

Faithfulness

Introduction

1. We live in a world that makes it very difficult to be faithful to God.
2. 1 Pet. 4:3-4: They think it strange and persecute us because we do not walk in the same ways as they do.
3. But God shows us through His servants in times past how we can overcome this challenge and continue to serve Him in truth and righteousness.

Discussion

I. The Faithfulness of Daniel.

A. Daniel upheld God's standard (Dan. 1:3-16).

1. Young man, torn away from his home in Jerusalem. His nation was taken into captivity because they had forsaken God to serve other gods. Daniel was one of the faithful few.
2. Ezekiel was a contemporary of Daniel to whom God described Judah as "*impudent and stubborn*" (2:4), and their character as "*briars*" and "*thorns*" and "*scorpions*" (2:6).
3. He came out from a people who rejected God and into a nation that did not know God.
4. Notice one very important statement made concerning Daniel's attitude: "*But Daniel purposed in his heart...*" (Dan. 1:8).

B. Daniel upheld God's righteousness in his conduct (Dan. 6:3-4).

1. Though he came out of a rebellious nation and into a heathen nation, he did not use that as an excuse to "act out" or forsake God's ways.
2. He faced pressure on both sides to change, but he held fast to God's righteousness.
3. He was as a light shining in the darkness.

C. Daniel was devoted to God, even when his life was on the line (Dan. 6:5-12)

1. Vs. 7, 10: His faithfulness to God was constant.
2. His character was flawless. The other Babylonian leaders knew that the only way to "get rid of him" was to attack the law to which he was so unwaveringly devoted.

D. Daniel's character is an example of true faithfulness.

1. This is perfectly stated in Dan. 6:4: "*...but they could find no charge or fault, because he was faithful.*"
2. His faithfulness to God and to the law of God was unwavering. He was completely devoted to righteousness without thought of personal sacrifice.

3. He was faithful because he knew that no matter how far his own people digressed and no matter how wicked the Babylonians were, God did not change, and neither did His law.
4. Daniel was faithful because he knew that obedience to God was far more important than even his own life!
5. The faithfulness that Daniel exemplified is greatly needed among God's people today!

II. Faithfulness Needed Today

- A. Pressure from the world is only getting worse.
 1. Our society once respected the idea of religion and the Bible; from there it merely put up with it; now religion, God, the Bible are being discouraged and even frowned upon; but what is next?
 2. As in other nations throughout history, our government and society in general are beginning to actively fight against God, religion and truth.
 3. Like Daniel: Dan. 6:5 – find fault against them concerning the law of their God.
 - a. Truth in religion, dancing, abortion, sexual immorality, homosexuality, etc.
 - b. Once ours was another point of few, now the truth is being considered “hate talk” and speaking the truth is being outlawed.
 4. Christians in America are finding that our culture is becoming more and more like the Babylon in Daniel's day.
- B. The biggest challenge for God's people is in learning true faithfulness before it's too late.
 1. Many Christians do not view God's law as an unbending, unchanging standard, but as guidelines that can be compromised when in conflict with convenience.
 2. It can be seen by the direction many congregations are going in that many Christians do not fully understand the meaning of true faithfulness.
 3. Cite examples of moral and doctrinal decline in the church
- C. Daniel's example important, for current as well as future generation.
 1. Parents, teachers, and other leaders in the church today have a great challenge striving against the moral decline.
 2. But the future generation will be persecuted for taking such a stand (2 Tim. 3:12).
 3. If we do not learn how to be faithful to God and His law, then we will sink right along with the world around us.
 4. We need to learn to be like Daniel

III. Becoming A Modern Day Daniel:

- A. Recognize unchanging nature of God's word (Dan. 2:8).
 1. Not change when men disagree.
 2. Not change when science disagrees.
 3. Not change when lives are at stake.
- B. Uphold God's righteousness regardless of social decline (Dan. 6:3-4).

1. Since the world is sinking farther and farther, the void between them and us will become greater and greater.
 2. But we must not fear men.
 3. Like Daniel, we must pursue God's righteousness, even when men plot against us, pass laws against God's word, and actively persecute us for righteousness' sake.
- C. Retain devotion to God and His ways, even when our lives are on the line.
1. Dan. 6:10: When Daniel "knew" that the law had been passed, he went and did exactly as he had been doing his whole life.
 2. Worship to God not easily forsaken. If we can forsake it without a second thought, what will happen when we are pressured to change the way we worship?
- D. We need to be faithful like all of God's servants.
1. Elijah—who served God when all alone.
 2. Jesus, who looked to the joy that was set before Him (Heb. 12:2).
 3. Paul, who saw only the glory of eternal life (Phil. 3:8ff).

Conclusion

1. What about you? Do you have faith? Are you faithful?
2. Faithfulness to God is not arbitrary.
3. God is true, His word is truth, the promises of eternal life are reality. But if we are not faithful in all things we can lose all of that.
4. Are you willing to "*purpose in your heart*" to be faithful to God as Daniel did?

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