

A Purposed Heart

Daniel 1:1-21

Counter Culture

Intro: Daniel Story - When I was a kid, I used to love to watch the Daniel Boone show.

A) Come home from school and my afternoon routine was Daniel Boone and the Lone Ranger.
– Snack

B) Fess Parker played Daniel Boone, the American frontiersmen who – because of his exploits – became one of the first American Folk hero's

C) TODAY – we begin looking at another Daniel

D) **A remarkable young man who because of his faith in God and His commitment to God**
1) Influenced Kings, countries and World History!

E) Consider how his story begins

In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. ²And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with some of the articles of the house of God, which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the articles into the treasure house of his god.

³Then the king instructed Ashpenaz, the master of his eunuchs, to bring some of the children of Israel and some of the king's descendants and some of the nobles, ⁴young men in whom *there was* no blemish, but good-looking, gifted in all wisdom, possessing knowledge and quick to understand, who *had* ability to serve in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the language and literature of the Chaldeans.

⁵And the king appointed for them a daily provision of the king's delicacies and of the wine which he drank, and three years of training for them, so that at the end of *that time* they might serve before the king. ⁶Now from among those of the sons of Judah were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. ⁷To them the chief of the eunuchs gave names: he gave Daniel *the name*

Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abed-Nego.”

Now King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon was a brilliant guy, here's one of the things that made him so brilliant.

A) When he would conquer a major metropolitan ancient city,

B) Instead of just destroying the city and enslaving everybody,

1) He gave his commanders these instructions:

C) Go into the city and arrest and take captive all the royal family,

1) **The best and the brightest**, because the royal family was generally the most educated.

D) The royal family was also generally the prettiest.

1) They generally were the people who had eaten well and had taken care of themselves and been taken care of.

E) Go into the city and take as captive the best and the brightest, and bring them safely back to Babylon.

And so Nebuchadnezzar had the habit of importing the prettiest people in the world

A) And the **smartest people** in the world into his capital city.

B) Then he would put them in a 3 year training program that would **slowly strip away all of their culture and replace it with Babylonian culture.**

C) The Result would be – that Babylon his capital city which was a magnificent city, would end up

1) Full of **brilliant people, the brightest scholars** in all the world & the **prettiest people** in the world.

D) **It was a Brilliant plan**

So, in 605 B.C. he sends his armies into the city of Jerusalem, conquers Jerusalem.

A) They go into the temple, the ancient temple that Solomon had built, pretty much destroys the temple

B) It was the Babylonian way of showing – **Our god is stronger than your god**

C)He enriches himself with Israel's gold, and he brings back to Babylon **Israel's best and brightest.**

1)And four of these young people that he brought with him are very famous people you've heard of.

D)Daniel is one; the other three are Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.

1)They were part of this entourage that he captured and brought to the city of Babylon.

E)These four young men with probably 50-75 other young men who are all around 14-15 yrs old

Imagine what that must have been like?

A)**Families most likely killed** – homeland defeated.

Everything held dear is gone – carted off **thru desert.**

B)Imagine traveling 1500 miles across the plains of Shinar which are completely flat.

1)Imagine weeks and weeks of walking through the hot desert all you see is sand and little vegetation.

C)Suddenly out of no where it seems is this humungous city in the distance

1)Unlike anything you have every seen before.

C)The city of Babylon was **six times larger** than **London is today.** 200 sq miles

1)330 ft walls surrounded the city - **60 miles of Walls**

D)200 Brass gates 80ft high – 180 Towers on the walls.

1)JERUSALEM would have seemed like a truck stop in comparison. - **Imagine the look on their faces**

Your kids first time at Disneyland – Wide eyed – starring in **AMAZEMENT!**

A)That is what Babylon must of seemed like to these young men. – **Endless possibilities**

B)Especially when they discovered that they were not going to be prisoners – **BUT PAMPERED**

1)They were entering into a 3year all expenses paid training Program – **a three year masters program**

C) Three year free college education and a food allowance that comes right off the kings table.

