

(2006 Conference) 8. Young People Who Stand for God

by Zac Poonen

God's witness is the ultimate test of our lives, and we must be willing to surrender our lives to Him and obey His commands, no matter how small they may seem.

Duration: 57:23

Scripture: 2 Chronicles 16:9

Topics: "Radical Obedience", "Youth Ministry"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of being wholehearted for God, standing out from the crowd, and not compromising with the world. It highlights the need for young people to seek God's witness in their lives, to be sensitive to His leading, and to be willing to obey even the smallest commands of God. The sermon encourages young individuals to be open to the supernatural, to seek visions from God, and to be willing to pay the price of radical obedience, even if it means facing challenges or losing worldly comforts.

Transcript

To young people at this time, and there is a phrase that's occurring in my mind, and that is, God bearing witness. Whatever you may think about yourself, if God does not bear witness to you, you have failed. For all of us, that is the thing.

I may think I'm doing a wonderful job, and I may think I'm wholehearted, but ask yourself, if God is bearing witness to you, your life, and to your service, we must never devalue ourselves because we are young. Paul told Timothy, don't let anyone despise your youth. In the Old Testament, when God called Jeremiah, it says in Jeremiah chapter 1, the word of the Lord, verse 4, came to me saying, before I formed you in the womb, I knew you.

Before you were born, I consecrated you and appointed you a prophet to the nations. He said, Lord, I don't know how to speak because I am a youth. How old was he? Maybe 17, 18 years old? Does God speak to people who are 17, 18 years old and tell them, hey, I've got a ministry for you, and I planned that ministry when you were in your mother's womb.

Take your life seriously. It's quite likely that God is saying that to some of you sitting here. And then we can say, oh Lord, I don't even know how to speak.

I'm a youth. That may be exactly how you feel. So I felt as a young man, when I felt God was calling me, I said, Lord, I don't know how to speak.

I've never in my life stood before the public, even in school. I never took part in public speaking or any such thing. But it's got nothing to do with these such abilities.

Those are all natural abilities that people have. God must bear witness to you. And I want to encourage all of you young people to be sensitive, to hear what God is saying to you, brothers and sisters.

I want to turn to another example in Ezekiel and chapter 14. You know, these examples in scripture are people to whom God bore witness. In Ezekiel 14, the Lord says in verse 13, if a country sins against me by committing unfaithfulness and I stretch out my hand against it, cut it off from it, man and beast.

Even if these three men, Noah, Daniel and Job were living there, they will be able to only save themselves and they will not, verse 16, be able to deliver even their sons and daughters. Sometimes the blessing of God upon a man brings blessing to his sons and daughters too. Like when God brought Lot out of Sodom and Gomorrah, he brought his son, his wife and daughters too.

But sometimes God says, no, it's only that man that's going to be delivered. And I'm not going to do anything for his son or daughter because they are not wholehearted like him. And here it was in such a situation, it was so bad that the Lord said, even if these three men, Noah, Daniel and Job were there, they would deliver themselves by their own righteousness.

Here was God bearing witness, saying these three people are righteous. Now we know that God bore witness about Job, even to the devil. He lived long, long ago, long before Ezekiel.

Ezekiel lived around in the 570 BC or something like that. And Job lived probably more than 2000 BC. Noah was another very righteous man to whom God bore witness.

He also lived in 2000 BC. God pointed to Noah and Job and said, there are two righteous men who lived way, Ezekiel, 1500 years before you. I can think of two righteous men.

And then this is the most amazing thing. But Ezekiel, in your lifetime, there is a 17 year old young man in Babylon, right where you are. His name is Daniel.

He's also a righteous man in the same category as those two people. That's amazing. Didn't God fear that Daniel's head would be puffed up when he heard that prophecy? Oh, I'm also a righteous man like Noah and Daniel.

What fantastic confidence God had in Daniel, young 17, 18 year old man, that even if Ezekiel the prophet gets up and puts him in the same category as Noah and Job, Daniel will remain the same humble young man he was. I hope God will have that confidence in you people. Can he? Would you be able to bear that? Would you be able to bear a prophet getting up and putting you in the same category as two righteous men who lived 2000 years ago? And say, God says you are in that same category.

And you fall on your face and you say, Lord, what am I? I don't have anything that I did not receive. We can't bear it. We get puffed up so easily, so quickly.

