



1231

LESSON EIGHT

*Pick Friends Who Will
Stand Up for What Is Right*

XTREME TRUTH

Daniel 3:1-18

1 King Nebuchadnezzar made an image of gold, ninety feet high and nine feet wide, and set it up on the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon. **2** He then summoned the satraps, prefects, governors, advisers, treasurers, judges, magistrates and all the other provincial officials to come to the dedication of the image he had set up. **3** So the satraps, prefects, governors, advisers, treasurers, judges, magistrates and all the other provincial officials assembled for the dedication of the image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up, and they stood before it.



*Choose friends who will
help you obey God
and not compromise.*

4 Then the herald loudly proclaimed, "This is what you are commanded to do, O peoples, nations and men of every language: **5** As soon as you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes and all kinds of music, you must fall down and worship the image of gold that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up. **6** Whoever does not fall down and worship will immediately be thrown into a blazing furnace."

7 Therefore, as soon as they heard the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp and all kinds of music, all the peoples, nations and men of every language fell down and worshiped the image of gold that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.



8 At this time some astrologers came forward and denounced the Jews. 9 They said to King Nebuchadnezzar, "O king, live forever! 10 You have issued a decree, O king, that everyone who hears the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes and all kinds of music must fall down and worship the image of gold, 11 and that whoever does not fall down and worship will be thrown into a blazing furnace. 12 But there are some Jews whom you have set over the affairs of the province of Babylon—Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego—who pay no attention to you, O king. They neither serve your gods nor worship the image of gold you have set up."

13 Furious with rage, Nebuchadnezzar summoned Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. So these men were brought before the king, 14 and Nebuchadnezzar said to them, "Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the image of gold I have set up? 15 Now when you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes and all kinds of music, if you are ready to fall down and worship the image I made, very good. But if you do not worship it, you will be thrown immediately into a blazing furnace. Then what god will be able to rescue you from my hand?"

16 Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. 17 **If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and he will rescue us from your hand, O king.** 18 But even if he does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up."



How do you think the three friends felt when they realized they'd been "ratted out" and would have to face the consequences of standing up for their faith in God?

What do you think they said to each other when they entered the furnace?

How do you think it made a difference to the friends that they all chose to do the same thing? Why?

Have you ever had an experience when you faced any kind of consequences for standing up for your faith? Write about it, and tell what you think would have been different if you'd faced it with friends by your side.

Back-It-Up!

Job 16:20-21

My intercessor is my friend as my eyes pour out tears to God; on behalf of a man he pleads with God as a man pleads for his friend.

Ecclesiastes 4:10-12

If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up! Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

Psalms 119:63

I am a friend to all who fear you, to all who follow your precepts.

John 15:12-13, NKJV

This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.

▲ ATTENTION ▲

Sometimes people are ready to toss away their idols. Other times, people hang on to their idols, even if it costs them the chance to really know Jesus. One thing for sure is that we need to take a stand, without compromise, for Jesus—and friends with the same commitment can stand together in strength.

MEMORY BANKING

Romans 10:9

"If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."

Idol
Chatter

The idol that King Nebuchadnezzar asked Daniel and his friends to worship was a statue made of gold. Most days we're not asked to worship a golden statue. There are still idols we are asked to worship today, however, that aren't the one true God. In the boxes below, describe the idols that "chatter loudly" to try and get your attention away from God.

Look back to the "Idol Chatter" page on which you put things that try to distract you from your true worship of God. Pick one or two of the idols that seem to have the most attraction to you. Then, form your "Power Plan" for the week:

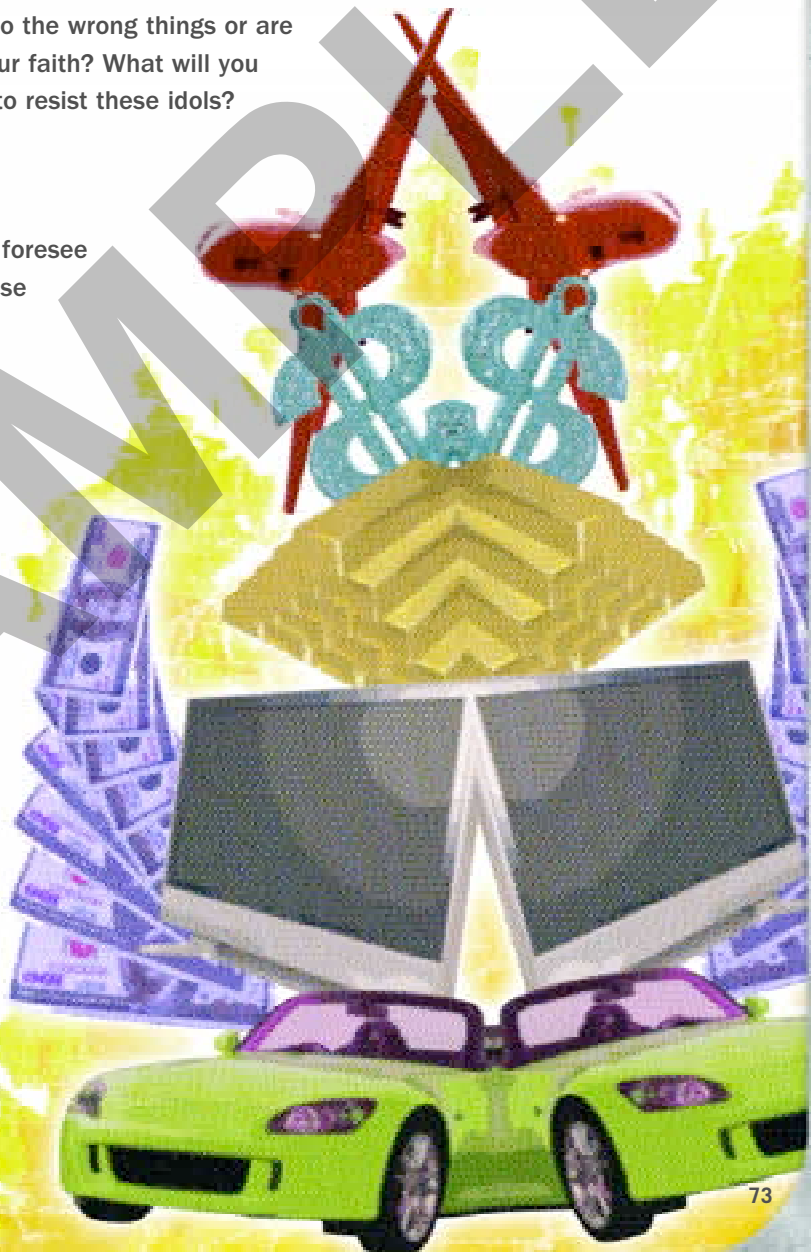
How can you resist each of these idols this week?

