

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.

Colossians 3:23-24 (NIV)

Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, chief of his court officials, to bring into the king's service some of the Israelites from the royal family and the nobility— young men without any physical defect, handsome, showing aptitude for every kind of learning, well informed, quick to understand, and qualified to serve in the king's palace. He was to teach them the language and literature of the Babylonians. The king assigned them a daily amount of food and wine from the king's table. They were to be trained for three years, and after that they were to enter the king's service.

Among those who were chosen were some from Judah: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. The chief official gave them new names: to Daniel, the name Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abednego.

But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine, and he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way. Now God had caused the official to show favor and compassion to Daniel, but the official told Daniel, "I am afraid of my lord the king, who has assigned your food and drink. Why should he see you looking worse than the other young men your age? The king would then have my head because of you."

Daniel then said to the guard whom the chief official had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, "Please test your servants for ten days: Give us nothing but vegetables to eat and water to drink. Then compare our appearance with that of the young men who eat the royal food, and treat your servants in accordance with what you see." So he agreed to this and tested them for ten days.

At the end of the ten days they looked healthier and better nourished than any of the young men who ate the royal food.

Daniel 1:3-15 (NIV)

QUOTES:

"I think my biggest challenge is my own lack of confidence in my Lord and savior having my back at all times. Intellectually I believe it but my anxiety and worry would indicate otherwise."

"Our culture seems to be setup to push people to the edge morally... so when you aren't willing to "go there" (another bar or "that bar", foul language, bending the truth, etc) you can feel a sense of judgement from your co-workers. It can even feel career limiting to follow Jesus... HOW CRAZY IS THAT."

"For me the biggest struggle is constantly thinking I have to shoulder everything and take on the stresses of the business. What happens if we fail? What happens if we lose people? What happens if we don't win the big contracts? What happens if. . . ."

"The cancel culture is real for anyone that even initially disagrees with your faith and it keeps me from using my platform in a way I know God would be proud of."

"It's difficult to understand how a God so good and full of love could create a situation that would take a child's life or allow someone to assault someone else (physically/sexually)."

CARRY THE SACRED INTO THE SECULAR

1. BE CAREFUL WHO NAMES YOU

The chief official gave them new names: to Daniel, the name Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abednego.

Daniel 1:7 (NIV)

We all have a last day for the titles we assume; choose wisely.

2. INNER RESOLVE LEADS TO FAVOR

But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine, and he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way. Now God had caused the official to show favor and compassion to Daniel, but the official told Daniel, "I am afraid of my lord the king, who has assigned your food and drink. Why should he see you looking worse than the other young men your age? The king would then have my head because of you."

Daniel 1:8-10 (NIV)

3. RUTS ANCHOR YOU IN HARD TIMES

Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before. Then these men went as a group and found Daniel praying and asking God for help.

Daniel 6:10-11 (NIV)