

061018 *Courageous living in Turbulent Times*.... Today we continue our new series *Courageous living in Turbulent Times*... the words turbulent time...as defined by the oxford dictionary means... a time characterized by conflict, disorder, or confusion; it is the opposite of stable or calm. and there is only one way to get through turbulent times...we need courage...courage is not gained in turbulent times ...it is displayed in turbulent...if I am courageous to do what is right in normal everyday life...I will be courageous to do what is right when the storms hit....

If you possess the moral strength, to do right when you could easily do otherwise....**you possess moral strength ...you either possess it or you don't...** another name for moral strength is CHARACTER : and character is the consistent behavior typical of a person in calm or turbulent times***

There are a few character traits or disciplines that have to be possessed in order to navigate successfully turbulent life situations...and none more important than courage...but courage never stands alone...

last week we examined some character traits that enables four your teen men...taken hostage from Israel into Babylon.... these teens were forced into... they had their whole life shaken...they went from nobility to a foreigners...they did not speak the language, know the customs or the culture... they went from have to a have not.. from powerful to powerless...from freedom to imprisoned. and God allowed it!

last week recap

*DA 1:3 Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, chief of his court officials, to bring in some of the Israelites from the **royal family and the nobility**-- ⁴ 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...*

- 1. So the first character quality needed to live courageously is to know God is in control.... some things you will not have control over...only God and on is your body.. it is yours by design...it has been picked out by God...**
- 2. 2.Which takes us to the second character quality...self care! they were Handsome!....handsome has the idea of self care...if you are going to weather successfully the turbulent times your body has to be strong enough to withstand the enormous stresses that come with turbulent times.....the fears, anxiety, stress, hurt, grief, loss, confusion, rejection, disappointment that always accompany these**

times...if we do not take care of our bodies during the good times we are setting ourselves up for additional and often unnecessary secondary troubles...

3. to be successful it is vital we nurture the character quality of being teachable..

verse 4.....*showing aptitude for every kind of learning, well informed, quick to understand,*

- **Being teachable is knowing that your current abilities, knowledge and experience are not enough to get you through this new turbulent time...you need to have already in your life aptitude which is a desire to grow already demonstrated**
- **showing aptitude... means capacity or ability to size up a situation..to be able to grasp the bigger picture...there is more going on then they know...they need to grow in knowledge and are used to asking for help...so they are listeners and learners**
- **which makes them well informed... they have learned a lot avbout a lot...people who can handle well that which used to baffle them...**
- **making them quick to understand what to do, how to act, what to say or not say...this is the way they do life...!**

Today...These young men were experiencing the most turbulent storm of their young lives...everything has changed... and it will get more turbulent...

*****Sound thinking is needed in turbulent times: and your identity will be attacked who we thought we were gets challenged..how we thought things would work out get challenged.. ...we are prone to brainwashing...Fear makes us forgetful of who we are!**

- **And the Babylonians were up to the task:** These boys were the best Judah had to offer. and they were experiencing the most turbulent storm of their young lives...everything has changed... and it will get worse...as the Babylonians not only have taken them hostage...
- they want to steal to steal their identities as members of Jewish Nobility and followers of Yahweh...by changing their names to Babylonian names and demanding they live like the Babyonians....

verse 4..... *He was to teach them the language and literature of the Babylonians.* ⁵ *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.*** ^{DA 1:6} *Among these were some from Judah: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah.*

- **By first Teaching them a new way to do life...:** Daniel and his friends were to be taught the **literature** and **language** of the Chaldeans. which included the priestly language Akkadian.
- **The goal was to make them suitable to Serve the King and his religion..:** They would help administer the Babylonian kingdom. They needed to understand Babylonian culture, traditions and religion. The Babylonian culture was a very religious system, with the King acting out the role of Marduk, the chief god of Babylon in the annual festival. **In order to serve, they needed to be part of the Babylonian system.**
- **and complete this by changing their names to Babylonian names**
- **and then demanding they live like the Babylonian's....starting with the way they eat...**
- **it would certainly go easier for the Hostages ...if they simply forgot who they were and where they came from and who they belonged too...and embraced the easier softer way...offered ...they would be better off**

It is abundantly clear to these young men... if you are going to survive you will need to serve the Babylonian King you will have to act like the Babylonians and you will also reap the benefits of that...you are better off to embrace this!

So how do you handle this? Embrace "the suck." this situation sucks! but I am who I am...and I belong to who I belong too...so I will deal with this ...as Paul says in

Phil 1:27 Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ.

- The situation is bad--deal with it. And don't just deal with it--open your arms and welcome it as you would an old friend. Why? because what I embrace I can deal with...
- we become **Resilient ...Resilient people succeed because they don't get stuck in the Suck they overcome it by getting into solution**
- **If we are not settled in who i am no matter what...what i stand on no matter what...who i belong too no matter what... i will be overcome by turbulent times or I will overcome turbulent times...**

So what is a person to do? Do what Daniel did...

