situations. During a time when God was seemingly far away, a simple word carried Daniel in the midst of exile and led him one of the greatest encounters of his life. (**Daniel 9**)
- Knowing the voice of a shepherd who cares for you will give you the confidence to reject every other voice trying to get you to follow them.
- When we live with undivided loyalty, in covenant with God, we can rest assured that he will walk with us even in exile. (**Daniel 1:9; Proverbs 16:7**)