I believe this is the biggest failure among young people. And I want to say to you young people, be careful. Here is an exemplary man in the Old Testament.

He was younger than Ezekiel. Ezekiel was about 30 years old when he started the ministry. Daniel was at least 10 years younger to him.

Ezekiel is prophesying about a fellow 10 years younger to him who is hardly 20 years old and says God considers him a righteous man. I wish we had young brothers and sisters like that in our midst, whom Almighty God could see something in them, that God could say, see with God there is no partiality. He told, he picked up Jeremiah from that whole crowd of thousands of people in Israel.

He picked up this young 17-year-old Jeremiah and said, you, I've chosen you. Why can't God do that today? He did that with Joseph way back, 17 years old, God gave him visions of the future, you know, what's going to happen. And those visions were fulfilled.

These are examples, dear young people, of people whom God picked up. The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth to show himself strong on behalf of those whose hearts are completely his. That's what it says in 2 Chronicles 16 verse 9. You know, God is looking for those whose hearts are completely his, who have given up every other ambition.

When we are young, we have ambitions, nothing wrong in that. But when Christ lays a hold of our life, we must shift our ambitions to something that is more, got more eternal value. You have ambitions as a young man, that's right.

Don't you young teenage girls and girls in your 20s have ambitions? You have hopes of getting married to a good man, a wholehearted brother. You young men, you have hopes and ambitions in your life to get a good job, to set up a home, good. But I hope those ambitions will be directed towards the kingdom of God.

And say, Lord, whatever else I do or don't do, I want my life to count for you on earth, like the lives of Joseph, Daniel, etc. counted. Do you know that all of Egypt, and not only Egypt, the whole known world in those days was saved by one young man, Joseph.

We don't know how many millions would have been destroyed by the famine in Egypt, if it were not for the wisdom that God gave to one young man who said to Pharaoh, God has shown me that there are going to be seven years of plenty, and then there will be seven years of famine. Pharaoh didn't know that. Pharaoh got a dream, but he didn't have a clue what the dream meant.

Pharaoh was much older than Joseph, but Joseph explained that dream, and he said, this plenty that you see now is not going to last forever. It's only for seven years. You see, most of us, when we get into a time of plenty, whether good salary or comfortable life, we think this will last forever now.

A man like Joseph knew it is not going to last forever. It's for a period, and during that period, he said, don't just spend everything. Store up, store up, store up.

Eat a little that is necessary, and store up for the future, because the time of famine is coming. Now, if Joseph were not there, those Egyptians would have just eaten and wasted their plenty, and the result would have been that when the famine came, there'd have been nothing, and not only Egypt would have suffered, all the nations around Egypt would have suffered too. But because there was one young man who was in touch with God, he saved Egypt, and he saved the nations around Egypt.

You must be a young man like that, a young woman like that, who can fulfill a purpose in your lifetime. And sisters too, you know, there was this young lady called Deborah, who God laid hold of in the book of

Judges, because there was no other man he could find, trained her one day to be a judge in Israel. So, God looks for such people.

We read in the story of Daniel, how he was another young man that we read of here, that God could bear witness to him. And what was the reason? You know, it says about Enoch in Hebrews 11, it's a beautiful phrase, that God bore witness to him. Hebrews 11, verse 5, by faith Enoch was taken up, so that he would not see death, and he was not found, because God took him up.

But before he was taken up, he got a witness from God, that his life was pleasing to God. God watched Enoch's life for 300 years. I mean, those days people lived up to 365.

I mean, Enoch lived up to 365. He started walking with God when he was about 60. So, if you make that down to the proportion people live today, it's after one sixth of his life was over, he started walking with God.

So, if you're going to live to 100 years, that means you start walking with God when you're 16, something like that. I mean, if you want to translate Enoch's lifetime to our lifetime, we got to look at Enoch like a man who for 16 years just did whatever he liked, and then one day he had an encounter with God as a young man. Those days, if somebody was 65, was a very young man.

People lived up to 900, and here was this young man who played the fool for many years, and then he had an encounter with God, and from that day, consistently till the end of his life, he decided to walk with God, and he was the only man who walked with God. If you want to know, and he had a testimony that his life pleased God as a young man, and if you want to know what type of world Enoch lived in, just turn to the book of Jude, and you see there that Enoch prophesied. He was a prophet in his generation.