D)Most of these young men were probably high fiving one another.

1)We thought we were going to be tortured and killed like our parents

E)Or slaves – working in the Salt mines or copper mines – **This is AMAZING!!! Live in palace eat....**

For three years they WOULD LIVE like Princes Living LARGE

A)But Their schooling was not so much to **inform** them in the customs and culture of Babylon – but MORE TO **FORM** THEM!

B)It was a slow subtle INDOCTRINATION into the The Babylonian mindset

C)The whole process was meant to wear down their resistance. Weaken their resolve.

1)To **slowly strip away their attachment to their homeland, their heritage, their religion** and their God!

D)They even sought to change **their identity** by changing their names.

1)Took away their Jewish names – and gave them names after Babylonian gods.

- ❖ Daniel = God is Judge – changed to – **Beltshazzar = Baal protects**
- ❖ Hananiah = God is gracious, changed to Shadrach – illumined by Raw
- ❖ Mishael = Who is like the Lord - becomes Meshach – Who is like Aku
- ❖ Azariah = The Lord is our help changed to Abed-Nego (meaning *Servant of Nego*).

So let me ask you this question: How would your 14 year old handle that situation?

A)Better yet how would you fair in that situation?

How are you HANDLING IT now?

B) We live in a Babylonian Culture that has been subtly seeking to indoctrinate us for years.

1) **Change our mindset** – weaken our resolve get us to forget our identity – who we are in Christ!

C) In fact we have reached a point haven't we where **this indoctrination isn't SO subtle anymore.**

1) **It is thrown right in our face** - You want to be accepted believe this way. Accept this mindset

D) Don't be one of those Radical fundamentalist Bible thumping uncool – Christian Freaks

1) **The Lines are being drawn my friends**

How are you dealing with that?

A) Daniel seems to see through this plan – He recognized something – many of us completely miss

B) Daniel seemed to realize **that Compromise does not erase the tension.**

1) It only weakens the resolve.

C) We tend to think: **If I give in a little bit – the tension will go away –**

1) I won't feel tempted anymore.
SO WRONG !!!!

DANIEL knew better than that. Compromise does not erase the temptation it only weakens the Resolve

A) SEE If you cheat in something once, it's way easier to cheat the second time.

B) OR Once you cross certain lines of debt and compounding debt,

1) It's just easier to **take on more debt.**

C) **Once you compromise with alcohol or recreational drugs,**

1) It's just easier the second time.

D) Think about it – that second cigarette is way easier than that first cigarette.

E) There are so many lines, that once you cross them, the tension doesn't go away, it's just that your resolve is lessened.

Daniel saw this and he realized:

A) They've **changed** my **clothes**, they've changed my **name**, they've changed my **habits**, and they've changed my **schedule**.

B) **I see where this is going.** One day I will have completely abandoned everything I hold near and dear to my heart

C) And so Daniel decided to do something that I want to encourage all of us to do.

1) Daniel made **a Decision** not knowing the end of the story: He Didn't know he'd **End up in the Bible V.8**

⁸ But Daniel **purposed in his heart** that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank; therefore he requested of the chief of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself

Daniel Purposed in His Heart!

A) Some translations rendered it Daniel resolved, Daniel determined in his heart!

B) **Daniel made a strong decision** – He was not going to defile himself.

1) The word for Defile carries the thought of *polluting, staining*.

C) When all the other young men **were going with the flow of the culture.**

Principle: Decisions not intentions will determine your destination – Where you end up.

A) You might have all the intentions in the world of being a Godly husband –

B) But if the **decisions** you make with your priorities and your time take you in the **opposite direction**

1) You will never be a godly husband

C) You might have **all the intention in the world** to be a great Dad to your kids.

1) But if **decide** to spend all your time at **work or** in your **hobbies** – NEVER GOING TO HAPPEN.

