

Aveleigh Year of The Bible, Sept. 23 2018
Sermon Series: FAITH UNSHAKABLE!— Part 3 of 9
Nine Weekly Reflections On Daniel’s Life & Book
Text: Daniel 1: 17-21 p. 947

Sermon, DANIEL’S THIRD TEST: WHEN YOUR FAITH IS CHALLENGED

“When the three-year training was completed, the chief official brought all the young men to King Nebuchadnezzar. The king talked with each of them, and none impressed him as much as Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. So they were appointed to his regular staff as advisers! In all matters requiring wisdom and balanced judgment, the king found the advice of these young men to be ten times better than that of all the magicians and enchanters in his entire kingdom!”
21 And Daniel remained there until the first year of King Cyrus. Daniel 1:18-20

INTRO: BRIEF HISTORY OF AMERICAN PUBLIC EDUCATION

1776

1933

1961

1962-3

SO, what can you do when your faith is challenged?

1. DECIDE IN ADVANCE TO STAND FOR GOD.

“Daniel made up his mind not to defile himself. . .” Daniel 1:8a

“Start with God — the first step in learning is bowing down to God; only fools thumb their noses at such wisdom and learning.” Proverbs 1:7 (Mes)

KNOWLEDGE is, _____ WISDOM is, _____

“All wisdom comes from the Lord, and so do common sense and understanding. God gives helpful advice to everyone who obeys him and protects all of those who live as they should.”
Proverbs 2:6-7 (CEV)

2. NEVER STOP LEARNING.

“Wise men and women are always learning, always listening for fresh insights.”
Proverbs 18:15 (Mes)

“Study to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that isn’t ashamed.”
2 Timothy 2:15 (KJV)

“Those who get wisdom do themselves a favor, and those who love learning will succeed.”
Proverbs 19:8 (NCV)

3. STEEP YOURSELF IN GOD'S WORD.

“Study God’s Word continually. Meditate on it day and night so you may be sure to obey all that’s written in it. If you do you will be prosperous and successful.” Joshua 1:8

I must KNOW_____ the truth in order to RECOGNIZE_____ the lies.

4. CHOOSE BELIEVERS AS MY BEST FRIENDS.

“The happiest people — the ones God blesses — don’t WALK with those who suggest doing wrong, don’t STAND with those who like to sin, and don’t SIT AROUND with cynics who deny God.” Psalm 1:1-2

5. STAY CONNECTED TO A CHURCH

“Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another . . .” Hebrews 10:25a (NIV)

6. REMEMBER THAT GOD WILL REWARD ME.

Jesus: “Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.” Matthew 5:11-12 (NIV)

PRAYER: Loving God, When others belittle our faith in You, grant us Faith Unshakable. Amen.

FOUR FOR THE ROAD: “Start with God - the first step in learning is bowing down to God; only fools thumb their noses at such wisdom and learning.” *Proverbs 1:7 (Mes)*

1. *Starting with God requires that you read the Bible to acquire wisdom and learning. How can you set yourself up to take a stand for God? Have you ever been belittled because of your beliefs and how did defend your faith in God? Please share your story.*

“Your commandments give me great understanding. It’s no wonder I can see and hate every false way of life.”

Psalm 119:104 (NLT)

2. *Reflect on a time you encountered the living Christ through the Scriptures. If you remember, share with the group what you were reading at the time. How does Scripture help you know (not intellectually, but in your heart) about Jesus or about yourself? Then, as a group, discuss how meditating on the Bible’s truth could positively change your life and/or how you relate to others.*

“Do not be misled: ‘Bad company corrupts good character.’” 1 Corinthians 15:33 (NIV)

3. *If bad company corrupts good character, then it follows that we should choose believers as our best friends. What poor choices about friends you have made in your life? Share a significant character changing experience with the group.*

“Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another . . .”

Hebrews 10:25a (NIV)

4. *Have each member share a time when their faith was strong. What key relationships with other believers kept their faith growing? How does a small group help members hold firm in love, compassion, joy and commitment to the ways of Jesus? Encourage one another by explaining how group members filled you with hope during difficult times.*

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DANIEL'S THIRD TEST: WHEN YOUR FAITH IS CHALLENGED

Call: Today is a day for worship!

Response: We have come to worship!

Call: Today is a day to rejoice!

Response: We have come to rejoice!

Call: Today is a day to declare God's greatness!

Response: We have come to declare God's greatness!

Call: Today is a day to hear from the LORD!

Response: We have come to hear from the LORD!

All: God, we worship you today for you are great and greatly to be praised!

Prayer of Confession, Loving God, we know that in every generation you call forth prophets to proclaim your word. We give you thanks that you are still speaking even today. Your Spirit inspires the young to see visions of a new creation and elders to dream of a time not yet known.

Yet we confess that we fail to hear your voice when it comes from an unexpected place. Convinced that we are right, we miss the Good News of your reconciling love.

We confess that too often enough is not enough. We confess our unwillingness to live with less, to part with possessions. We confess that too often we sacrifice what is sacred for that which is profane.

Forgive us, God. Restore us with humility and awaken us anew to your presence and grant us faith Unshakable. Amen.

Mitch's pastoral prayer not in bulletin, Oh God, how we love you! We do not say it enough. We love you. We want our actions to demonstrate our love; we want our words to communicate our deep affection for you. We love you because you first loved us. Thank you for showing us what true love is. May our hearts' first desire be toward you, and may our lives never stop telling you how much we love you. Receive our worship today as an outpouring of our love. We give all of this to you in your name