Verse 14, Enoch prophesied about the hypocrites in his time. It is about these men that Enoch prophesied. Which men? These people who are, verse 12, hidden reefs, who only care for themselves, clouds without water, hypocrites doubly dead, trees without fruit, wandering stars, etc.

And what did Enoch prophesy about such people living in his time? The Lord is coming. He spoke about the second coming of Christ before the first coming took place, and he said the Lord is coming with thousands of his holy ones, and he's going to execute judgment on all these, all you ungodly people, for all the ungodly things you've done, for all the ungodly way in which you've lived, and for all the ungodly things you have spoken, for your words, your deeds, God is going to judge you, all your grumblers, and those who find fault to live up to your lusts. That's the type of people Enoch lived around, just like today.

And here was this young man, Enoch, who walked with God in his life. God bore witness to him, just like God bore witness to Daniel. There is a righteous man.

And if you look at Daniel, chapter 1, book of Daniel, chapter 1, you see one of the reasons why God bore witness to him, and that is something that all of you can take heed to. In the world in which we live, there's a great need for people like Daniel. It says here, Daniel was one of the fine young people, selected with many other intelligent, smart young people.

You know, God can choose anybody. He can choose someone who's dumb. He can choose someone who's smart.

We shouldn't think that God only chooses those who are weak and dumb and poor. He chooses certain rich people like Abraham and Job, and He chooses some exceptionally clever people like Paul and Daniel. I mean, with God, these things don't make a difference.

It's a heart that matters. So don't think that, oh, well, God doesn't choose all these clever, intelligent people. He chooses only simple people.

No. Daniel was an extremely clever, intelligent man. He could pass all the tests there, and he came first in the class.

God chooses such people too. And it says here, but the thing, the reason why God chose Daniel was not because he came first in his class. No.

He chose him because he made up his mind, verse 8, that he would not defile himself. The important thing is not how capable we are in the things of the world, but whether we can keep our heart from being defiled. The great temptation, when you have tremendous capabilities in the world, some of you are very smart and capable in earthly things.

You're very capable in your job. You're able to do certain wonderful things and you get good jobs and good salaries. Can you put God first there in your job and say, like Daniel, I'm sorry, I will not do these things which are wrong.

It's a great temptation because you can lose the opportunity for promotion. Now, if you are just working as a sweeper or something, that's easy because you don't look much for promotion. But I'm talking about people who have got tremendous abilities and you have scope to advance.

And you know that if you stand up for what is true, the authorities won't like it so much. That's what Daniel faced. The king had said, this is the food you must eat.

But Daniel made up his mind that he will not defile himself, even if the king sent food and said, you got to eat this. And in those days, it was not just a question of being sacked from your job. It was a question of losing your head if you dared to defy the king.

I mean, I'm amazed at Christians who will compromise just to get a promotion or who compromise just to get a little increment or compromise just to keep their job. Here was a man who would not compromise even to keep his head, leave alone his job. No wonder God bore witness to Daniel and said he's in the same category as Noah and Job.

God has got no respect of persons. I believe that in our generation, God can point to you and say that you're like that. If he sees when he tests you, that you will not compromise.

You got to stand true to God in this day of compromise. That is the greatest need for young people. See, God cannot use a man before he tests him.

God tested Jeremiah through many, many, many situations to see whether he would compromise. He was a prophet and God tested him to see whether he would preach the whole truth or whether he would seek to please people. And I'm sure millions of prophets through the years have lost God's approval because somewhere along the line, they tried to please man.

But there were a few like Jeremiah who stood true and Daniel. And you could find yourself in situations, Daniel found himself in situation in his work spot where he was tempted to compromise, to do something wrong. And you young people can find yourself in situations in your work spot where everybody, all the other Jews of Daniel's friends were doing the wrong thing.

It was a very small issue. You know, nowadays many people say, oh, that's a small thing. Whenever I hear that word from somebody, I know he's a compromiser.

Oh, that's a small matter, brother. That's not a big issue. Such a person will never in his lifetime be in the category of Daniel or Joseph.

What was the small thing? Eat a little pork, drink a little wine. Yeah, I know there are some dietary laws God has given in the book of Leviticus, but it's a small thing. It's not a sin.

You're not harming anybody. You're not hurting anyone. It's a small thing.

