



THE LORD'S FLOCK GROWTH DIGEST

PASTORAL GROWTH SERIES

“BLOOD PRESSURE”

(Living Under Pressure, Part 6)

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Hypertension or having a high blood pressure is dangerous to our health as it may lead to stroke and other serious complications. Living for God in a secular world is never easy; the daily pressures can pose grave challenges to our faith. The Bible tells the story of Daniel who was taken captive along with young men by the Babylonian army to be trained to serve King Nebuchadnezzar’s kingdom. Presented with several challenges to his faith and his faithfulness to God, Daniel allowed the Holy Spirit to influence his life situation rather than letting his life situation influence him (Dan. 1:1-8).

1. How did Daniel survive the environment that was hostile to his faith?

- 1.1 He was favored by God (Dan. 1:9).
- 1.2 He was determined not to become absorbed into his new environment (Dan. 1:8).
- 1.3 He decided in his heart to follow God (Josh. 24:15).
- 1.4 He was sold out to God (Rom. 5; Prov. 16:3).
- 1.5 He was committed to the Lord (1 Cor. 11:1). Being committed meant that he should:
 - 1.5.1 Have the mindset to stick with it to the end.
 - 1.5.2 Stand on his values even if others disagree.
 - 1.5.3 Be determined not to compromise his ethics.
 - 1.5.4 Refuse to be polluted with the ways of the world.
 - 1.5.5 Take responsibility for his actions.
 - 1.5.6 Trust God when faced with impossible situations.
 - 1.5.7 Allow God to use him mightily in His kingdom to influence others.
- 1.6 Being committed to God also brings favorable results such as:
 - peace and contentment

- divine insight
- focus and success to our life
- a life filled with fruitful labor
- closer relationship to God
- earthly and eternal rewards
- respect from others
- change to lives of others through our service and witnessing
- honor to God who in turn honors you

1.7 He was a man with an excellent spirit (Dan. 6:4).

1.8 He was a man of integrity (Dan. 1:12-13).

1.9 His faith was honored by God (Dan. 1:15-19).

2. What can we learn from Daniel’s life?

- 2.1 Resolve to follow God despite the pressure around us (Rom. 12:2).
- 2.2 Look for friends who can support us in our faith (Eccles. 4:9-12; 1 Cor. 15:33).
- 2.3 Guard our heart (Prov. 4:23; Lk. 6:45).

Conclusion

Daniel faced several challenges to his faith, just like any young Christian today in our society. However, he was highly favored by God to overcome peer and world pressures. We too can be called highly favored if we commit to God, live a life holy and pleasing to Him (Rom. 12:1-2); be consistent with our relationship through prayer, obedience, and service.

Reflection:

How do you live your life according to your biblical values? Specifically, how do you react while interacting with individuals who position themselves as “tolerant” in the current politically correct climate?

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