

Unwavering Faith

Lesson Scripture: Daniel 3:14-16-25

Lesson Aims: To understand and appreciate the Hebrew boys' faith victory, to trust God's promises to the faithful and to refrain from bowing down to idols.

Background: Three years have passed since last week's lesson. King Nebuchadnezzar has questioned the trainees; Daniel and his three friends stand "head and shoulders" above the rest.

They are given key positions in the king's service. The king then begins to have a troubling dream. Testing his "experts," he not only wants an interpretation, he wants them to tell him what the dream is! They stall, and he becomes furious and threatens them with their lives.

Daniel and company fall into that category as well. When the commander comes for them, Daniel asks why. He then goes to

the king and asks for a little more time. Daniel requests that his friends pray to God that the dream and its interpretation might be revealed. After sharing this new knowledge with the king, Daniel gets a promotion and requests that his friends get one as well.

His friends are made administrators over Babylon.

Lesson: The lesson begins after the decree to bow down to the golden image when musical instruments are played. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego (remember the name change from last week) don't follow the order. Apparently some astrologers, wanting to gain favor with the king, tell of their disobedience.

Nebuchadnezzar summons them and demands an explanation. Their response is simple: "We bow only to God. He has the power to save us. But if not, we will be faithful to him anyway."

Furious, the king orders the fur-



Sunday School Lesson

Mildred Peppers

... victory of the Hebrew boys. They are protected from harm, comforted in trials, set free from bonds, they glorified God and are rewarded! The fires in our lives are just as hot as those of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Within our families, on our jobs, in social settings and at church, our faith is tested.

Some look and wonder how do we stand it. There will be situations in our lives that force us to decide whom we will serve. II Corinthians 4:8 speaks of the suffering along with the hope. The Hebrew boys answer the call. Please note that Daniel isn't around, and yet they are faithful. My point here is, don't rely on

someone else's faith — nurture your own. The boys share Job's sentiment from Job 13: 15: "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." Unwavering faith is evident! Is our faith like that? Do we only trust when things are going well? Our faith journey will give us scars, bruises, and maybe breaks, but we are not forsaken.

Look with your spiritual eye sometimes and not the physical one. The picture is different. God delivers — on time. His word is true and he is always faithful. On that you can depend. What we are to do is have steadfast faith, deep rooted faith, unwavering faith in God, the omnipotent one.

The reward isn't always financial; it isn't a promotion, but joy, unspeakable joy! When we come out of the fire, like the Hebrew boys, we are a little stronger and a little wiser for the journey.

Let's put nothing before God — ever!



Olivia Gaddy, who lost her job of 13 years to downsizing, thanks God and Forsyth Tech for her new position.

Hard work, persistence pay off for Forsyth Tech grad

Olivia L. Gaddy is feeling good about herself these days. In May she graduated from Forsyth Technical Community College with an associate's degree in administrative office technology and a certificate in clerical processing. Now she has a new job as an administrative assistant with the Housing Partnership of Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Inc.

However, things have not always fallen into place so easily for Gaddy. For 13 years she worked as an electronics assembler at AT&T and thought her future there was secure. Then AT&T downsized and she

was out of a job. After a period of working for a telemarketing company, Gaddy, a single parent with three children, decided she wanted to go back to school to get a degree. Though she had thought about getting a 4-year degree, she decided to start with a 2-year program, she said, to see how she would do.

Gaddy began at Forsyth Tech in 1993. "I hadn't been in school for a long time," she explained, "so I needed to start in Pre Tech to review. But, I was determined to make it."

She said she was able to quit her telemarketing job and go to school

full-time, because she qualified for financial aid through the Financial Aid Office at the college.

Gaddy received a Pell Grant and other scholarships, which covered tuition and books, and she qualified for the work-study program, which allowed her to work on campus and earn extra money. "If it wasn't for the Lord Jesus Christ and Forsyth Tech" said Gaddy, "I wouldn't be where I am today."

Now, having completed her degree and being happy in her new job, Gaddy is thinking that down the road she will go on to get her bachelor's degree.

Z. Smith offers sabbaticals to five nonprofit leaders

A chance to get off the merry-go-round, that is what the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation Sabbatical Program is offering a select group of nonprofit organizational leaders from North Carolina in 1998. Unique among foundation efforts across the country, this program rewards nonprofit leaders who have made exceptional commitments of time, talent and energy to their nonprofit organizations. Application deadline is Dec. 1.

Awards of \$15,000 will be given to five full-time paid organizational leaders who are experiencing burnout and stress on the job, and who could benefit from a time of personal renewal and professional growth. Each individual sabbatical applicant designs his or her own renewal experience.

"The point is to do something for themselves," said Tom Lambeth, executive director of the Foundation located in Winston-Salem. "As a result of recipients'

sabbatical activities, their organizations benefit from revitalized, renewed leaders who return to work recommitted to the challenges and rewards of public service," he said.

This will be the ninth year that the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation has awarded sabbaticals. In the past, recipients have used the time to write, to read those books that for months or years had been sitting on the shelf, to study in neglected areas of interest; to find deeper relationships with their families, and to travel.

Selections are based on the degree of need for a break from the daily stress and challenges of work, including the difficulty the work environment poses, and the potential for continuing to make a significant contribution to their chosen field. Preference will be given to individuals with at least five years experience who are working to solve problems in any

of the five Foundation's grant-making categories. The current grantmaking categories include primary and secondary education, the environment, community economic development, issues impacting minorities, and issues impacting women. This program is not designed for teachers or other career public school employees.

The Foundation receives many more requests for sabbaticals than it can fund and hopes that organizations will give a high priority to the personal development and renewal for professionals who work in community-based organizations.

Persons wishing more information on the 1997 sabbatical program should write or call: Sabbatical Program Coordinator, Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation Inc., 101 Reynolda Village, Winston-Salem, NC 27106-5199; (910) 725-7541 or 1-800-443-8319.

Grant sends WSSU nursing student to England

When opportunity knocks, an individual must be ready to open the door. That is how Jerri Allen, a senior nursing student at Winston-Salem State University, responded to a knock. Her response enabled her to receive a grant that made it possible for her to spend the summer studying health care at Guy's Hospital in London, England.



Jerri Allen

the Nursing Department.

While in England Allen visited the British Museum and the old Operating Theater in London. She also spent a weekend in Bristol, in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Golding. Louise Golding is a former resident of Winston-Salem and

a former member of Mount Zion Baptist Church. Allen is also a member of Mount Zion Baptist Church.

Allen sings in the Inspirational Choir and volunteers in the church's Senior Life Enrichment Center.

She is back at Winston-Salem State and looks forward to completing her nursing training at the end of the current school year. She said that she found that there was a big difference between the way nurses are trained in England and in the United States. In the United States nurses are taught as general nurses and given the option of specializing in a particular area later. But in England students studying nursing choose an area to study or specialize in from the beginning of their training. Jerri is the daughter of Laura Allen.

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