

Resolve - Daniel Study - Chapter 2

Resolve- to decide, to purpose, a firm determination (Webster's Dictionary)

How important is a firm determination in competition? Resolve comes from an inner conviction that a certain way to go is the right way. As coaches, we have to be convinced that our training program and game plan are going to work. Tony Dungy was resolved to coach his players God's way because he was convinced it was the right way to go. By doing things God's way, he was convinced he would also get the best from his players.

Name a person or team that has demonstrated resolve.

How has this person impacted you?

The first chapter of Daniel begins with Nebuchadnezzar's besiege on Jerusalem. Defeat happened quickly. Without God's intervention, the Babylonians were too much for Judah to handle. Verse two states that "the Lord delivered Judah into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar," and that he took some of the articles from the temple and placed them into the treasure house of his god. By doing so, he declared defeat of Israel's God and that his god, Marduk, was most powerful. Even though the King thought Marduk was the most powerful, Daniel let us know who was really in charge. To the world, it appeared they had lost, but the game was not over. Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah knew that God won, and they were resolved to trust Him to the end.

Daniel and his friends were called into the King's service. They spent three years learning the Babylonian language and literature. During this training time, they are given the King's food and wine, which violated the Jewish dietary laws and, therefore, God's Word. Verse eight says, "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 in this way."

Was Daniel just a prideful teenager, or was he convicted about honoring God?

It was most certainly the latter. As Daniel acted with resolve, God was working behind the scenes to provide favor to Daniel. Daniel asked the chief for permission, but with resolve, he convinced the chief (who would be beheaded if Daniel's idea failed) to give his way a try. Daniel knew God's way was the best and was not going to budge. God strengthened Daniel and his friends through all of this, and they became leaders in Babylon.

What does it mean to coach God's way?

Are you letting the "chiefs or kings" in your life dictate how you live and coach?
If yes, what are you going to do differently from this point on?

Memory verse: 2 Timothy 1:12 *"Yet I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day."*

TALKING POINTS: RESOLVE

Main thought:

Conviction leads to resolve, and resolve leads to action.

Key Scripture:

Daniel 1:8

Discussion questions:

1. Why can there be disconnect between my convictions and actions?
2. Discuss the godly convictions that should guide a coach.

COACH'S TESTIMONY: RESOLVE

Patty Gasso, Head Softball Coach at the University of Oklahoma

Patty has trusted God through challenging times and is now bearing the fruit of her resolve.

The empty beer cans and litter strewn across the field were the least of Patty Gasso's concerns. When Gasso took over as the University of Oklahoma's softball coach in October 1994, the program was in disarray. Her predecessor had been acting on an interim basis because the previous coach had resigned due to health concerns. Some players rebelled, skipping the fall training period because they had wanted an assistant coach to get the head job.

The former staff left behind virtually no information on any recruits for the following season. Then there was the softball stadium—if you could have called it that. The Sooners' home field was a collection of slow-pitch diamonds at a recreation park near campus.

"When we'd bring recruits in," Gasso said, "we'd drive by the softball fields at night: 'That's where we play, but let me show you the football stadium, the basketball stadium, the baseball stadium.' For home games, we'd have to have the team there 30 minutes before warm-ups to pick up beer bottles and trash. We've come a long way."

Talk about an understatement. Now in her twelfth season, Gasso has built the Sooners into a national powerhouse, with the 2000 NCAA championship as the cornerstone. Coming into this season, she had compiled a remarkable career record of 705-238-1 in 16 years, including a 544-179-1 mark at Oklahoma. She owns more Big 12 Conference wins than any other coach in conference history, and she has been named Big 12 and Midwest Region coach of the year three times.

The pitfall for every coach in Gasso's enviable position is to survey the grand athletic empire they have built and boast, like King Nebuchadnezzar in the book of Daniel, that it came from their hands. Gasso, though, has a completely different perspective.

“As I’ve been here, and as you win more, the pressure to win goes even higher,” she said. “That alone has made my faith stronger. All this isn’t happening because of me. It’s happening because of my faith and belief in God and what He allows me to do. I’m slowly understanding that there’s more to life than winning softball games, being on TV and winning the College World Series.”

Ironically, God used softball to bring Gasso to faith. In 1986 she married Jim Gasso, a Christian who had grown up in the church. With the persistent witness of Jim and a friend, Shelley McCall, who was an assistant coach under Gasso when she was at Long Beach City College (Calif.), Gasso began to realize something was missing in her life. Finally, in 1992, she surrendered to Christ during an LBCC softball game, of all times, while she was coaching in the third-base box.

Now, Gasso uses softball as her own spiritual platform. During the off-season, she hosts a voluntary Bible study at her house for softball players and other Oklahoma athletes. During the busy spring season, Gasso and some of her players attend a pregame service on Sundays and a Thursday evening service.

“What gives me more satisfaction is working with players and in their lives,” she said. “I’m trying to open doors to bring the Word of God into players’ lives. Maybe they’ll latch on, or maybe they won’t, but my job now as coach is not only to make them better players but introduce them to the Word of God.”

Bible Reference:

2 Timothy 1



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