D) Daniel made a strong decision here – that would radically influence HIS DESTINY

1) Daniel said – Not defile myself

E) We are only talking food right? – **What Big deal?**

Why would Daniel and his friends consider the king's food defiled?

A) Either offered to idols - participating in their idolatry and acknowledging their gods

B) OR not kosher. Special diet to avoid certain foods like pork – meat with blood – **Ceremonially unclean**

C) Either way Daniel said: **I am not doing that!**

1) Could have said: when in Rome... when in Babylon.

What happens in Babylon, Stays in Babylon.

Daniel seems to recognize there is **more at stake here than food!** – He doesn't want to defile himself

A) So Daniel purposes in his heart – not DOING that

B) NOTE V.8 again - The narrative is going along – Daniel is being put through the process –

1) They change his name – he can't do anything about that –

C) And – THEN in v.8 we read **But Daniel** – STOP - He is going to make a stand

D) Notice the result V.9 - **Now God** had brought Daniel into the favor and goodwill of the chief of the eunuchs.

C) Whenever there is a **But Daniel** – there is always a **NOW GOD** {True in OUR LIVES TOO!

GOD blesses those who stand up for Him!

A) God gives Daniel Favor with his caretaker.

¹⁰ And the chief of the eunuchs said to Daniel, "I fear my lord the king, who has appointed your food and drink. For why should he see your faces looking worse than the young men who are your age? Then you would endanger my head before the king." {Serious – I don't want to die!

¹¹ So Daniel said to the steward whom the chief of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishaël, and Azariah, ¹² "Please test your servants for ten days, and let them give us vegetables to eat and water to drink. ¹³ Then let our appearance be examined before you, and the

appearance of the young men who eat the portion of the king's delicacies; and as you see fit, so deal with your servants." ¹⁴ So he consented with them in this matter, and tested them ten days.

¹⁵ And at the end of ten days their features appeared better and fatter in flesh than all the young men who ate the portion of the king's delicacies. ¹⁶ Thus the steward took away their portion of delicacies and the wine that they were to drink, and gave them vegetables.

THE TEST:

A) Daniel comes up with this plan. He says – I don't want to eat this ceremonially unclean food.

B) I don't think God wants me to eat it either – So I am going to trust God – **He will make up for what is lacking IF WE DON'T EAT IT!**

1) SO HE says let's do a test: 10 days and see if your servants are not more healthy.

B) Daniel is putting his entire trust in what he knows to be true of God!

1) He believes God is faithful.

C) He might have had questions about being brought into captivity –

D) But He leaned back on what He did know – God is faithful – I am going to trust Him.

1) Make a stand and believe He is going to bless.

Guys we need to learn from this lesson.

A) We are living in an age where people are working harder and longer hours than ever before.

B) When the economy collapsed in 2008, many companies – had to lay people off.

1) Asked remaining employees to work longer and harder. {What choice do I have – I want a job right

C) Now that the economy has recovered a bit – **the demands haven't**

1) Many companies are still functioning **with a lean and mean mentality.** -

D) They are getting **more for less** – so why change it!

E) Puts Christian men in a tough position:
Working more – less time for family, less time for the Lord

1) No time for Service in Church –

Constant prayer – Cover me in your grace with my family - I have to work - TENSION

A) But what if you did what Daniel did here?

B) See Daniel had a conviction: Not eat food – Honor the Lord.

C) As men we have a conviction: priorities -
#1 The Lord – #2 Family – #3 The Body -
#4 Profession.

What would happen if we prayed: Lord I want to be faithful to You, My family, My Church.

A) **Cover me by your grace at work.** - Lord make up for my Lack at work.

B) What does that look like practically? Well let's say you are working 60-70 hrs a week. – **All your time**

C) You did like Daniel and went to your boss and said: I am working too many hrs.

