

Daniel 6

Darius the Mede decided to divide the kingdom into 120 provinces, and he appointed a prince to rule over each province. The king also chose Daniel and two others as administrators to supervise the princes and to watch out for the king's interests. **Daniel soon proved himself more capable than all the other administrators and princes. Because of his great ability,** the king made plans to place him over the entire empire. Then the other administrators and princes began searching for some fault in the way Daniel was handling his affairs, but they couldn't find anything to criticize. **He was faithful and honest and always responsible.** So they concluded, "Our only chance of finding grounds for accusing Daniel will be in connection with the requirements of his religion."

So the administrators and princes went to the king and said, "Long live King Darius! We administrator, prefects, princes, advisers, and other officials have unanimously agreed that Your Majesty should make a law that will be strictly enforced. Give orders that for the next thirty days anyone who prays to anyone, divine or human—except Your Majesty—will be thrown to the lions. And let Your Majesty issue and sign this law so it cannot be changed, a law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be revoked." So King Darius signed the law.

But when Daniel learned that the law had been signed, he went home and knelt down as usual in his upstairs room, with its windows open toward Jerusalem. He prayed three times a day, just as he had always done, giving thanks to his God. The officials went together to Daniels house and found him praying and asking God's help. So they went back to the king and reminded him about his law. "Did you not sign a law that for the next thirty days, anyone who prays to anyone, divine or human—except to Your Majesty—will be thrown to the lions?"

"Yes," the king replied, "that decision stands; it is a law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be revoked."

Then they told the king, "That man Daniel, one of the captives from Judah, is paying no attention to you or your law. **He still prays to his God three times a day.**"

Hearing this, the king was very angry with himself for signing the law, and he tried to find a way to save Daniel. He spent the rest of the day looking for a way to get Daniel out of this predicament. In the evening the men went together to the king and said, "Your Majesty knows that according to the law of the Medes and the Persians, no law that the king signs can be changed."

So at last the king gave orders for Daniel to be arrested and thrown into the den of lions. The king said to him, "May your God, **whom you worship continually,** rescue you." A stone was brought and placed over the mouth of the den. The king sealed the stone with his own royal seal and the seals of his nobles, so that no one could rescue Daniel from the lions. Then the king returned to his palace and spent the night fasting. He refused his usual entertainment and couldn't sleep at all that night.

Very early the next morning, the king hurried out to the lions' den. When he got there, he called out in anguish, "Daniel, servant of the living God! Was your God, whom you worship continually, able to rescue you from the lions?"

Daniel answered, "Long live the king! My God sent his angel to shut the lions' mouths so that they would not hurt me, for I have been found innocent in his sight. And I have not wronged you, Your Majesty."

The king was overjoyed and ordered that Daniel be lifted from the den. **Not a scratch was found on him because he had trusted in His God.** Then the king gave orders to arrest the men who had maliciously accused Daniel. He had them thrown into the lions' den, along with their wives and children. The lions leaped on them and tore them apart before they even hit the floor of the den.

Then King Darius sent this message to the people of every race and nation and language throughout the world:

"Peace and prosperity to you! I decree that everyone throughout my kingdom should tremble with fear before the God of Daniel. For he is the living God, and he will rule forever. His kingdom will never be destroyed, and his rule will never end.

He rescues and saves people; He performs miraculous signs and wonders in the heavens and on earth. He has rescued Daniel from the power of the lions."

So Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

I want to finish up Daniel 6 and look at a few truths revealed in the verses of this chapter.

a. Daniel, "knelt down as usual."

But when Daniel learned that the law had been signed, he went home and knelt down as usual in his upstairs room, with its windows open toward Jerusalem. He prayed three times a day, just as he had always done, giving thanks to his God.

Daniel prayed regularly. What was he doing? Was it just religious?

What does this word mean and entail?

It is not just the act. You can be in the posture of prayer and miss the point.

And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words.

It is the connection

In the first phrase of the prayer Jesus teaches the disciples He reveals a posture...

"Our Father," is the first indication of the posture we are to have...

What Jesus reveals with this is that prayer is rooted in relationship. We are invited into a real relationship with a loving Dad. Prayer is how we talk and connect.

