

“The Test of Integrity!”

Daniel 6:1-16

Intro. – Under the inspiration of God, Solomon wrote of two tests in life. Both are revealing and most effective. I’d like to refer to them as I introduce this message.

One is the test of adversity. Is there anything like *tough times* to show us how strong or weak we really are? Solomon wrote in Proverbs 24:10 *“If you falter in times of trouble, how small is your strength.”*

The second test is equally revealing and yet much more subtle. This is the test of prosperity/success. Like nothing else, prosperity reveals the complete truth of our values. Again, listen to what Solomon says, Proverbs 27:21 *“The crucible for silver and the furnace for gold, but man is tested by the praise he receives.”* In other words, prosperity is a test of our integrity.

This second test is the one we will intently be studying through this message. You see, if you can be trusted whether alone or in a crowd, if you are a person of your word and convictions, you are fast becoming an extinct species. Integrity is becoming a lost art/trait!

Daniel epitomizes integrity better than anyone else with the exception of our Lord. Daniel was one of three “administrators” over the 120 “satraps” = (men King Darius delegated authority over his kingdom). Three administrators responsible for the activities of 120 satraps. They were apparently the most rusted men in the kingdom. What responsibility and what prosperity these three must have had, but, it was Daniel who proved his integrity through the test of this prosperity.

Do we recognize integrity? Do we see its origin being of/from God? Do we understand just what integrity is? Do we desire integrity to be a vital part of our character?

Purpose: to better understand what all is involved with integrity in our lives

I An Excellent ATTITUDE (vv 1-3)

- the first indication of integrity in Daniel’s life = attitude. First place this showed up was in the realm of his employment. The application to our lives is obvious:
 - A. There Was No Jealousy
 - 1. Daniel had no jealousy against the other commissioners. Significance in this why?
 - 2. Could have been threatened and competitive resulting in nasty/ugly relations... after all at 80 years old he probably had seniority!
 - 3. But, because he possessed “exceptional qualities” = king planned to set him over the kingdom.
 - B. There was No Revenge
 - 1. Look at the plot that took place against Daniel – v 4
 - 2. Here is a man working diligently for his boss and amongst his peers; yet, peers set up a spy program against him...
 - 3. 2 significant facts arise here:
 - a. Bible says they found *nothing* – refreshing to find such integrity in positions of leadership...
 - b. Daniel sought no revenge...
 - C. Application for Us
 - 1. How’s our attitude when at work? --- note: proper attitude will result in good news/bad news:
 - a. good news = good boss can’t help but notice good worker...
 - b.. bad news = fellow workers who are lazy and dishonest will be bothered because not like them
 - c. because you’re not like them = envy/jealousy = probably encounter what Daniel got!
 - 2. How’s our revenge factor? – integrity doesn’t seek revenge; it simply puts it in Lord’s hands!

II FAITHFUL on the Job (v 4)

- A. There Was No Negligence
 - nothing could be found to criticize Daniel’s work ethic...
- B. There Was No Unfaithfulness

1. Proverbs 10:6 “*Many a man proclaims his own loyalty, but who can find a trustworthy man?*”
 2. You see, trustworthy people are rare:
 - a. most businessmen say their trouble is with their employees, not the public.
 - b. Studebaker is case in point = ... employees were robbing them blind...
 - c. bankers = “preachers” are the highest risk loans...
 3. Time we all appraise our personal lives – are we trustworthy, do we do our jobs well even if the boss isn’t watching, can we be trusted with expense accounts and other privileges?
 4. Proverbs 20:7 “*A righteous man walks in his integrity. How blessed are his sons after him.*”
- Righteous walk where? – yes, by faith but also in their integrity!

III Personal PURITY (vv 5-9)

- A. There Was No Corruption
 1. Daniel was “tailed” and “spied upon” = discovered no hidden dirt, no hanky-panky.
 2. Could dig all they could, found nothing but Daniel’s purity...
 3. On the surface many appear honest/upright, but, get down to the nit-grit all surface!
 - Illus. – Long Beach, CA a man and young woman went to chicken franchise. Inadvertently manager handed man box filled with proceeds of the day instead of box of chicken they had ordered. Took the box and opened realized what had happened. Took it back... The manager couldn’t belief. He said, “Stick around. I want to call the newspaper. You have to be the most honest man in town.” The man responded, “Don’t do that.” “Why?” “Because, I’m married and the woman with me isn’t my wife.”
 4. Not Daniel, excellent attitude, faithful on the job, and personal purity = had nothing to hide.
- B. There Was Total Commitment
 1. Frustrated with their investigation of Daniel, these men sought to use Daniel’s faith against him.
 2. Vv 5-6 of our text makes this clear...
 3. So a written injunction was drafted – the deck was stacked. Not only was Daniel being *setup* – being *setup* by using his commitment to God against him.

Personal purity = yet another aspect of integrity.

IV CONSISTENT Faith in God (vv 10-16)

- A. There Was No change of Plan
 1. Daniel knew a death warrant was out = didn’t change a thing = “...*just as he had done before.*”
 2. Didn’t turn in panic – went to room and poured himself before God in prayer as was his practice.
- B. There Was Trust in God
 1. Sure, Daniel faced uncertainties, but, didn’t lack the faith that his God would handle matters.
 2. Such faith/trust is directly correspondent to his consistent walk with God
 - a. prayer = seeking God and His will
 - b. Illus. – plaque says: “When you’re faced with a busy day, save precious time by skipping your devotions.” Signed, Love Satan.
 3. V 11 – they interrupt his prayer and found him doing “wrong”...
 4. V 16 – final results? Daniel is thrown into lions’ den...

Daniel unquestionably had consistent faith/trust in God!

Conclusion: One last noteworthy aspect of integrity which helps summarize what we must learn from this text. Do you remember wondering, “What had Daniel done to received such harsh treatment? As we matured we realize, Daniel wasn’t in the lion’s den because he had done something wrong. He was there because he had done something RIGHT!

This confuses many today. We’ve been given the impression, do wrong, get punished; do right, get rewarded. Now, this sounds proper and even seems logical, doesn’t it? But such is not always true. Sometimes wrong is done and the world rewards the wrong... Other times, right/truth is done and a terrible price is paid.

The point is this: Daniel isn't the last one to suffer for doing right and standing for truth. You and I face this possibility as did Daniel. Will integrity shine? Will success/prosperity ruin or harm us.

Here then is real integrity. Tested by prosperity, Daniel proved to be excellent in attitude, faithful on the job, personally pure and filled with consistent faith in God. O, that you and I would pass the test of integrity!!