And perhaps those laws were because they were in the wilderness. Now we are in Babylon and things have improved. We got to adjust to our society.

That's what people say. You know, in Daniel's time, the other Jews could have said what a lot of Christians say today. That was for that time.

I mean, Moses was speaking in Leviticus for that culture. Hey, that was thousand years ago, Daniel. That's what people say today.

Those things that Paul wrote, that is for that culture 2000 years ago. We're living now. We can't be particular about these small, small commandments.

It's written only one verse, half a verse. You know that the thing forbidding eating pork was half a verse? Half a verse. There's only one verse in Proverbs which says, don't look upon the wine when it stirs itself and is red and stirs itself in the cup.

Only one verse. It's half a verse. And people could have come to Daniel and said, why are you bothered about half a verse man? Do you know the number of Christians today who despise half a verse in the Bible? They will never in a thousand years find the witness of God.

No wonder India lacks prophets. No wonder India lacks wholehearted men and women. Do you know that God will not test you in the big things? He didn't test Daniel to see whether he murdered somebody or committed adultery.

No, it was a small little thing. There was a little pork on the table. There was a little wine and all the Jews said, come on, let's eat it.

And somebody says, hey, it says in Leviticus chapter 11, there's certain things we can't eat. It says in Proverbs, we can't look at this wine when it's stirring itself. Then came these arguments.

Oh, that was for that culture. That's only half a verse. And come on, we got to take the broader view and all these things that we hear today among Christians.

But in the midst of it, there was one man, only one man, 17, 18 years old who said, brothers, I don't judge you, but my conscience does not permit me to do this. I'm not here. You may call me a legalist.

You can call me whatever you like, but I fear God. And even if it's one 10th of a verse, if God has said it, I'll do it. Can you imagine the delight it brought to the heart of God? Not because Daniel didn't eat pork.

That's not the point. The pork was only a test. Not because Daniel didn't drink wine.

The wine was only a test. Today we can eat pork and drink a little wine. There's no sin in that.

I mean, if it was a sin, then it must be a sin now too. It is not. It was kept there as a little test.

And I found in the New Testament too, there are these little one 10th of a verse somewhere. It's not important, but it's a test to see whether you obey it or not, to see whether you come in the same category as Daniel and to see whether you become proud and judge other people who don't obey that verse. That's the other way you can spoil yourself.

You can obey a verse and then destroy all the effect of that verse by being proud. Like you heard me say, you make this wonderful chicken curry and then you put one dead lizard inside. The dead lizard is your pride that, aha, I'm obeying this verse and those other fellows are not.

Please, when you make the chicken curry, please don't put a dead lizard inside. Spoils the whole thing. Leave others alone.

That's another thing I found. So many fine young people, they cannot leave other people alone. They are busybodies in everybody's affairs.

Why don't you do it like me? Why should they do it like you? There are elder brothers like that. They want everybody to do it like them. Who said they should do it like you? Leave them alone.

If they want to go to hell, let them go to hell. If they want to disobey God, let them disobey God. You preach the word and then leave it to them whether they want to obey God or not.

But you don't compromise. That's the position Daniel took. He didn't go around judging all those other fellows.

Be a young person like that, wholehearted, radical, obeying every little thing in God's word, but not judging anybody else. It's that second part that is very difficult for many young people and even older people. That proves that they are not wholehearted.

That proves they are not living before God's face. They're obeying something in order to show others, see, see me. That's the dead lizard.

It's about 25 dead lizards when it's like that. God says, I don't want that curry. Many young people are spoiling all their radical, wholehearted thing by compromising and judging others and becoming proud of what they've done.

But Daniel wasn't like that. He took a stand. He didn't want anybody else to join him.

He said, that's fine. You fellows can do what you like, but this is the way I want to go. Think if God can find young people like that here.

You young men in your place of work, or you stand up and say, I will not compromise whatever I may do. When I was a young man, I had a great ambition to go right up to the top of the Navy. And then Jesus came into my heart and gripped my life.

And I discovered one thing. I have to give up my earthly ambition if I want to please the Lord. It was impossible to have two ambitions because I found myself in so many situations where I would either have to please my superior officer or do what God says.

There are numerous times in my life as a young man, 21, 22 years old, where I had to stand before my senior Kamani officer and say, I'm sorry, sir. I can't do that. I'm a Christian.

