**Keeping the Commitment**

**Daniel 1:1-21**

**Day 29 and Beyond**

**Week Five**

Daniel lived in the days of the Babylonian takeover of Israel. Daniel was drafted into the personal service of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. King Nebuchadnezzar set out on a plan to make-over certain youth of Israel. Nebuchadnezzar wanted to direct the learning, the diet, and the way of life of certain young men. At the end of this “training” period, the hope was that these young men would serve the king. Daniel, even as a young man, recognized Nebuchadnezzar’s plan. Daniel recognized immediately that at the core of Nebuchadnezzar’s plan was the hope that Daniel would turn from his faith in the God of Israel. Though it would have been easy to go the way of many, Daniel had a different resolve.

Daniel 1:8 is the place to start in this text. “But Daniel purposed in his heart…” Here’s the key. We have sought the Lord for personal revival over the course of the last 28 days. Now what? What about Day 29? If these last 28 days have meant anything at all, what we do next is incredibly important. There must be a resolve, an unwavering commitment.

I want us to consider the characteristics of the kind of commitment necessary to live in a state of personal revival.

**Commitment is inseparable from conviction.**

The first thing that we learn from Daniel and his three friends is that commitment is inseparable from conviction. We generally do what we have the conviction to do.

The King set out to change their way of . . .

* Thinking (v.4)—The king wanted them to learn a new language and new literature.
* Living (v.5)—The king wanted to change their diet. Their diet represented more than just the things they ate and drank. For these Hebrew young men, their diet represented a way of life—a godly way of life.
* Worship (v.7)—Most of all, at the heart of the king’s agenda, was his desire to change their worship. We notice this in the names. Whereas there has been much discussion on the significance of the meaning of the names, it is generally recognized that their Hebrew names all had something to do with the one true God. Their new names have something to do with referencing pagan gods.

The statement made about Daniel in 1:8 is a reference to his strong conviction that he was going to remain true to the one true God.

We must come to the place in our lives where we believe that some things are right and some things are wrong.

**Commitment is strengthened by community.**

Don’t let it escape your notice that Daniel’s resolve was strengthened by the resolve of others.

* Daniel and his 3 friends purposed together.

*As iron sharpens iron, so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend.*

*Proverbs 27:17*

* Daniel and his 3 friends prayed together. (2:17-18)
* Find a Church and find some friends who will help you to live out your commitment to Christ.

C. S. Lewis said, “The next best thing to being wise oneself is to live in a circle with those who are.”

**Commitment is necessary for future challenges.**

Daniel’s resolve to not eat the king’s food and drink the king’s drink was not his last challenge to his convictions. There were greater challenges to come. From this we must learn:

* Today’s test of your commitment is preparation for tomorrow’s crisis.
* When we obey, the next time is easier.  
  + It is also true that when we disobey, it is more difficult to obey the next time.

I love the story about Athanasius, early bishop of Alexandria. Athanasius opposed the teachings of Arius, who declared that Christ was not the eternal Son of God, but a subordinate being. He was finally summoned before emperor Theodosius, who demanded he cease his opposition to Arius. The emperor reproved him and asked, “Do you not realize that all the world is against you?” Athanasius quickly answered, “Then I am against all the world.”

Jeremiah 12:5 says, “If you have run with the footmen, and they have wearied you, then how can you contend with the horses? And if in the land of peace, in which you trusted, they wearied you, then how will you do in the floodplain of the Jordan?”

Dear Christian, it is time that we realize that in order to carry out the plans that God has for us we must have resolve—commitment. May God find that in each of us today.