

The 3rd Sunday after Epiphany ~ Sunday, January 22, 2017
“Daniel: Uncompromising Faith ~ When the Bottom Falls Out”
Daniel 2:1-23

We too can endure the crushing blows of the breakers of life, if we have a proper _____. No matter how frail we seem—or how slender the plant—when we have the proper _____,

“And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow him. Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness.” (Colossians 2:6-7)

Daniel and his friends shared three characteristics: their _____ beauty and form; their _____ prowess and ability; and their _____ graces.

They were the brightest and the _____—hand picked by Nebuchadnezzar to serve in the Babylonian court. The King’s plan was simple—he would _____ them, thereby eliminating in their thinking their:

They drew the line at _____ the king’s food. Their reason for this was simple: There was no _____ mandate against the education or the the changing of their names. However, there was a clear biblical mandate against eating _____ food.

If they compromised the _____ in their eating, they’d have easily compromised the Word of God in other areas, as well.

Like Daniel, we need to draw the line where God draws it—on the basis of the _____ of His Word.

“In the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; his spirit was troubled, and his sleep left him. Then the king commanded that the magicians, the enchanters, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans be summoned to tell the king his dreams. So they came in and stood before the king.” (Daniel 2:1)

3 LESSONS ON HOW TO RESPOND TO AN IMPOSSIBLE SITUATION

Lesson #1: _____ situations will _____.

Because of this the king was angry and very furious, and commanded that all the wise men of Babylon be destroyed. So the decree went out, and the wise men were about to be killed; and they sought Daniel and his companions, to kill them.” (Daniel 2:12-13)

What trials and challenges have you faced?

“My brothers and sisters, when you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy.” (James 1:2)

Trial = *peirasmōs*, which carries with it not only _____ trials, like the loss of a job or the death of a family member, but also _____ trials.

James is telling us that trials are not _____, but inevitable.

“Dear friends, don’t be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you.” (1 Peter 4:12)

In our comfortable North American culture, we’re afraid of _____ and complain at the slightest _____.

Different = *poikilos* =

We’re not just going to have many troubles, we’re going to have _____ troubles.

“With man it is impossible, but not with God. For all things are possible with God.” (Mark 10:27)

With God we never face the _____. There is always _____. Nothing and no one is beyond His power to _____, redeem, and make new!

All of the road blocks, unexpected detours, and ditches that we face in our journey through life are simply _____ for us to get out of the way and allow _____ to work.

If our faith is no good in times of trouble, then it’s no _____ at all. If it’s only good when we don’t need it, then we don’t _____ it. If it’s only good for when we’re doing well, then what good is it?

True faith _____ us when everything goes wrong, and the _____ of our faith is tested by how it stands up in times of trouble.

How have you viewed the trials that have come into your life?

Lesson #2: When faced with an impossible situation we need to _____.
“Then Daniel went to his house and made the matter known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions, and told them to seek mercy from the God of heaven

concerning this mystery, so that Daniel and his companions might not be destroyed with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.” (Daniel 2:17-18)

When the bottom fell out, Daniel fell to his knees and _____.

Daniel was _____. He He could have used this to come up with a _____ to his problem. He was also _____–he served the king and had learned to manage the _____ of the royal court. Surely he could have pulled some strings, called in a _____, or used his political acumen to get himself out of this situation.

Daniel set aside the things of this _____–human wisdom and politics–and prayed. He turned away from _____ and towards _____. Daniel knew that he and his friends were _____ to help themselves, and so he asked God to be merciful in helping them deal with situation.

Daniel understood that a seemingly impossible situation–at least from our limited human perspective–could only be resolved with divine _____. He knew that the battle belonged to the _____ and that his God was more

Do we know this? Do we believe it?

Often in an impossible situation, we forget how truly _____ we are apart from God, and we continue to believe that our own _____ are what really make things happen. We’re so accustomed to depending on our own _____ that we neglect to seek God’s supply when we need it the most. And we look for ways to _____ or _____ the situation ourselves

No matter what’s happening in our life we need to take it to _____–we need to pray.

“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)

Friends = *chabar* =

Elsewhere in the OT, this same word is used as a verb meaning:

That’s what the _____ of believers is all about–that’s what the Church–what Christian community is all about–being joined or knotted together–in our determination to stand in _____.

When you have a need, don’t go it _____–don’t grit your teeth and push through in your own _____. Instead, learn to share the need or burden with someone else.

Prayer is a declaration of _____ before God.

What do you do when you find yourself in a seemingly impossible situation? Do you take it to God–do you pray? Do you take it to a friend or do you try to go it alone?

Lesson #3: Our prayers should lead us to _____.

“Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision of the night. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven. Daniel answered and said: ‘Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, to whom belong wisdom and might. He changes times and seasons; he removes kings and sets up kings; he gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding; he reveals deep and hidden things; he knows what is in the darkness, and the light dwells with him. To you, O God of my fathers, I give thanks and praise...’” (Daniel 2:18-22)

God’s _____ in answering Daniel and his friend’s prayers, led Daniel to praise.

“Praise is the honey of life which a devout heart extracts from every bloom of providence and grace.” (Charles Spurgeon)

Daniel’s praise reminds us to always be _____ and not take God for _____. His words are more than just a record of his praise to God–they’re a _____ for us to follow

The test of our spiritual maturity doesn’t lie only in the _____ of our prayers during times of crisis, but also in our wholehearted response of _____ when God answers our prayers.

When the bottom falls out we can have _____ because the God who loves us is perfectly _____ and incomprehensibly _____!

Although our wisdom is limited and lacking, we can trust that God has the wisdom to know what’s _____ for us and the _____ to see that what’s best will always come to pass–in His way and in His time.

Where do you turn to for wisdom in a time of crisis?

What do you do when your prayers are answered?

How quick are you to praise God?