1) **No time for my family, My Church, - TEST crazy**

D) Let me cut back and do 40-50 hrs for 10 days or a month – **be reasonable in request**

1) See if I am not more productive than I was before or anyone else for that matter? (**Doesn't work – back**)

E) **Here is what you are doing:** You are saying God I believe – You want my priorities to be different

1) I am going to try and make that happen and trust you to **fill in the lack of time – make me more productive**

Sound Crazy? – Listen I have done this in my own life and I know others who have done this

A) Result seen God come through radically.

B) **Jobs that should have taken longer** – getting done in record time.

1) **Deals that normally would stall in negotiations** and get dragged out – Doors flying open.

C) Because – Men made the Decision: **I am going to take God at His word.**

1) Seek to find a way to put my priorities in line with God's word and watch and see what He does!

D) **I encourage you to pray about this: Try it** – the worse thing is your boss can say No! –

1) But what if He says yes! – You experience the grace of God being made strong in your life like never before

Notice the result here: ¹⁷ As for these four young men, God gave them knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.

¹⁸ Now at the end of the days, when the king had said that they should be brought in, the chief of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. ¹⁹ Then the king interviewed them, and among them all none was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; therefore they served before the king. ²⁰ And in all matters of wisdom *and* understanding about which the king examined them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians *and* astrologers who *were* in all his realm. ²¹ Thus Daniel continued until the first year of King Cyrus.

Three big ideas in this story!

A) #1 V.8 Daniel makes a stand

#2 V.9 God blesses it

B) #3 **V.10 Others are influenced** – Daniels 3 friends don't say a word – but they are included

1) Following his lead

C) Same thing is true in our lives – When we make a stand for the Lord – GOD BLESSES IT!

1) OTHERS ARE INFLUENCED.

D) Usually it is those who are closest to us – Families and friends – OUR KIDS!

Never forget the night my Dad quit Drinking

A) Heavy Drinker before saved – continued to drink after but never drunk –

B) One night after Church.

1) Huge impact on me!

C) Filled up (5) 33 GALLON trash Cans –

1) **GOD IS REAL – THIS MAN IS CHANGING!**

Never forget the night I got saved!

**A)My dad had a temper - even after saved
THE CHASE**

B)MY WORDS – NO!!!!!!!!!!

C)DADS MAKE AN IMPACT –

1)GODLY MEN MAKE AN IMPACT

Around 40 years ago, Yale University conducted an extensive seven-year study on how a persons actions in life effects the lives of his or her children.

This study was focused around the lives of two men: Max Jukes and Jonathan Edwards.

Max Jukes and Jonathan Edwards both lived over two hundred years ago. They were contemporaries:

Max Jukes was an Atheist and did not expose his children to church, even when they asked to go. He believed in the abolition of laws and rules.

Mr. Jukes formed an organization called the Freedom Movement that preached free sex, no laws, no formal education and no responsibilities.

Jonathan Edwards was a Preacher – *Sinners in the hands of an angry God*”

He was a Godly man - known by all as a "disciplinarian".

Not because he disciplined his children harshly, but because he was a self-disciplined man.

He exercised himself toward Godliness

Both of these men were chosen for their diverse beliefs, but also because they both fathered 13 children.

Here are the legacies they left behind:

Max Jukes was known to have had at least 1,026 descendants. Three hundred were sent to prison for an average of 13 years, 27 were murders, 190 were public prostitutes, 680 were admitted alcoholics. His family cost the state of New York close to 1.2 Million dollars in rehabs / jail time dollars and does not appear to have made much contribution to society.

Jonathan Edwards was known to have at least 929 descendants.

Of these, 430 were ministers, 314 were war veterans, 86 became university professors, 13 became university presidents, 75 wrote wholesome books, five were elected to the US Congress and two to the Senate.

Three Were Governors and One was vice president of the United States.

As far as we know, the Edwards' descendants did not cost the state or society one cent, but rather contributed immeasurably to the life and strength of New England and of our entire nation.

**DAD LETS PURPOSE IN OUR HEARTS –
MAKE A DECISION – NOT JUST
INTENTIONS**

A)Get this right – leave a godly legacy for our kids

RELY on God’s grace – strength - AMEN?