

The Family Time

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Daniel 1:5 And the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's meat, and of the wine which he drank: so nourishing them three years, that at the end thereof they might stand before the king.

Daniel 1:8 But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.

Today we look at the challenges that face the family, and the external challenges that we encounter. Take for instance the challenges met by Daniel and his companions.

Daniel and his companions in Babylon were, in their youth, apparently more favored of fortune than was Joseph in the earlier years of his life in Egypt; yet they were subjected to tests of character scarcely less severe. From the comparative simplicity of their Judean home these youth of royal line were transported to the most magnificent of cities, to the court of its greatest monarch, and were singled out to be trained for the king's special service. Strong were the temptations surrounding them in that corrupt and luxurious court. . . . The direction that their food should be supplied from the royal table was an expression both of the king's favor and of his solicitude for their welfare. But a portion having been offered to idols, the food from the king's table was consecrated to idolatry; and in partaking of the king's bounty these youth would be regarded as uniting in his homage to false gods. *{CC 246.4}*

Daniel and his companions' faith in God and their steadfast obedience to his will bore fruit. Notice this!

In acquiring the wisdom of the Babylonians, Daniel and his companions were far more successful than their fellow students; but their learning did not come by chance. . . . They placed themselves in connection with the Source of all wisdom, making the knowledge of God the foundation of their education. In faith they prayed for wisdom, and they lived their prayers. They placed themselves where God could bless them. They avoided that which would weaken their powers, and improved every opportunity to become intelligent in all lines of learning. They followed the rules of life that could not fail to give them strength of intellect. They sought to acquire knowledge for one purpose-- that they might honor God. . . . In order to stand as representatives of true religion amid the false religions of heathenism they must have clearness of intellect and must perfect a Christian character. And God Himself was their teacher. Constantly praying, conscientiously studying, keeping in touch with the Unseen, they walked with God as did Enoch. *{PK 486.1}*

True and lasting success is always the goal. But there is a prerequisite, which is unavoidable.

True success in any line of work is not the result of chance or accident or destiny. It is the outworking of God's providences, the reward of faith and discretion, of virtue and perseverance. Fine mental qualities and a high moral tone are not the result of accident. God gives opportunities; success depends upon the use made of them. . . . *{PK 486.2}*



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We live in a world that teaches us self reliance. But if we never experience the power of the grace of God, we will never reach the height that is possible for us to attain.

His grace is given to work in us to will and to do, but never as a substitute for our effort. As the Lord cooperated with Daniel and his fellows, so He will cooperate with all who strive to do His will. And by the impartation of His Spirit He will strengthen every true purpose, every noble resolution. Those who walk in the path of obedience will encounter many hindrances. Strong, subtle influences may bind them to the world; but the Lord is able to render futile every agency that works for the defeat of His chosen ones; in His strength they may overcome every temptation, conquer every difficulty. {CC 247.4}

Compromise is not an option.

What if Daniel and his companions had made a compromise with those heathen officers, and had yielded to the pressure of the occasion, by eating and drinking as was customary with the Babylonians? That single instance of departure from principle would have weakened their sense of right and their abhorrence of wrong. Indulgence of appetite would have invoked the sacrifice of physical vigor, clearness of intellect, and spiritual power. One wrong step would probably have led to others, until, their connection with Heaven being severed, they would have been swept away by temptation. . . . {CC 248.3}