And you know, those are the days when as a young 22, 23 year old, I got a spiritual backbone. God is trying to build a spiritual backbone in you in these different situations where you stand alone. I was alone.

Most of the ships I worked in, I was the only Christian standing up for Christ. I thank God for those experiences. There was not a single believer around.

Most times, many weeks, I never met a believer for weeks on end. It was just me and Jesus, that's all. And if you find yourself in situations like that, young people, remember that is the time when God is testing you to see whether you will stand and obey those little commands.

The New Testament is full of people who missed something by disobeying little commands. I told you yesterday how Saul lost the kingdom just because he didn't kill the good sheep. What a little thing that is.

Just because he went and offered a sacrifice when he shouldn't have done it. King Uzziah lost the kingdom, became a leper because he went and offered a sacrifice. He shouldn't have done it.

That was not his ministry. I've seen people lose the anointing of God because they go into a ministry God has never called them to. They go and poke their nose into affairs which don't concern them.

Instead of God expanding their borders, they expand their borders themselves and God brings confusion into their work and into their life. So there are many, many examples like this throughout scripture of people who did not commit very serious sins. In the same way, there are these examples of people like Daniel who obeyed God in minute little things.

Can you take a stand for God in your office and say, I'm sorry, I'm a Christian, I can't do that. You may lose your job, that's fine. I almost got court-martialed.

Court-martialed means I could be locked up in jail. I said, it's fine, but I'm not going to go against my conscience. I tell you God will test you, but if you pass the test, boy, you know what a ministry God will give you? All the honors you get in the world will be nothing compared to that ministry God will give you after he's tested you.

And he won't test you just once. He'll test you one after the other after the other. And in the midst of it all, because you're a young man, he will also test you to see whether you submit to your elders who are carnal.

Okay? Elders who are not as wholehearted as you. That's how Jesus was tested. I know Mary was a wonderful girl, but she was not as wholehearted as Jesus.

No, no comparison. Joseph was not as wholehearted as Jesus. And I can imagine that Jesus saw Joseph and Mary fighting with each other.

Do you believe that Joseph and Mary fought with each other? Or are you a Roman Catholic? Have you seen, okay, let me ask you an easier question. Have you seen new covenant husband and wife fighting with each other? What about old covenant husband and wife? You know, there are many Protestants who believe Roman Catholic teaching, the immaculate Mary and the immaculate Joseph, who never fought with each other. And Jesus lived in this holy home.

I'm sorry, I don't believe that. They were old covenant people. I have seen new covenant people, how they fight.

And I multiply that by about 10. And I say, that is how old covenant people must have fought. And Jesus lived in that home and saw this.

And he never judged them. He was wholehearted and he submitted to them. They were carnal.

Nobody could be spiritual until the day of Pentecost. But Jesus submitted to them. Can you submit to an elder brother who's not as spiritual as you are without judging him? God has kept me here.

I have to submit. I tell you, I've been through that for years in my twenties. And those are the years God broke me.

My elder brothers were not spiritual in all the churches I lived in those years. I did not judge them. I went about my business.

And in church matters, I did what they told me to do. I minded my own business. Many of you, I believe some of you who are older in your thirties, forties, just think you could have had a much, much wider ministry if you had allowed God in your younger days to break you a little bit.

Don't be satisfied with what you have. There could have been more. You must have a desire to get God's best.

God can break you through a difficult wife. He broke Job through a difficult wife. He broke John Wesley through a difficult wife.

He can break you through a difficult husband. God has his own ways. In Daniel's case, he was broken through the circumstances, you know, jealous.

Other people in the office who were jealous of him and who accused him to the boss, got him thrown in the lion's den. What all he faced in his life? Jealousy because he was so upright. They examined every area of his work, it says in Daniel 6, and they could not find a single thing wrong with him.

What a testimony. When I was young and I was working in the Navy, this was my desire. Lord, whatever people may say, accuse me, laugh at me about my faith, they must never be able to find one thing wrong with the work I do.

You must have that desire in your work, in your office. I remember commanding officers who used to call me for my annual report and say, I don't find anything wrong with your work, but you're a very unsociable person. You don't drink and play cards and things like that with the other people.

Okay. What he thought was bad was I thought was good. So I knew I could never go to the top, but they could not complain about my work.

