

Dare to be a Daniel
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Introduction: Going away from home to college is a huge step in life.

- A. Godly parents prepare their children for such occasions.
1. Their desire is that “the way he should go” is to be with God. **(Prov 22:6)**
 2. You are who you are today because of choices you have made and the choices your parents have made. You are entering a new phase of your life.
 3. The ultimate test of parents is to prepare their child to meet God. They cannot achieve this goal by themselves.
- B. There are great examples in the Bible of teenagers standing after a “sudden change!”
1. Parents can only prepare their children and pray they choose the Lord. Your continued involvement and support is crucial!
 2. Students it is up to you to choose “whom you will serve!” **(Josh 24:15)**
 3. Let’s consider the components of the stand taken by Daniel.

I. Daniel determined to serve the Lord is all things

- A. A sudden change was forced upon Daniel. **(Dan 1:1-4)**
1. Daniel did not choose this change rather it was forced upon him.
 2. He was overnight forced into a strange culture, language and land.
 3. He could have concluded that God’s ways had been defeated unless he was instructed in scripture. Those so instructed would be strengthened! **(Deut 28:49; Jer 25:11-12)**
 4. Daniel had a faith that stood long before the day of crisis. Be thankful for godly parents!
- B. Daniel committed himself to God’s ways. **(Dan 1:5, 8)**
1. He did not have a generic commitment to God that would bend with the culture!
 2. The local church you chose is crucial! How is God’s word viewed and taught?
 3. God and His presence did not change. **(Mal 3:6; Psa 139:7-10)**
 4. What God expected of His people did not change. His word remains the same! What Daniel had learned would be all that he had. **(Psa 119:10-11, 137:1)**
 5. Consider the temptations you will be faced with that are accepted in the college culture. (Alcohol, sexual immorality, priorities)
 6. What faith do you bring to Auburn? You will be tested! My prayer is that you will make faith your own.

II. Daniel’s faith changed the people around him

- A. We all need relationships that will help and strengthen us. How do they come? God will provide! **(Dan 1:9)**
1. How many of Daniel’s countrymen took the stand he did? Many feared.
 2. Even many of the worldly admire a man of faith that stands against the crowd.
 3. This stand also pushes others away! Joseph knew this! **(Gen 46:33-34)**
 4. Please do not hide your faith with the hope of gaining friends in the world.

B. Consider the few that stood with Daniel. (Dan 1:6-7)

1. Imagine having *your name changed* to acknowledge idol gods!

Daniel (God is my judge) to **Beltshazar** (a servant of Bel) (Bel - the principle Babylonian deity)

Hananiah (Jehovah is gracious) – **Shadrach** (command of Aku [moon god]; inspired by the sun God)

Misrael (who is like God) - **Meshach** (who is like Aku)

Azariah (the Lord helps) - **Abed-Nego** (servant of Nebo) (Nebo, son of Baal)

2. The peer pressure of the culture *only made them stronger*. Consider that later stand of his three friends without Daniel! (Dan 3:12, 16-19)

3. They could *humbly give reasons and proof* of why they did what they did. (Dan 1:10-16)

4. *Many doors will be opened to you* in college when you walk by a living faith. There are great opportunities in the questions that will come! (1 Pt 3:15)

5. The choices you make in relationships *will determine how your college days will go*. (Ex. Social Greek organizations, roommates and time commitments)

III. Daniel learned how to worship

A. How did the Jews worship without the temple?

1. God's people always have had *a life of personal worship*! God has always expected His people to pour out their hearts to Him. (Ps 62:7-8)

2. An external worship that excluded the heart *is despised by God*. Consider how Daniel is contrasted to the people in Ezekiel's day. (Ezk 14:3-5, 14, 20)

3. The Pharisee's of Jesus day also had heart problems. (Mt 15:8-9)

B. Daniel *from an early age learned how to worship*. It was seen in his old age. (Dan 6:10-11)

1. His worship was greatly *developed in times of fear and uncertainty*.

2. What happens when all we have is stripped away? How powerful *can our relationship with God become* in such a day? (Ps 3:1-6; 27:1-5)

3. Consider what a college student wrote about his first days at Auburn.

"The first thing I learned at AU was that living on your own isn't always all it's cracked up to be. You have to cook yourself (or eat taco bell). You have to pay bills and clean house. Until I moved down here I thought my clothes just magically cleaned themselves. Once you get used to all of that, other problems begin to creep up. There are new friends but none of them fulfilling that "BFF" role at first. You miss out on what's going on at home, friends, church, younger siblings. Then I realized that I had no one to share the day with."

4. Many here have found great comfort and companionship with *being with others as we worship together*! (Ps 122:1)

C. What foundations can be built in our youth? (Lk 6:46-49)

1. My college days were especially life changing for me. I am thankful to this day for *those who took the time to help* and awkward, geeky, lonely young man.

2. This church and its leadership is committed to helping every member grow in their faith. There are *many doors of opportunity* if you will open them!

Conclusion: All of us should be Daniels in every phase of our lives!