

#4 - Standing Up in a Smackdown World

9/14/2008 - Jim Johnson/Daniel 2:1-30

We live in a Smackdown World. It's a tough world and we need a tag team of trustworthy advisors if we are to win the match. But who do we trust? According to Daniel 2:1-3, the King of Babylon had been repeatedly dreaming a disturbing dream. He summoned all his advisors and expected them to explain the dream to him. We are then introduced to 2 completely different types of advisors.

THE TYPICAL ADVISOR

A. The typical advisor is _____ about his/her own expertise. - 4

The king's advisors (Chaldeans) made some confident if not arrogant assurances that they could get the job done. They were cocky and full of themselves. Be careful. The arrogant person tends to boast in order to mask their inadequacy. If you really have the goods, you don't need to boast.

B. The typical advisor is _____ by the wrong things. 5-6

The King tested them. If they were as talented as they pretended to be - then they should be able to declare the dream without his telling them and then interpret it as well. To fail to do so would mean death but to succeed would mean riches and honor. The King knew what it took to motivate this gang: fear and money – mostly money. Beware of the advisor is primarily motivated by money rather than helping others and doing a good job.

C. The typical advisor _____ when he has nothing of value to say. 7-9

The advisors wanted to know the dream first. Once they knew the dream, they could begin talking and say pretty much anything that they wanted. The King would never know the difference. But the King knew that they had conspired together in the past to speak lying and corrupt words to the King. He expected more of the same. The typical advisor may lie when he doesn't know the truth. Unless you are significantly wise, you may not know the difference.

D. The typical advisor _____ that if he/she can't help - then no one can. 10-11

The King's counselors could not do what the king asked them to do, so they told him that he was simply asking too much and that no one could declare the dream except a god. The typical advisor not only is inept to help, they also take away the hope that anyone else might be able to help.

THE GOD FEARING ADVISOR

A. The God Fearing Advisor is _____ about his/her ability. -12-16

The king was going to make good on his threat and tear the counseling crew from limb to limb. Though Daniel and his friends were still in school, they were included in the edit. (12-13) Daniel responded by seeking an audience with the King (14-16). He was honest with the King. He said that he didn't know the dream or its interpretation, at least at that point in time and he asked for a little time to ponder it. The King was probably shocked by his honesty. But at least he wasn't trying to lie to him like the other guys, which is probably why the King granted him the time he requested.

The God fearing advisor says, "I don't have all that you need right now, but I am going to do some research. I am going to ask around. I am going to do my best to get you the answer you need." This person is realistic about their ability and resources. If they are honest in this way, you can be sure they will be honest with you after they have studied the problem.

B. The God Fearing Advisor _____ God for what he/she lacks. -17-23

Daniel summoned his friends to join him in prayer (17-18). Though this group was 10 times better than the Kings typical advisors, they too were stumped. It was humanly impossible for them to describe a dream that the King had locked up in his brain. They knew the limits of their wisdom and their skill so they prayed.

A God fearing advisor takes your problem to God in prayer. Unlike other young men, they so mature and so wise – that they made prayer their first response. How good to have an advisor that seeks wisdom from above.

God answered his prayer by giving Daniel a vision. But he did not rush out and report it to the King. He took precious extra time to thank the Lord – and to worship the Lord. A good reminder that we cannot have Daniel's success unless we first have Daniel's devotion to the Lord.

C. The God Fearing Advisor _____ God the credit. - 24-30

Daniel reported back to the King and informed him that he could both declare and interpret his dream (24-26). He told him that it had to do with the future and what will take place then (27-29). No doubt the King was already relieved and grateful just to know that someone had the key to the mystery. But Daniel was quick to give credit to God. He portrayed himself as just another Joe, but, one who served a mighty God. Daniel took his moment of glory & reflected it to the God whom he loved and feared.

And this is maybe the most significant trait of the God fearing advisor. They do what they do - not for money, not for power, not for influence but for the glory of God. When you do what you do for the glory of God – you just do the right thing.

CONCLUSION

The bottom line: **The best _____ comes from a God fearing person.**

Be very careful about whom you choose to consult. A person should not be trusted just because they wear a uniform, or because you know them, or because they have a certificate hanging on their wall. They should not even be trusted just because they have a fish next to their ad in the phone book. Trust them if they are truly God fearing folk.

Why should you submit your marriage to a counselor who isn't a believer? Why should you read a book on parenting written by an agnostic professor from a state university? Why should you trust a financial advisor who does not understand God's principle of stewardship? Find a God fearing advisor when ever you can – for the best advice comes from a God fearing person.

FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

Use this section in your personal or family devotions to better apply the truth

1. What other ways might we distinguish a typical advisor from a God fearing advisor?
2. Where or how do you identify and find such advisors?
3. What about you? Are you the kind of God fearing advisor that someone else might need? If not – why not?