We know about prayer, we understand it's important, but I would suggest there is a very real and dangerous problem in our time.

Very few will practice a systematic discipline of prayer. This is what we see in Daniel's life.

I would like to challenge us to a few truths to build our prayer lives like Daniel:

Set your time and be consistent.

Consider this: Daniel was so consistent in his prayer life that the world around him knew **where & when** to find him.

This tells me a very real key to a vibrant prayer life is consistency.

I would submit that Daniel built his daily schedule around his discipline, he wasn't waiting for time to appear.

Make worship your agenda.

Darius declares,

May your God, whom you worship continually..."

The statement means, "perpetually," The root idea is to dwell in something.

It tells us that Daniel lived as a worshipper all the time.

What does that mean?

It means Daniel lived every aspect of his life as worship.

Your life, every moment, 24/7 is an act of worship.

How you work, grocery, drive, mow the lawn, handle yourself in a restaurant...all of it is worship.

Why is this important?

Praise and Thanksgiving set my perspective and expectation.

When I am giving thanks, I live thankful.

When I am praising, I am not complaining.

Set a habit of reconnecting throughout your day.

Daniel had developed a pattern of staying connected to God throughout his day.

I believe this is important on several fronts, and I believe this is the secret to Daniel's life.

Think about what happens with this discipline?

a. I live knowing I am coming into His presence.

Because of that, I am not willing to live into sin patterns or poor attitudes.

At the very least, I am dealing with them because they are being vetted by His searching and knowing my heart.

b. The early church modeled this pattern and they lived and moved in supernatural authority in the miraculous. Is it worth asking if there is a connection?

c. Paul, the Apostle, followed this model.

What does it look like for you and I to consider an intentionality of life that gave us room to break from busyness long enough to pray 3 times per day?

Am I saying we should do this? Does the number count?

Yes and no.

I am not calling us to commit to three times per day.

I am saying that we see this pattern in the Scriptures.

I am calling us to make the decision to become a people who intentionally stay connected and focused to Jesus throughout the day.

I believe when my habits are centered around my relationship with Jesus, my outlook begins to follow. The Kingdom of God begins to shape my vision and decisions.

b. Daniel says, "[*for I have been found innocent.*](#)"

[*My God sent his angel to shut the lions' mouths so that they would not hurt me, for I have been found innocent in his sight.*](#)

Remember earlier in Daniel 3, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego? They make this incredible statement, "God is able to rescue us, but even if he doesn't we won't bow." It was confident, full of conviction, and they appeared to have absolutely no doubt about what they were doing.

What I see here in Daniel is a very different response. His statement is, "God has inspected me and found me pure."

What is the point?

Daniel was following his gut conviction on a path of action and behavior, and He was actually looking at the outcome to help him know if God was pleased for his decision.

That is a concept we see so often in our culture...people reading circumstances to find the approval of God.

But I think there is a really important truth in the way these two stories reveal:

Bowing down before a God was forbidden in Scripture. (Leviticus 26)

Because of this, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego knew what to do.

Being forbidden to pray was not.

Daniel was facing a grey area where he had to make a judgement or faith call.

It teaches me that Daniel was looking to watch the outcome of his circumstances to sense God's approval because he didn't have the Scriptures to lean on.

Therefore, when the Scriptures speak directly to a subject, we do not need to watch the situation to know if we are pleasing God.

Why? Obedience to the Scripture is pleasing to God.

The important part for me is that we have a grid to understand. The Scriptures are our first line of guidance and where we live from. We choose to obey them regardless of the consequence.

I would submit that by living the Scriptures, we actually develop an understanding of who our Father is and we learn how to make those decisions in the, "grey areas," that align with his character.

c. Darius says, "[*He \(Yahweh\) rescues and saves people; He performs miraculous signs and wonders in the heavens and on earth.*](#)"

Could I invite us to just consider this as a very simple statement of fact about who God is?

Could I invite us to let go the the strange theology we have been taught that would cause us to only resort to this belief as a last option?

This is who God is. It is His nature. What does it look like for you and I to live from this truth?