My work was perfect because I took pains to do it. And you must take pains in your office. I used to tell them, sir, I'm not doing my work to get your annual report.

I'm doing it because I fear God. And I remember some of those commanding officers on their deathbed. They remembered what I told them.

I tell you, you young people must be such outstanding witnesses for Christ in your office that till the dying day, your boss will remember you. They'll remember there was one man I knew in my office. He was so different.

He never cared for promotion, but he did his job so perfectly. I could trust him that he would not speak about me behind my back. He was a God fearing man.

Do your bosses, will they remember you on their deathbed that there was one Christian I came across? Boy, he was genuine. That man didn't go after money. I remember I met an admiral here the other day, a colleague of mine in the Navy.

He was senior to me. We met at the Naval officers function here once and he said, Zach, I can never forget. I left the Navy 40 years ago.

He said, I can never forget how with all the prospects ahead of you, you chucked everything and went out. And he was surprised to see me still alive and happy. I met another senior officer at that function who was the one who troubled me a lot because I was a Christian.

He was the one who almost court-martialed me. I saw him there and he was so embarrassed to meet me. I had nothing against him.

I was so happy to meet him. They never forget you. That's what I discovered.

You stand for Christ, 40 years later, they will remember that you were a Christian who stood there. You must be like that, you young people in your office. Not only you'll get a backbone, but you'll be a witness.

I didn't go around distributing tracts to these people. When an opportunity came, I would say, I'm sorry, sir. I'm a Christian.

I can't do that. They would ask me to write false statements. I say, I'm sorry, sir.

I'm a Christian. I can't do that. Once I got a transfer in half an hour for not doing what the commanding officer wanted me to do.

That's fine. You must have some experiences like that in your younger days, where you lost a job because you stood for the Lord. Where you didn't get a promotion, somebody else got promoted.

Somebody, you got pushed down and something else happened because you stood for the Lord. These are the things that will make you the type of Christian you should be. That's how Daniel was.

So when Daniel took that stand for the Lord, then there were two or three people sitting around the table whom we now know as Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Their earlier names were Hananiah, Mishael,

and Azariah. Those were their original names.

We don't know those names so well. Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were sitting there and they said, we always felt like this, that this pork and this wine we shouldn't touch, but we saw all these compromising young people and decided to be like them, but now we're going to follow Daniel. You know what a difference it makes? Your sisters, when you see all the other sisters following the fashions of the world and you as one sister decide you're not going to go that way, you'll be like a Daniel.

And then there will be some other young sisters, they say, hey, there's one sister who's bold, who's not going to follow the fashions of the world, and who's not going to dress like the film stars and the models, and you'll get a little company, you'll get a little fellowship. That's how the real church is built. In the midst of compromise, somebody is willing to be different and is not going to follow the way everybody else is going.

The vast majority among the Jews were compromisers, the vast majority in every church are compromisers, even among young people. But in the midst of them, God is looking for one who will say, well, small command or one-tenth of a verse or half a verse, I'm going to obey God. And such a person, God will bear witness to him.

Do you know that God could influence the whole nation of Babylon through one man, Daniel? Not by the multitude of compromisers. God could influence the next kingdom, Medo-Persia. Darius was the king of Medo-Persia.

Usually, you know what happens in parliament, when the Congress is in power, they put certain people in as secretaries and police directors, but when the new government comes, BJP comes, they sack all those people and put some other people there. That's what happened in Medo-Persia. Babylon got defeated, Medo-Persia took over the empire and they sacked everybody, but Daniel, they didn't sack.

It's amazing. They kept him. He said, you continue to be the prime minister.

What a man. Because they discovered, I think, by searching the records, this fellow wasn't serving Babylon. He was a godly man and I think Medo-Persia will benefit by having this chap on our side.

He's not in politics and taking this side or that side. The whole government changed and they retained this man as prime minister. Great testimony.

One man. And he began to influence Medo-Persia. And do you know that he was the man who influenced Medo-Persia to send the Jews back to build the temple in Jerusalem.

God's work is mostly done by one person. And you can be that one person. One wholehearted, radical, uncompromising person who will stand for God, no matter what, how many people around him compromise, who will obey the whole counsel of God, who will not reject something and say, oh, that's a small thing.

