

Kingdom Values

..and saying, "*The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.*"

Mar 1:15

Introduction

In today's modern society, we find that worldly values have permeated into our society. Many of the worldly values are against our Christian values. How can we lead godly lives without being influence by our surroundings? It seems a challenge but there is a way. This week, we will look at how we can bring godly influence in the society we lived in by having the Kingdom of God mindset by looking at Prophet Daniel's life.

Sharing

Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, he answered them, "*The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed, nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There!' for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you.*"

Luk 17:20-21

Daniel was in Babylon and lived in an idol worshipping country. He was brought to Babylon in his teens from Judah and lived there for the next 85 years or more of his life. Instead of living the lifestyle of the Babylonians, he continued to lead his life according to his faith in God. Here are the values that Daniel and his friends, Hananiah, Mishael, Azariah brought along with them even as they lived in Babylon.

a) Daniel went through Babylon education but did not embrace its' values

It was mentioned that Daniel and his friends received education in that land (Dan 1:4). However, they did not embrace those values that were not from God. Instead they continued living in their faith in God. They even refused the food from the king's choice in order not to defile themselves (Dan 1:8). When Daniel's friends were asked to bow before the statue of king Nebuchadnezzar, they refused and as a result they were thrown into the fiery furnace which was heated seven times more than the usual! Although it was a death sentence, yet, their faith triumphed over the command of the king. Because of their faith, God delivered them and they did not die in the furnace but came out alive!

Daniel and his friends made the right choice by pledging allegiance to Godly values that are eternal. They focus their spiritual eyes on God. The kingdom of God is not of this world as mentioned by Jesus in John 18:36.

In today's modern society, the mass media (TV, newspaper, magazine) has a good reach to many people. However, it is important that we as God's people draw the line when the value system is against our principles of our faith. Our decision determines our destiny. When we choose to obey Jesus by rejecting pornography, free sex, and many other negative values, we are storing for ourselves treasures in heaven where no moth nor rust could destroy it (Matt 6:20). Start now by sowing godly values in our minds. As the saying goes:-

Sow as a thought, reap an action.

Sow an action, reap a habit.

Sow a habit reap a character.

Sow a character, reap a destiny.

b) Able to serve well in the secular

Daniel showed us a good example by serving well in his role as the chief of magicians. He was not serving as a religious leader but he was serving the king in the secular world. It was mentioned that he had an extraordinary spirit (NASB Dan 5:12) or in some translation it is mentioned as the spirit of excellence. Even his enemies could not find any error or fault in him (Dan 6:4). It clearly showed that Daniel led a very high working ethics. He did not cheat on his time working for the king doing something else. He did not abuse his authority in the kingdom and the king had also plans to appoint him over the entire empire (Dan 6:3) which indicates how much the king trusted Daniel!

It does not matter where you are placed in the society or workplace, but what matters most is how we are able to glorify God even in that small role. Jesus mentioned that we are to be the salt and light of the world (Matt 5:12-14). We are supposed to make a difference. Mother Theresa, despite serving in the slums, her ministry was known to the world simply because she made a decision to make a difference in the society she lived in. We can make that difference too by serving well as a loving father or mother to our children, as a filial son or daughter to our parents, as an outstanding employer or employee to our organization, as a faithful believer or a servant of God in the church we worship.

c) **His name Babylonian name, “Belteshazzar” did not influence his character**

It is interesting to note that Daniel’s Babylonian means “Bel protect the King”. Bel refers to a Babylonian god. The name Daniel means “God is my Judge”. Despite his name Belteshazzar being used more often since he lived in Babylon, Daniel’s character did not depict him as a man serving the Babylonian god. He continued practicing his Jewish faith and worshipped God 3 times a day (Dan 6:10)! There were no occasions where Daniel served any other god besides the God Almighty. What matters most is not what happens to us but rather how we respond to what that has happened. Daniel showed us here that he was adamant not to be influenced by his Babylonian name.

Sometime in our lives, people do call us names which may poke fun or even hurt us. However, if we choose not to live up to that name, sooner or later it will go away as it has lost its meaning! If you think there is no way, Daniel clearly shows us there is a way.

d) **Daniel knew His Eternal Citizenship - Heaven.**

Daniel’s way of life indicates that he has an eternal perspective. He led his life just the opposite of the world around him. He might speak and look like a Babylonian in appearance but his character shows otherwise! His faith was recognized by the kings he served. Even to the point of being delivered into the lions’ den, he would not change his faith!

In Phi 3:20, we are called the citizens of heaven. As citizens of Heaven, we should lead our lives like we belong to it! In the royal family, there are things which they are forbidden to do as they have a standard code of conduct. Likewise, as Christians, we have a standard code of conduct which is to be Christ in every aspect of our lives. Jesus came to the world that we may follow his example. Paul says, “Imitate me as I imitate Christ” (1 Cor 11:1). That is why we are called Christian, which means followers of Jesus Christ.

Discussion

1. Discuss what the worldly values that may go against our faith and how can we stand firm against it
2. Discuss if there are examples of people around you or people whom you know that stood to their faith and how their character could be an example

Conclusion

As an ambassador of Christ (1Cor 5:20), let us be a good ambassador to represent well the kingdom of God. Daniel was a good example of how we can represent the kingdom of God despite living a kingdom that worships idols. We can make a difference by bringing godly values to our surrounding by living and having the kingdom of God mindset. May God be glorified!