

MEN'S LIFE BLOOMINGTON & GOD @ WORK

Tuesday, October 25, 2016

To the Core of My Being

Daniel 6:12-20

Definition: We need to determine what we believe to the core of our beings and not compromise those beliefs, whether they are within marriage, family, brotherhood, or at work. When Daniel was thrown into the lion's den, King Darius knew that Daniel had been wrongly treated. Concerned for Daniel's well-being, the King stayed up all night fasting and praying. When was the last time that we felt such distress, that to the core of our being, we sacrificed sleep and food for the benefit of a brother?

Segment Questions:

- Out of all of the hats that you wear, which one would you put the most importance on and why?
- Why is King Darius so "distressed" at the news of Daniel? What did he seek to accomplish? When you hear distressing news, what do you do first?
- The king seems powerless as the events unfold, and he eventually "commands" Daniel to be placed in the Lions' Den and seals it with his ring. In this culture, the word of the king was law and was never "wrong." Notice Darius does everything that is required of him, even if he did not want to. What would you have done?
- Darius does 10 things for Daniel in those 9 verses. Phrases such as, "set his mind" and "labored," are used. What do his words and actions reveal about what the king thinks of Daniel? What do his words and actions reveal about himself?
- What was the king's reaction to sealing Daniel into the den? As the king approaches the lions' den the next morning, what was going through his mind?

Action Questions:

- Consider your hats that you wear through this journey called life, which one stands out to you in this moment that you need to make a "to the core of my being" statement? Why?
- Have you, as a husband, father, or friend, fasted and prayed for someone, even to the point of not succumbing to sleep?
- Somethings were out of his control, but he was active, not passive, in his waiting for events to happen. Is there someone you need to be concerned with at this moment as they are going through a trial? What can you do to be active?
- In what ways does living the axiom, "To the core of my being," impact your leadership, whether with your wife, with your children, with your employees, or with your friends? What are the benefits?

Do you remember Indiana Jones? That classic fedora cocked to the side and a bullwhip on his hip? That was a cool hat! But most of the time, he was boring students as an archeology professor. I have daydreamed of wearing that fedora off on adventures. The truth of the matter is, none of my hats are as exciting... How about your hats? As we journey through this life, we wear the hat of son, husband, father, friend, employee, boss, student, mentor, Christian, sports fan, athlete, etc. None of these seem as exciting as Indiana Jones' fedora of adventure. Our hats, the ones that we all wear and change multiple times a day, are more important than Indy's iconic, and fictional, hat.

We have the opportunity, day-to-day, moment-by-moment, to impact those people that we come in contact with in big ways. Oftentimes, we minimize our potential impact in our flurry of busyness. It is time, brothers, that we determine what beliefs we hold TO THE CORE OF OUR BEINGS. I feel we need to intentionally pray about and define these beliefs for our different roles that, to the core of our being, we will stand up for, fight for, or become involved for.

It is important to define that, which to the core of my being, I cannot be silent, but I have to spring into action. I have failed my wife and kids. In the hectic busyness of life, I often get distracted and the pursuit of my wife suffers. Not only does my wife need me to pursue her, but my children need to see what an active Christian marriage should look like. To the core of my being, I will invest heavily my time and my energy into pursuing my wife.

An example of living a "to the core of my being" belief is found in the familiar story of Daniel and the Lion's Den in Daniel 6:12-20. Except when we read this story today, do not focus on Daniel, but rather King Darius.

12 Then they came near and said before the king, concerning the injunction, "O king! Did you not sign an injunction, that anyone who makes petition to any god or man within thirty days except to you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions?" The king answered and said, "The thing stands fast, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be revoked." 13 Then they answered and said before the king, "Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, O king, or the injunction you have signed, but makes his petition three times a day."

14 Then the king, when he heard these words, was much distressed and set his mind to deliver Daniel. And he labored till the sun went down to rescue him. 15 Then these men came by agreement to the king and said to the king, "Know, O king, that it is a law of the Medes and Persians that no injunction or ordinance that the king establishes can be changed."

16 Then the king commanded, and Daniel was brought and cast into the den of lions. The king declared to Daniel, "May your God, whom you serve continually, deliver you!" 17 And a stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet and with the signet of his lords, that nothing might be changed concerning Daniel. 18 Then the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; no diversions were brought to him, and sleep fled from him.

19 Then, at break of day, the king arose and went in haste to the den of lions. 20 As he came near to the den where Daniel was, he cried out in a tone of anguish. The king declared to Daniel, "O Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?"

I have failed a Christian brother too. He was a teacher wrongfully accused of having a sexual encounter with a student. The problem was, he had been unfaithful to his wife. Police established a "pattern of behavior" and arrested him. I have prayed for him, spoken to him, and tried to speak truth in love. He avoids me. To the core of my being, I know the truth that we are called to a higher standard, but I have not lost sleep, or fasted, or pursued the renewal of our friendship. Are we not here to sharpen, encourage, and embolden each other? What do you believe to the core of your being? Will you fight for it?