How can your Daniel Network partner be a help to you in resisting this idol?
In what ways can God's presence help you?

Do you have friends who do the wrong things or are a negative influence on your faith? What will you do about them as you try to resist these idols?

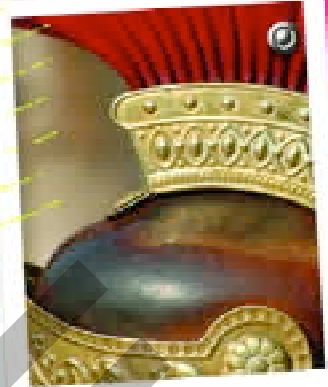
What good things can you foresee happening if you resist these idols? Explain.

How do you think it will help other people if you resist these idols this week? Why?



HEROES OF THE FAITH


The Thundering Legion of Rome



Forty soldiers made up “The Thundering Legion” that had nobly served Rome in the early fourth century. But somehow, these 40 had become Christians. That made them suspicious to the Roman emperor Licinius and his officials.

The Thundering Legion was brought to trial as a unit. The Roman governor conducting the trial commanded them to make an offering to the Roman gods or be stripped of their military ranking. But the Legion knew that faithfulness to Christ alone was what mattered and took their stand accordingly. The governor tempted them with bribes, then threatened them with torture.

The soldiers stayed resolute. The governor ordered the soldiers to remove their cloaks, armor, and shoes. He ordered them to go to the middle of a frozen lake to die from exposure. The




Thundering Legion obeyed and *ran* to the middle of the lake. They encouraged each other by praying together, “Lord, we are 40 who are engaged in this combat; grant that we may be 40 crowned, and that not one be wanting to this sacred number.”

They suffered for many hours. As death drew near, the governor ordered that hot baths be placed on the lake’s edge for any of the Legion who would renounce their faith. Only one did—and to the surprise of all, one of the guards took off his armor and warm clothing to join the remaining 39 in death. The Thundering Legion’s prayer was answered.

TAKE A STAND

Masks



When the ancient Greeks went to the theater, they often saw actors put on masks. The masks represented the characters the actors were playing at the moment. It was not unusual for actors to play more than one character in some plays. So, in the course of a performance, the actor could put on several masks and play several parts. We get our word *hypocrite* from the word the Greeks used for *actor*. Sometimes Christians are called hypocrites when we say one thing and act in ways that aren’t consistent with our words. It’s like putting on a mask to act a part when we really don’t intend to live the way we should. When we share our faith, people will evaluate how sincere we are by the way we really live, not by any act we put on for public performance. Keep that in mind as you strive to be an effective witness for Jesus Christ.

MISSION: POSSIBLE⁸

*Assignments for Servants of the Most High God
Go ahead ... I DARE you!*

- 1 How you act speaks way louder than what you say. To be an effective witness for Christ takes more than having the guts to tell someone about Jesus. It means that the way you think and act needs to be consistent with what you say. Does this mean you have to be perfect to be an effective witness? Of course not. But it does mean that your life should be getting more holy and more consistent. People should see that your actions and your words line up.

This week, write down some of the specific areas where, after thinking and praying about it, your actions are not in line with what God would want. Write down some specific things you are going to do about this (STOP lying, swearing or losing your temper; START praying more, being nicer to your brother or sister). Ask God to help you.

Start doing

Stop doing

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

- 2 Since the people you hang with can be a huge influence on you, what change in your friendships are you going to make? Discuss this and pray about it with your Daniel Network partner.

Hang out with more

Hang out with less (or not at all)

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

- 3 Do a "prayer walk" with a friend through your neighborhood or around school. Pray for friends and neighbors who need to know Jesus.

Remember that you'll get a chance in class next time to share about one of your "Mission Possible" tasks. Go for it and then tell about it!

daniel_log: |

Log on to daretobeadaniel.com/daniellog for this session's "Daniel Log" activity and to write in your online journal. The pass code for this session is **STAND8**.

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LESSON EIGHT COMPLETE

Sam's 10:9

*Choose friends who will help you obey God
and not compromise.*

go ahead, dare me.

