

How do I live my faith in a secular culture?

The crises of man are not new. There is nothing “more secular” about the world today than there has ever been, in any age or society. The world’s hostility toward God has not changed since the days of Adam.

Living out your faith in a secular world does not depend on the approval or disapproval, acceptance or persecution, or health or disease of the world. The issue at stake centers not on the depth of the world’s depravity but on the depth of your personal desire for God.

Daniel, along with the whole host of Scripture (see Hebrews 11, for example) stands to prove that it is entirely possible to live out your faith in any age or condition. No one suffered more pressure to conform than Daniel.

At 16, he witnessed the cruel slaughter of his family and the burning of his village. He was carried away to exile in a foreign land, utterly stripped and forced to serve ruthless kings.

They required him to learn their ways, study their arts and perform their wishes. They even changed his name to reflect their gods. In every way possible, the ruling world tried to claim Daniel—and failed.

Why? Because Daniel *chose*. Daniel chose his God, and he chose *obedience* to his God, even if it meant death (see Daniel 6 and Rev. 12:11). The whole secret to living out your faith in a secular world lies in one simple, ageless word—*choice*.

David *chose* (see Ps. 27:4). Mary *chose* (see Luke 10:38-42). Jesus *chose* (see Matt. 26:39). And so it will always be for His followers.

Look up the following verses:

- John 15:18-21
- Deut. 30:15-20
- Josh. 24:14-15
- Matt. 6:24
- James 4:1-5

What can you conclude from these passages? Do any of them apply to you?

If you are struggling to live out your faith in a secular world, it may mean that your choice is not clear. All the performance of your choice is God's, a responsibility He assumed in the person of Jesus Christ.

Thus the problem is not strength, but resolve. God will perform your choice *for* you, and overcome the world in you, if that is what you really want.

The question is: What do you really want?

JULIE R. WILSON is a Bible teacher and freelance writer and editor living in Lubbock, Texas.
