

BUILD KEYSTONE HABITS

JANUARY 16, 2022

WORSHIP

We Praise You,
Gréater Than;
All Glorious

WELCOME

What is one habit
someone you look
up to or someone you
consider successful
consistently do?

WORD

DANIEL 6:1-10

It seemed good to Darius to appoint 120 satraps over the kingdom, that they would be in charge of the whole kingdom, ² and over them three commissioners (of whom Daniel was one),...³ Then this Daniel began distinguishing himself among the commissioners and satraps because he possessed an extraordinary spirit, and the king planned to appoint him over the entire kingdom. ⁴ Then the commissioners and satraps began trying to find a ground of accusation against ... but they could find no ground of accusation or evidence of corruption, inasmuch as he was faithful, and no negligence or corruption was to be found in him. ⁵ Then these men said, “We will not find any ground of accusation against this Daniel unless we find it against him with regard to the law of his God.” ⁶ Then these commissioners and satraps came by agreement to the king and spoke to him as follows: “King Darius, live forever! ⁷ All the commissioners of the kingdom,... have consulted together that the king should establish a statute and enforce an injunction that anyone who makes a petition to any god or man besides you, O king, for thirty days, shall be cast into the lions’ den.” ⁹ Therefore King Darius signed the document, that is, the injunction. ¹⁰ Now when Daniel knew that the document was signed, he entered his house (now in his roof chamber he had windows open toward Jerusalem); and he continued kneeling on his knees three times a day, praying and giving thanks before his God, as he had been doing previously.

Our series called **FIT FOR LIFE: New Habits to Change Your Life** continues today. James Clear, author of *Atomic Habits*, wrote, “**Goals don’t determine success... you do not rise to the level of your goals; you fall to the level of your SYSTEM.**” We may all have the same goals but despite that, we still end up with different results. Are we careful about small actions and decisions? These small actions repeated over time will eventually have radical results in our lives. Recall Paul’s instruction to Timothy in **1 Timothy 4:7-8**, in which he remarked, “**discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness**”. It is important that we live a disciplined life, following certain systems that ultimately bring the best results to glorify God. Our lives are the sum total of all decisions that we make, and if we repeatedly make certain choices and decisions, it becomes a habit.

Many researchers have already proven that our lives are defined by habits. We choose habits unconsciously, and we end up being shaped by these habits. We must then **BUILD KEYSTONE HABITS**. A keystone is a foundational stone that holds an arch together – and this was used in the past when people built bridges and entrance arches. Keystone habits are small habits that people introduce in their routines that carry over and affect the other aspects of their lives.

Our main example is Daniel in the main passage above. We see how this Bible character, Daniel, exhibited how he protected his “**keystone habits**” despite external pressure and life-threatening tactics of his enemies. What was the key to Daniel’s firm example?

1. K – KNOW YOUR WHY AND WHO

The reason why Daniel was able to build keystone habits is that he maintained an intimate relationship with GOD. His **WHY** was clear – in fact, early on in **Daniel 1:7-8**, he held on to his convictions because he knew **HE WAS ACCOUNTABLE TO GOD**. This is similar to Apostle Paul – the why of his life was clearly to please God (**2 Corinthians 5:9-10**). This built their WHO, and they identified as clear followers of God no matter the challenges thrown their way. At the end of your life, have you given thought to what you want people to say about you? Your identity is linked to your reason for living, and God has purposed for you to live a life that reflects His values, His grace, and His holiness!

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2. E – EMPLOY A SYSTEM

The second quality of Daniel was his clear establishment of a system (disciplines or habits) which helped him hold on to his convictions. He exhibited prayer, study of God's Word, obedience to God's Word (**Daniel 6:10**). Even his habits of praying towards Jerusalem (**1 Kings 8:48-49**), the content of his prayers (remembering **Jeremiah 25:11-12**), his faithful study of God's Word (**Daniel 5:17**), and his consistent high view of God all contributed to a firm faith that shines even in the hardest of times. **R.A. Torrey** emphasized that **"Triumphant prayer is almost impossible where there is neglect of the study of the word of God"**. To be able to make good systems, we must understand the cycle of habit – it begins with a **CUE**, which triggers an **ACTION**, and eventually yields a **REWARD** or an effect. **CUES** have to be so obvious so that it will take effect, and **ACTIONS** must be easy so you can build consistency. Both good and bad habits lead to rewards – often, bad habits yield immediate rewards (like the dopamine effect, which makes certain habits addictive), while good habits usually take a **compounding effect** that delivers best results when done repeatedly.

3. Y – YIELD THE REWARDS

Yield is an agricultural term - it has to do with harvesting. **Galatians 6:7** reminds us that what we sow, we shall also reap. Reaping is not always immediate – so the encouragement in **Galatians 6:9** rings true – we must not grow weary in doing good. Daniel did not become the man that he was overnight – it was a consistent, daily act of submission to his convictions and his faith that ultimately protected him throughout his reign in a foreign country. We are reminded of Jesus' short parable on **Luke 18:1-8**, a parable of contrast between the evil judge who gave in to a persistent woman's request, and a gracious Heavenly Father who hears our cry and brings justice quickly.

In developing good habits, our biggest challenge is that not that we make bad choices willingly, but that we make choices based on habits we've already created. As we pray for God to help us determine keystone habits to develop, may we approach His throne of grace with vibrant hope and expectant persistence that He gives wisdom to those who ask for it. May your keystone habits lead to a superior worship of Him!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. Self-Check.

Do you know your WHY? WHY do you want to develop certain habits? Do you know your WHO – WHO do you want to become?

2. Setting It Right.

What new KEYSTONE habits do you want to develop?

3. Living It Out.

Can you give examples of answered prayers based on your spiritual journey? How will you inspire others to also do the same?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray for and with people to make it their habit to seek and know God through the Bible. Show you care for them by being present and by guiding them in their spiritual journey. Share the truth of the gospel of Christ—which has the power to change one's life and habits!

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives

II. Country and the World

Upright and moral governance of Public Servants
 A God-centered Philippines
 Repentance and Salvation

III. Church

That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples
 Elders, Pastors, Leaders, and Families
 Ministries and Churches worldwide

IV. CCF Facilities

Worship and Training Center
 Prayer Mountain

V. Personal Concerns

Deeper intimate relationship with God
 Righteous living
 Salvation of family and friends

MEMORY VERSE

1 Timothy 4:7-8

...discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness; ⁸ for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come.