1:8 But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine...

- **Daniel knew the provisions from the King's table were sacrificed to Idols, and by eating the meat he would be defiled. and many of the foods violated the Mosaic law.**

- There are two sides to each one of our lives...

- **The person God has called you to be...** *So you must be true to yourself, this is the to be part! Daniel would not defile himself! how many times have we defiled ourselves? ...because f lack of commitment:*
- Daniel at an early learned the secret of spiritual success, to be real with God, to trust God and be obedient. Solomon learned this principle also, at the end of his life, Daniel learned at the start of his. Solomon, who was the wisest man world, fell because of his flesh. He was not willing to purpose in his heart, for this reason he lived a compromised with sin. (Nehemiah 13:6)
- **What has God called you to do now....** You must own your Present Responsibilities NOW!
- **Daniel purposed to do something now...not eat forbidden food...:** In the first eight verses, we see what separated Daniel from most of the people living in Jerusalem. He sought to please God, regardless of his circumstances.
- Daniel, knew the decision he needed to make right now...and he set course to accomplish his purpose.
- he did not know everything but he knew what to do...the next indicated step! ”.
- Daniel at an early learned the secret of spiritual success, to be real with God, to trust God and be obedient.
- So he humbly asked...was not angry...did not complain...did not throw a tantrum...and God stepped in!

verse8.... *and he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way.* ⁹ *Now God had caused the official to show favor and compassion to Daniel...*

- **why could he be so composed? he had already committed to not defile himself no matter what the outcome...commitment makes us gentle...for our peace/happiness is not centered on someone else's decision ..if they agree great if not ok...**
- **Also Daniel knew if God was willing, God would make away. Daniel, did not just wait for God to rescue him, he stepped forward in faith. He gave God the opportunity to work, by asking the for an exception.**

He did what Peter said to do... *1 Peter 3:¹⁴ But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. “Do not fear their threats; do not be frightened.” ¹⁵ But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect....*

- the official heard his wish..but had his fear, because his life was on the line if he did not prepare these hostages well...in every way

¹⁰ 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.”

- **And Daniel was not so consumed by his own trial...that he could not hear the pain of someone else...**
- **so he responds**

¹¹ Daniel then said to the guard whom the chief official had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, ¹² “Please test your servants for ten days: Give us nothing but vegetables to eat and water to drink. ¹³ 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.” ¹⁴ So he agreed to this and tested them for ten days.

- Resilient people...are flexible... **Resiliency makes room to adapt...**
 - he says let us try it for a short time...you will be safe in the decision...and we will see what happens...he had already committed in his heart his direction
- *****And here is a huge character trait... Be around like-minded people. **“ Being of one mind...creates courage!! these were committed friends before trouble they would be loyal in trouble! Create a support network in the**
- out of all the captives he put himself with three...that were as committed as he was... when one is weak there is someone to help you up!
 - **the God Part... God was using these men as a testimony to the chief of his presence in their lives... this will pay dividends later on down the road...**

¹⁵ At the end of the ten days they looked healthier and better nourished than any of the young men who ate the royal food. ¹⁶ So the guard took away their choice food and the wine they were to drink and gave them vegetables instead.

- **it worked physically and reinforced emotionally and spiritually who they were! there is great strength gained and faith built... by walking your beliefs out in turbulent times....**
- **and faith is always rewarded....**

Hebrews 10:35 So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. ³⁶ You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised.and

[1 Samuel 26:23](#) The Lord **rewards** everyone for their righteousness **and faithfulness....**

So God rewards them...for their heart to honor God right now... with further knowledge and wisdom..while they still are captives...

¹⁷To these four young men God gave knowledge and understanding of all kinds of literature and learning. And Daniel could understand visions and dreams of all kinds.

- **The Difference Between Loving God's Blessings and Loving God** God honors those who have the courage to honor him in turbulent times!!
- **He increased their abilities in all these areas and even in the understanding of the subconscious and supernatural...this also happens to us...**
- **not even that much for their benefit but for His purposes...listen your character is not to help you cruise through life but to enable you to be used to carry out the purposes of God in your life!**
- **but character is developed in the good times...and in the turbulent times it is displayed...so if you are in the good times...be resolved to honor God...and in the turbulent times...so in the good and turbulent times Honor God!! take note of your character and what needs to be worked on ...**
- **and we end the chapter with this...**

Dan 1:21 And Daniel remained there until the first year of King Cyrus.

I call this the Rinse and Repeat principle... He is going to be a prisoner for a long time.... there is an old saying "repetition is the mother of learning."

- The more you perform the same activity, the more confident you become and Confidence is a tangible thing--it comes from practice and repetition.
- The more you have to exercise your commitment to Christ no matter what...the stronger and more courageous you become!
- The greater your testimony is and influence increaseseven when you still remain a prisoner for the next 70 years

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