

LESSON 6 // DEAD OR ALIVE?—PART 2

Big Idea: In Daniel 1-6, we see four young men successfully navigate significant pressures, and a key was how they handled commitments. We learn from their example that commitments will be tested and true commitments come with no strings attached.

> ***Daniel 3:5-6 (NLT)*** *When you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes, and other musical instruments, bow to the ground to worship King Nebuchadnezzar's gold statue. 6 Anyone who refuses to obey will immediately be thrown into a blazing furnace.*
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> ***Philippians 2:5-8 (NIV)*** *In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; 7 rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!.*
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> ***1 John 5:21 (NLT)*** *Dear children, keep away from anything that might take God's place in your hearts.*
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> ***Daniel 3:28 (NLT)*** *Then Nebuchadnezzar said, "Praise to the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego! He sent his angel to rescue his servants who trusted in him. They defied the king's command and were willing to die rather than serve or worship any god except their own God."*
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> ***Luke 9:23 (NIV)*** *Then [Jesus] said to them all: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me."*

Start Talking:

Why do you think the idols of our culture are so alluring at times, even to believers? What has been your experience with this?

Start Thinking:

Read Daniel 3:5-6. Why's it important to understand and anticipate that your commitments will be tested?

Read Philippians 2:5-8. How does Jesus' example encourage you to stand strong in your commitments?

Read 1 John 5:21. How does putting and keeping God first in your heart help you resist worshiping the idols of our culture?

Read Daniel 3:28 and Luke 9:28. What does it mean to "deny yourself" and "take up your cross daily" in your commitment to Christ? What kind of pressure do you face to compromise this commitment?

Start Praying and Doing:

Pray for God's wisdom and discernment to identify and stand against the idols in our culture. Ask the Holy Spirit to keep you on guard and aware of spiritual forces of evil that seek to distract and detour you from following Jesus wholeheartedly. Let your battle cry be like the one Daniel's friends declared: "*We will never serve your gods or worship the gold statue you have set up" (Daniel 3:18).*