



Bits of Hope from 06/11/2006 (10am)

Pastor Cynthia L. Hale

Daniel 1:1-9, 12-20

A pimp is a hustler who takes advantage of women for his personal gain. When he is angry with the women he uses, he kills them. Popular rap group, Three Six Mafia, recently won an Oscar Award for the song, "It's Hard Out There For a Pimp." One can't help but wonder if society is trying to depict African Americans in a negative light and we are allowing it. Denzel Washington won his first Oscar for playing a crooked cop. Halle Berry won her first Oscar for playing a woman sleeping with her husband's prison guard. Why would anyone write a song that would demean women? Why would anyone support that kind of song? The movie, "Hustle and Flow," depicts the consequences of choices made as a result of circumstances. Everything that glitters ain't gold. Everything is not as it appears. Your circumstances should not define you. If you can be a drug dealer, you can be an entrepreneur. If you can manage women, you can manage a company or a department. If you want to be somebody or go somewhere, you must understand it is not about the hand that was dealt you but it is about what you did with it. It is the choices that you make that will make a difference in whether or not you succeed.

In the text, the question was whether or not the four Hebrew boys would conform to the pattern of Babylon. The enemy knows where you are going and he is tempting you to conform to the pattern of this world. The Hebrew boys could have easily done what everybody else was doing. Too many folks just go along with crowd because the pressure is great. The truth is, you want to fit in and be liked. You want to go with the crowd but the crowd isn't going anywhere. You are not an imitation or duplication. You are an original and you should act like you know who you are and whose you are. You were fearfully and wonderfully made by God. There is nobody in the world just like you. You can never be anyone else. So why are you trying to be like everybody else? You are royalty. You cannot leave your throne to get down with people lower than you unless you are lifting them up so they will know God for themselves. You are not common. You cannot just fit in, especially now that you are a Christian.

Romans 12:1-3 The word, conform, talks about being a chameleon. A chameleon is an animal that changes colors to blend into whatever environment it is in. Do not let the world squeeze you into its mold. In the text, the boys decided not to eat what everyone else was eating. They would not compromise their principles hence they asked for a special diet. They trusted God, for it was God who placed them in that situation in the first place. They already had the favor of God but He wanted to see if they would jeopardize it. Some of us are secret disciples. Many of your young friends are misguided. They are wasting their minds. A mind is a terrible thing to waste. They might not have the guidance they need. It takes courage to stand out in the front to set an example. Character means you practice what you preach. Character means you don't patronize music that demeans women. Those young men in the text got into the king's kingdom with charisma and character.

You are born leaders. Every choice you make has future implications. The choices you make and the behavior you display will determine your destiny. You may become America's Next Top Model or the next NFL draft pick but be educated and versatile. It's hard out there for a pimp but it's even harder for someone whose game is played out. There is this new fad among students called MyFacebook or MySpace. The problem is people are posting inappropriate pictures of themselves. Corporate Execs are looking through these web pages and will remember you when they are determining which person to hire. They aren't going hire you when you have inappropriate pictures displaying your negative choices and behavior. You never know who is watching you. You become the god you worship. What is your god? You ought to beat the pros at their own game by being courageous and living your life for the favor of God. Watch Him bless you. It's hard in the world for everybody but you can have help and hope with Jesus.

Peace.

Volunteers are always welcome 770-696-5100