



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

God's Leadership School (Jeremiah 12:5)

JANUARY 16, 2013

Dave DePue / PO Box 1775, Topeka, KS 66603 / dave.depue@capitolcom.org

It seems that two of God's favorite activities with His followers are character development and leadership training. I trust that you will profit from our study of these over the next several weeks.

INTRODUCTION

God develops a servant, especially a leader over a lifetime. Events and people provide the lessons which shape us. Each of us can recall critical incidents and special people that God used in this ongoing process. Your program of instruction, as well as mine, has been unique and continues throughout our lifetime.¹ Ruth Graham illustrated this for those who would view her tombstone. She lifted a profound quote from a roadway sign at the end of a construction zone: "End of construction, thank you for your patience."

FOCUS ON ENDURANCE

Jeremiah 12:5 "If you have raced with men on foot, and they have wearied you, how will you compete with horses? And if in a safe land you are so trusting, what will you do in the thickets of the Jordan?"

Yes, education requires commitment, and to be fruitful, any training must be rigorous. My common retort to a complaint of one of my college students was, "Any dead fish can float downstream; it takes a live one to go against the current." Can you remember someone in your life who appeared to have given up, coasting in a life of mediocrity? Our personal growth is similar to rehabilitation in physical restoration. Lack of rigor dooms a person who will not participate. **Are you looking at your current situation as a training period, where you take counsel, keep notes, and look for opportunities to sharpen skills?**

BUILDING A FOUNDATION

*Daniel 1:4b (Ashpenaz) was to teach them the literature and language of the Chaldeans.*³

Daniel was a teenager when he was captured during an invasion and exiled to Babylon. He and several other young men were chosen by that king to be trained as future administrators, helping to assimilate the Hebrew people now in exile. There are fundamental skills and areas of core knowledge that will be needed in whatever work you pursue. Failure to learn basics dramatically slows your development or requires you to play catch-up for a season or longer. I can attest to this reality! **Are you intentional about keeping up with your peers on the basics required for excellence?**

PASSING TESTS

*Daniel 1:8 But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine, and he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way.*⁴

This young Hebrew and his three friends risked their lives to raise an objection based on principle. The Mosaic Law forbade consumption of pork (Leviticus 11:44). God honored their sincerity, blessing them with wisdom and understanding. At the appointed time, the king examined Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, judging them to be ten times better than all the others (Daniel 1:20). Life is full of tests! **Are you alert to pass these character checks that frequent your talk and walk? Can you recall an occasion when you or another passed, or failed, such a test? Please reflect on the subtle difference between such a test and a trap!**

A PRAYER

Father God, I realize that You have me in a training program, shaping me to be worthy of higher service. Grant me vision for the journey and discipline to pass the tests which You allow in my life. Strengthen me to persevere and to finish well (Acts 20:24). I pray in the Name of Jesus. Amen.

¹ J. Robert Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*. (NavPress) 2012 p22.

² The Holy Bible, English Standard Version. (Crossway Bibles) 2001.

³ Ibid.

⁴ The Holy Bible, New International Version. (Biblica) 1984