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# Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

**The Oaks Baptist Church**  
Grand Prairie, Texas

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## A Sincere Faith Daniel 1:8-21

### Aim and Application of the Lesson

The lesson guides us into an understanding of the culture and politics of Daniels's time and recognize the influence that culture had on young Daniel as he tried to live **A Sincere Faith**. The study's aim is to appreciate the resolve of a young man caught up in a world of idolatry and mysticism. The study's application is to confirm that God is in control regardless of our feelings or circumstance and to encourage believers to stand up for their faith, trusting God for the outcome.

*(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)*

### Lesson Introduction and Background

"Culture Christians"—have you heard this phrase? It is becoming familiar to some of us. It gets mentioned in our conversations. We see examples of it daily. We even question whether we have joined this group. What is a culture Christian? One popular definition is that it refers to someone whose faith is politically correct. By this definition, this is a person who tries to make his religion completely inoffensive. He is a chameleon believer, one so assimilated into the culture that it is hard to recognize his faith. Now I am not saying that believers should eschew modern life and live in extreme austerity. There is nothing wrong with having modern conveniences. That is not the problem. The problem is summed up in this word: "compromise." Culture Christians allow compromise into their faith. They know what God's Word says about something and that it differs from what society says. However, they choose to follow society rather than risk taking a stand for God's Word and offending anyone. Daniel was faced with a difficult choice. Should he eat the king's food, or should he follow God's Word? It would have been easy to say, "God will understand. He knows my circumstances, so He will excuse it." Daniel was facing extreme pressure. Giving in to the plan of man would have been the easy and comfortable path. Therein lay the danger. Living in faith is never easy. We are constantly weighing our convictions against the press of society. We are often pressured to live counter to God's Word. God's Word has something to say about culture Christians, and it is not good. In Revelation, God tells us that He is not interested in followers that are only halfway believers (3:15-17). We cannot pick and choose which parts of His Word to follow, for every part is relevant (2 Tim. 3:16). We either follow all or we really are not following it at all. You might be thinking, "That is easy for you to say. You do not know what I face every day." Maybe I do not, but God does. He understands because He lived as a man. The bottom line is that God calls us to faith that is real, active, and practiced every moment of our lives. We have to be willing to follow Him even when it is difficult. A faith that changes with every current societal fad is not sincere. It is faith without integrity. Is your faith sincere? Are you real in your belief the way Daniel was? Are there areas of compromise in your walk? Is your faith a show? If you see that your walk is faltering, there is still hope. When David had fallen short, he repented and asked God to renew him (Ps. 51:1-12). As believers, we are called to "walk worthy of the vocation" (Eph. 4:1) to which we are called. While we live in this world, we will always face the temptation to compromise and water down our faith. We need to remember, though, that we are not of this world (cf. John 15:19). We do not lean on the world's wisdom, which is foolishness to God (I Cor. 3:19). We walk a delicate balance each day, leaning on Him for direction. When we have sincere faith, God will bless us.

*(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)*

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

**THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:**  
Christ, the Rock, is our sure hope

**COMMENT FOR THE WEEK:**  
Solid-rock faith allows me to believe that despite the chaos of the present moment. Regardless of how worthless I may feel, I truly matter to a God of love.

**SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:**  
*The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; My God, my strength, in whom I will trust; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.*  
(Ps 18:2 NKJV)

*(from "Our Daily Bread", Apr 6, 2015)*

### **Series: Faith in Action**

**UNIT: A Living Faith in God**

### NEXT WEEK

**A Bold Faith**  
(Dan 3:19-28)

## NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

### Sincere Faith through Faithfulness to God (Dan 1:8-13)

#### *Faithful to God through being resolved (8)*

Be resolved to God because He is holy and good (Josh 24:19-22)

Be resolved to God because He is the King, everything he does is right and all His ways are just (Dan 4:31-37)

Be resolved to God because it should be desirable and the right choice (Josh 24:15)

Be resolved to God because He is the only one who has eternal life (John 6:66-69)

Be resolved to God because He has delivered and will continue to deliver from deadly peril (2 Cor 1:8-10)

Be resolved to God because those who endure will reign with Him (2 Tim 2:12)

Be resolved to God because to stay steadfast brings rewards from God (Rev 3:9-13)

#### *Faithful to God in spite of resistance (9-10)*

Resistance where God helps the powerless against the mighty (2 Chron 14:9-12)

Resistance that cannot be overcome by strength and size (Ps 33:16-19)

Resistance that may seem to be overbearing, but reliance on God will always bring deliverance (2 Cor 1:8-10)

Resistance by people who have been captivated by Satan (2 Tim 2:24-26)

I should expect frustrations and resistance and therefore test all things by the Holy Spirit (1 John 4:1-3)

Always be prepared to face resistance (Luke 10:3)

#### *Faithful to God through testing (11-13)*

Testing to bring out humility (Deut 8:2)

Testing to determine love (Deut 13:3)

Testing of the heart (Prov 17:3)

Testing so that God will lead into righteousness (Ps 139:23-24)

Testing refines (Ps 66:10)

Testing proves faith genuine (1 Peter 1:7)

Testing aids in receiving God's inheritance (Heb 11:8)

### Sincere Faith through Faithfulness from God (Dan 1:14-21)

#### *God grants endurance (14-16)*

God provides endurance through grace (2 Cor 12:9)

God provides endurance through His presence (1 Cor 5:4)

God provides endurance through strength (Col 1:11)

God provides endurance to me from within (Eph 3:20)

Endurance that displays that one is living worthy of the kingdom of God (2 Thess 1:3-5)

Endurance of hardships (2 Tim 2:3)

Endurance that is rewarded by reigning with Jesus (2 Tim 2:12)

Endurance that proves one is a child of God (Heb 12:7-9)

Endurance that is counted as being blessed (James 5:11)

#### *God grants wisdom (17)*

Wisdom that comes from His word (Deut 4:5-6)

Wisdom comes through the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 12:8)

Wisdom that comes from Jesus (1 Cor 1:30)

Wisdom that comes from the fear of the Lord (Prov 3:7-8)

Wisdom that comes from God (Prov 2:6-7)

Wisdom that keeps and preserves (Prov 4:5-7)

Wisdom through prayer (James 1:5)

#### *God grants success (18-21)*

God grants success through our commitment to Him (Ps 37:3-7)

God grants success by working out everything for His own ends (Prov 16:2-4)

God grants success through us walking the way of God (Deut 5:33)

God grants success through us working as for the Lord (Col 3:23-24)

God grants success through us being obedient to God's Word (James 1:25)

God grants success through us trusting in God (Prov 28:25)

God grants success through us abiding in God (John 15:7)