

BABYLON

GRANDPA IN THE LIONS' DEN

The Conspiracy

Daniel 6:1-9

Breaking All The Rules

Daniel 6:10-17

Wrinkles Get Rewarded

Daniel 6:18-28

605 BC	Babylonian Empire: Nebuchadnezzar
562	Evil Merodach rules
560	Nergalsharezer rules
556	Laborosoarchod rules
555	Nabonidus rules
539	Belshazzar rules for daddy
539	Medo-Persian Empire: Cyrus
	7 Kings 2 Empires 4 Testimonies

Lessons From The Lions

- ① Being a light is not just doing **our job** but doing **it well**.
- ② Past **faithfulness** is preparation for future **faithfulness**.
- ③ Our greatest challenges to faithfulness may be our **possessions** or **positions**.

Growth Group Homework

For the week of October 21, 2007

QUICK REVIEW: Looking back over your sermon notes from *Grandpa in the Lions' Den*, what was most challenging, helpful, or interesting to you?

MY STORY

1. We've seen in this series how Daniel was a man of integrity in spite of his circumstances. His life and words were consistent with what he believed. What challenges to living a life of integrity do we face in our society?

Have you seen or experienced any positive or negative consequences from living a life of integrity? If so, what were they?

2. Chris talked this weekend about developing a lifestyle of usefulness. Can you think of someone you know personally who has shown themselves to be useful for God? What actions or character qualities contributed to their usefulness?

DIGGING DEEPER

1. God desires for us to live out integrity in every facet of our lives. Read the following passages and write down what integrity looks like in each of the situations.

Colossians 3:22-24

Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to win their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord. [23] Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, [24] since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. [NIV]

Genesis 39:1-12

Now Joseph had been taken down to Egypt. Potiphar, an Egyptian who was one of Pharaoh's officials, the captain of the guard, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had taken him there.

[2] The Lord was with Joseph and he prospered, and he lived in the house of his Egyptian master. [3] When his master saw that the Lord was with him and that the Lord gave him success in everything he did, [4] Joseph found favor in his eyes and became his attendant. Potiphar put him in charge of his household, and he entrusted to his care everything he owned. [5] From the time he put him in charge of his household and of all that he owned, the Lord blessed the household of the Egyptian because of Joseph. The blessing of the Lord was on everything Potiphar had, both in the house and in the field. [6] So he left in Joseph's care everything he had; with Joseph in charge, he did not concern himself with anything except the food he ate.

Now Joseph was well-built and handsome, [7] and after a while his master's wife took notice of Joseph and said, "Come to bed with me!"

[8] But he refused. "With me in charge," he told her, "my master does not concern himself with anything in the house; everything he owns he has entrusted to my care. [9] No one is greater in this house than I am. My master has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?" [10] And though she spoke to Joseph day after day, he refused to go to bed with her or even be with her.

[11] One day he went into the house to attend to his duties, and none of the household servants was inside. [12] She caught him by his cloak and said, "Come to bed with me!" But he left his cloak in her hand and ran out of the house. [NIV]

In Genesis 31:38-42, Jacob defends his integrity during a conversation with his father-in-law. How do you see Jacob's integrity revealed in this passage?

Genesis 31:38-42

"I have been with you for twenty years now. Your sheep and goats have not miscarried, nor have I eaten rams from your flocks. [39] I did not bring you animals torn by wild beasts; I bore the loss myself. And you demanded payment from me for whatever was stolen by day or night. [40] This was my situation: The heat consumed me in the daytime and the cold at night, and sleep fled from my eyes. [41] It was like this for the twenty years I was in your household. I worked for you fourteen years for your two daughters and six years for your flocks, and you changed my wages ten times. [42] If the God of my father, the God of Abraham and the Fear of Isaac, had not been with me, you would surely have sent me away empty-handed. But God has seen my hardship and the toil of my hands, and last night he rebuked you." [NIV]

What do you think motivated Joseph and Jacob to act with integrity?

When do you find it hardest to live with integrity?

2. We heard this weekend how past faithfulness is preparation for future faithfulness. Faithfulness means we persevere in doing what we know is right or what we've committed to do regardless of the cost, difficulty, or outcome. What encouragement do you find in the following passages to persevere through difficult times?

Galatians 5:9-10

"A little yeast works through the whole batch of dough." [10] I am confident in the Lord that you will take no other view. The one who is throwing you into confusion will pay the penalty, whoever he may be. [NIV]

2 Corinthians 4:16-18

Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. [17] For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. [18] So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal. [NIV]

James 1:2-5

Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, [3] because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. [4] Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. [5] If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. [NIV]

Has there been a time in your life when you were tempted to doubt God's faithfulness because of the obstacles or challenges you faced?

3. Rather than view themselves as slaves to the various kings they served, Daniel and his friends consistently viewed themselves as servants of God. Maintaining a similar perspective is one of the keys to usefulness. What do the following passages say about the kind of mindset that we should strive for as servants of God?

Luke 17:7-10

"Suppose one of you had a servant plowing or looking after the sheep. Would he say to the servant when he comes in from the field, 'Come along now and sit down to eat'? [8] Would he not rather say, 'Prepare my supper, get yourself ready and wait on me while I eat and drink; after that you may eat and drink'? [9] Would he thank the servant because he did what he was told to do? [10] So you also, when you have done everything you were told to do, should say, 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty.' " [NIV]

Matthew 20:20-28

Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Jesus with her sons and, kneeling down, asked a favor of him.

[21] "What is it you want?" he asked.

She said, "Grant that one of these two sons of mine may sit at your right and the other at your left in your kingdom."

[22] "You don't know what you are asking," Jesus said to them. "Can you drink the cup I am going to drink?"

"We can," they answered.

[23] Jesus said to them, "You will indeed drink from my cup, but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared by my Father."

[24] When the ten heard about this, they were indignant with the two brothers. [25] Jesus called them together and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. [26] Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, [27] and whoever wants to be first must be your slave-- [28] just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." [NIV]

What do you find most challenging about the attitude expressed in these verses?

TAKING IT HOME

1. How well are you doing at putting yourself in a place where God can use you?

What is one change you could make or something you'd like to continue doing that would put you in a better position for God to use?

2. Is there anything in your life you need to address in order to take a step closer to living a life characterized by integrity?