

Faithfulness Carries Its Rewards

How diligently are you seeking God? Do you remain steady in your love for Him no matter what, or do you let life's disappointments interfere with your pursuit of Him? Daniel loved God and showed it in his daily life in spite of his circumstances, and the Lord responded.

The Lord revealed His love to Daniel in a deep way through an angel, who addressed Daniel as the beloved of the Lord: "He [the angel] said to me, 'O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak to you, and stand upright, for I have been sent to you now.' And when he had spoken this word to me, I stood trembling" (Dan. 10:11, 19).

I assume that receiving the understanding of how much God loved him was one of the most powerful things that happened to Daniel personally. The angel said, "O Daniel, greatly beloved." Imagine a high-ranking angel telling you, "The Lord greatly loves you, and you are beloved by your God." In other words, he is saying, "The Lord is moved by the way you live. He is moved by your hunger for Him and by your lifestyle choices."

We know that God loves the world. He loves unbelievers, even though He does not enjoy a relationship with them. But there are those in whom God takes special delight; that is, He delights in the choices they make for Him. In this sense His love for them is different than that with which He loves the world. He takes greater enjoyment in those who seek to love and obey Him with all their hearts.

And God clearly took great enjoyment in Daniel. In essence He told Daniel, "I am moved by the way you care about My kingdom and My glory and the way you care about who I am. That touches

Me.”

Jesus taught that the Father loves all who obey Him. He loves the relationship He has with all who keep His commandments, and He loves their life choices.

“He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father. And I will love him and will reveal Myself to him” (John 14:21)

Lest we think that Jesus loves only those who love Him, let’s remember that Scripture says God loved us first (1 John 4:19). But He loves the choices of those who love Him.

Jesus made the amazing statement that He would manifest Himself to those who show their love for Him in their words, actions and lifestyles. No one is “good enough” to deserve a greater manifestation of God’s glory. It’s not about being good enough but about positioning ourselves to receive more from God.

Every believer can have a close relationship with the Lord. Daniel was forcibly taken to Babylon as a prisoner of war in his youth. Yet even as a captive, far from his home in Jerusalem and in a foreign culture, he determined to seek God with all his heart for all his days. Today the Lord is looking for men and women like Daniel, who will set their hearts to live before God as Daniel did.

Some people are easily offended. If they don’t get on the worship team at their church or aren’t hired for the job position they were hoping for, they ask, “How could God allow this to happen to me? It’s so rough.” Yes, your heart hurts, and the pain is real, but your response to life’s trials and disappointments is the crucial issue.

Look at Daniel. He was taken into captivity, and yet he determined not to defile himself and to be a man of prayer all his days. He did not let any person or any disappointment

steal the vision of what he was determined to be from his heart. He remained steady in his love for God and lived out his commitment in his daily life until he died.

In my 40 years of ministry I have seen many people go hard after God for five or even 10-plus years. Most of them were young and in their twenties. By the time they reached 35, several had “good” reasons for drawing back and being more “practical.”

I have seen only a few people stay consistent in seeking God with diligence for 20 or 30 years or more. Daniel stayed consistent in seeking God for 60 years, even during his time in the pagan city of Babylon.

I want the Lord to say to me on the last day, “I loved the way you spent your time and money and the way you obeyed Me; I loved the way that you loved Me.” I want Him to be able to say the things about me that He said about Daniel. I want to be steady like this great man of God, even when I’m 80. What about you?

✘ *Adapted from Growing in Prayer by Mike Bickle, copyright 2014, published by Passio-Charisma House. This book will help you develop a passionate life of prayer where it ceases to be a dutiful ritual and becomes a time of personal encounter with the God of the universe, who will listen and respond with great love, revealing His heart, giving you guidance, blessing your circumstances and making a difference in your world. To order your copy, [click here](#).*

Prayer Power for the Week of Jan. 26, 2015

This week set your heart to live before God as Daniel did. Seek Him daily through prayer, the Word and worship. Declare His Word over your circumstances and exalt His Name as the God of the universe, our only Savior, King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Commit your ways to Him and surrender all to His will. Continue to pray for worldwide revival, more laborers for His

harvest fields, the spread of the gospel into unknown places, the persecuted church, the protection and destiny of Israel, our own nation and its leaders and the next generation (Dan. 10:11, 19; John 14:21; 1 John 4:19).