That's not very important. Those are not the major things in scripture. Beware, my brothers and sisters of those who say, oh, let's follow the major things.

Let's not worry about these little things. That's exactly what all those compromising Jews sitting around the table said. Daniel, the main thing of the Ten Commandments, man, don't worship idols, don't murder, don't

commit adultery, don't bear false witness, et cetera, et cetera.

Not this pork and wine. Where is that in the Ten Commandments? Daniel would have said, you can say what you like. I'm not going to judge you, but I see it in scripture.

Where do you find young people like this, who will dare to be different? Where will you find parents like this, who will train their young people to be willing to be different from the multitude and the crowd? And when your young sons and daughters come to you and say, dad, mom, can I do this? Can I dress like this? And you say, my girl, don't you want to follow Jesus? Don't you want to live for him? Don't you want to be totally uncompromising? Or do you want to yield to the pressures of people around you and be like them? Where are the parents who will give that type of advice? They are disappearing, such parents. Everybody wants to please their children. Okay, do it, do it.

I'll buy whatever you want. I'll buy it for you. But see where your own life is going, my brother, sister, the anointing gradually disappearing from your life because you have become a compromiser too.

Yeah. Let us examine our hearts, Jeremiah said in Lamentations, let's examine our hearts and our ways and turn back to the Lord. I believe that is the need of the hour.

Let us examine our hearts and our ways and turn back to the Lord and please don't be like Adam to find some justification for what you have done. Adam and his tribe are experts at finding justification for disobeying God's word. Don't fall into that category.

I'm sure these Jews had plenty of reasons why we should, we can eat pork and drink wine, disobey these little commands in Leviticus. But Daniel wouldn't listen to them. And because Daniel took a stand, these other three joined him, there was a little church there.

It wasn't a big church, just four people. But those four people influenced the whole nation. And we read here that when the next chapter of the Nebuchadnezzar had a vision, Daniel chapter two, and was going to kill everybody because nobody could explain his dream to him.

And he said, I'll test whether you fellows really know what you're saying by saying, you tell me what the dream was. That's a good way to find out whether people are genuine or not. He was a clever fellow, Nebuchadnezzar.

You tell me what the dream was, then I'll know whether your interpretation is right. Otherwise, I'll tell you the dream, you'll say some interpretation of the other and you'll fool me. No, no, no, no, no.

I'll know whether you're in touch with God by telling me the dream. And those fellows said, that's difficult. These are all fellows who are working for money, no? Who are clever fellows, invent some interpretation or the other and Nebuchadnezzar, you can't fool me.

I'll kill the whole lot of you. You guys are fooling me that you are in touch with God and you are prophets and all that. And Daniel heard about it.

Daniel said, hey, I'm in touch with God. God can show me the dream that he gave to Nebuchadnezzar. And it says in the night, Daniel saw a vision, Daniel 2.19. God gave a vision to Daniel.

God gave a vision to Joseph. You know what the promise is in Acts of the Apostles chapter 2 verse 17? I will pour out my spirit and all flesh on your sons and your daughters and your young people will see

visions. Your young people will see visions.

Do you want to be a wholehearted person like that? Most young people see dirty sexual dreams. That's all they see, even after they become Christians. Because that's what they're thinking about.

That's what they're reading about. That's the type of 10% filthy movies that they see. And they dream about that at night.

Now, of course, they come to the meetings and clap their hands and sing songs and do all that. But their heart is after falling in love with somebody and that type of stuff. Where can you be a wholehearted believer for God if your primary aim in life is to fall in love with somebody? I'm not against it.

When you get married, by all means, fall in love with your wife. But if that's your main goal in life, when you're a young man, you will completely miss God's will for your life. As a young man, your desire must be to see visions of God.

And at the right time, God will bring someone to you to be your husband or your wife whom you can love deeply. But if that becomes the number one thing in your life, you're not completely going to miss God's will for your life, like a lot of other people before you. And you miss God's will in marriage.

You can never change that decision. You can change your decision when you, if you took a wrong job or bought a wrong house or any decision in life, you can change except the one you choose when you get married. So it's so important that if you want the right person, I'll tell you what, seek God.

Say, Lord, I want my mind and my thoughts to be on the visions of God. Doesn't it say, Lord, in your word, Acts chapter two, you'll pour out your spirit upon young people like me and I will see visions of God. I want to see it, Lord.

