

The Requirements of a Godly Influence

Daniel 1:1-21

Daniel 1:1-21 (NASB)

¹ “In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it.

² The Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, along with some of the vessels of the house of God; and he brought them to the land of Shinar, to the house of his god, and he brought the vessels into the treasury of his god.

³ Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, the chief of his officials, to bring in some of the sons of Israel, including some of the royal family and of the nobles,

⁴ youths in whom was no defect, who were good-looking, showing intelligence in every *branch of* wisdom, endowed with understanding and discerning knowledge, and who had ability for serving in the king's court; and *he ordered him* to teach them the literature and language of the Chaldeans.

⁵ The king appointed for them a daily ration from the king's choice food and from the wine which he drank, and *appointed* that they should be educated three years, at the end of which they were to enter the king's personal service.

⁶ Now among them from the sons of Judah were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah.

⁷ Then the commander of the officials assigned *new* names to them; and to Daniel he assigned *the name* Belteshazzar, to Hananiah Shadrach, to Mishael Meshach and to Azariah Abed-nego.

⁸ But Daniel made up his mind that he would not defile himself with the king's choice food or with the wine which he drank; so he sought *permission* from the commander of the officials that he might not defile himself.

⁹ Now God granted Daniel favor and compassion in the sight of the commander of the officials,

¹⁰ and the commander of the officials said to Daniel, “I am afraid of my lord the king, who has appointed your food and your drink; for why should he see your faces looking more haggard than the youths who are your own age? Then you would make me forfeit my head to the king.”

¹¹ But Daniel said to the overseer whom the commander of the officials had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah,

¹² “Please test your servants for ten days, and let us be given some vegetables to eat and water to drink.”

¹³ “Then let our appearance be observed in your presence and the appearance of the youths who are eating the king's choice food; and deal with your servants according to what you see.”

¹⁴ So he listened to them in this matter and tested them for ten days.

¹⁵ At the end of ten days their appearance seemed better and they were fatter than all the youths who had been eating the king's choice food.

¹⁶ So the overseer continued to withhold their choice food and the wine they were to drink, and kept giving them vegetables.

¹⁷ As for these four youths, God gave them knowledge and intelligence in every *branch of* literature and wisdom; Daniel even understood all *kinds of* visions and dreams.

¹⁸ Then at the end of the days which the king had specified for presenting them, the commander of the officials presented them before Nebuchadnezzar.

¹⁹ The king talked with them, and out of them all not one was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah; so, they entered the king's personal service.

²⁰ As for every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king consulted them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians *and* conjurers who *were* in all his realm.

²¹ And Daniel continued until the first year of Cyrus the king.”

Companies often spend millions of dollars to influence the public. Along with money, a lot of thought, energy, and strategy go into designing ad campaigns and public relations events that will capture people's interest.

As believers, we're involved in a much more important endeavor—that of capturing hearts with gospel truth through godly influence. If we are to have an impact on others, we need to present a consistent witness before them.

Having a strong conviction about God's Word is the foundation of a godly influence; we must believe the Bible is true and practical in our daily lives. Daniel clearly did. In today's reading, he and his friends refused the king's food and wine. Why? Because Scripture told them not to eat anything offered to idols—a common practice of the time ([Exodus 34:15](#)).

[Exodus 34:15 \(NASB\)](#)

¹⁵ “Otherwise you might make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land and they would play the harlot with their gods and sacrifice to their gods, and someone might invite you to eat of his sacrifice.”

Daniel put not only himself and his friends but also the commander of the officials in danger of death over the issue of *food*! But he took such action because he knew the Father wanted him to obey Scripture, no matter the cost.

Following the Bible's instructions is not usually a matter of life or death. But doing so can nevertheless place us in uncomfortable situations. If we are to have a godly influence, we must be committed to our convictions. A believer's life is often the only example of scriptural principles other people will see. So, like Daniel, we must make up our mind to follow God, regardless of the circumstances. And like the people in Daniel's sphere of influence, those you touch will see the work done for the Lord and glorify Him ([Matthew 5:16](#)).

[Matthew 5:16 \(NASB\)](#)

¹⁶ “Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.”