And then other people around you will say, Hey, that's, that's not for today, man. That's for 2000 years ago. It's when Moses wrote what Paul wrote.

It's not for today. And you see all these people sitting here, they're all fine people and all, they don't see any visions. Okay.

I'm not here to judge you. I go to scripture and I say, the Holy Spirit will be poured upon people and your young men will see visions. I know there are plenty of people with false visions.

So what? I read frequently in the paper that there are counterfeit 500 rupee notes. So what? I know there are genuine 500 rupee notes also. And I know there are plenty of counterfeit visions and angels and all that rubbish people are seeing.

But I also believe that Daniel saw a vision. Joseph saw a vision. Paul saw a vision.

They saw something. They got direction in their life. It's true.

We must be open to the supernatural. This is the thing that surprises me about many Christians. They hear all about witchcraft all around them.

And in witchcraft, they know that it's supernatural. I remember one man came to me once. I don't even know how he got my address, living in the other end of Bangalore.

Somebody had given him my address and he came to me with two of them and said, brother, there was some dispute about the property with my sister and she's done witchcraft on me. And that tube light that's blown ages ago outside suddenly starts flickering. And inside the house, suddenly pig's dung falls behind me.

And he asked me, do you believe all this? I said, sure. The devil's got tremendous power. And I believe in witchcraft.

I believe in the part of witchcraft. But I also tell you, if you listen to me, you can be completely delivered. The devil cannot touch you.

I'm not scared of the devil. For many years after I was born again, I was scared of the devil. But after I got baptized in the Holy Spirit, it became different.

I believe the devil should be afraid of me. Because as Jesus is, so I'm in the world. And the devil should be afraid of you.

You shouldn't be afraid of the devil. But Christians believe the devil has got all these supernatural powers and Christians have got nothing. No, Christians can't have anything.

Christians can only read the Bible and study and live like other normal human beings. Nothing, zero supernatural in their life. Is that how God has left us in this world? Is that how you read the Acts of the Apostles? Is that how they lived in the days of the apostles? Is that how anybody lived from beginning till end of the Bible? No, you do not have because you do not ask.

You ask and do not receive because you do not believe. You believe the devil has got all that power and he can do all those things. But you believe that the poor old helpless Christians can do nothing.

We have insulted Jesus Christ. We have insulted the Holy Spirit by saying that greater is he that is in the world than he that is in us. And you young people must rise up another generation that proves to India that greater is he that is in us than he that is in the world.

Will you take that challenge? I'll tell you before you raise your hands, you may lose your job. Are you willing for that? Are you willing to reduce your standard of living? You have to take a lower job. You may have to pay a price.

I'm not going to hide that from you. When I became radical, the Lord asked me to quit my job. And you know what happened when I quit my job? My income dropped by 85%.

That's how it was. I mean, don't say yes to God if you're not willing for all that. He won't let you starve.

He won't let you on the streets. He won't let your children suffer. None of these things have happened to me.

But he'll take you through testing to see whether he means more to you than all material things and jobs and house and lands and everything else. And if you pass the test, he'll give you everything. But he'll test you first to see whether he means more to you than everything on this earth.

And that is where most young people fail. Some boy means more to them. Some girl means more to them.

Some little thing means more to them than God and his word. They want to be like the others. They don't want to stand out to be different.

They want to follow the fashions of the others. They want to live like the others, have the ambitions of the others. And they say, God, I want to be wholehearted.

God is not fooled. Let's bow before God and pray. Heavenly Father, I pray that you will raise up a generation of people in this land, young people, young men and women, who will not be like the half-hearted, compromising young people who we see these days who are only interested in music and fun and games and entertainment and movies and fashions and gold and silver.

Raise up a generation of young men and women who will count for you. Raise up a generation of parents who will guide their children into that which is the best for them, not the best materially, but the best spiritually. Lord, have mercy upon us.

Make us men and women of prayer who will pray for our children that they will live for God in their generation. And I pray that the young people who have heard this message today will be challenged. And perhaps two or three of them at least will be gripped.

Perhaps four people like Daniel and his three friends, you can change this nation like you did through Daniel and through Joseph. Lord, give us that faith that you can choose young people and do a mighty work of them to pass the test. We pray in Jesus' name.

Amen.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/7NYpkxPtHEg.mp4>

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