

CALL to PRAYER - Pray for the courage to serve well those who God has placed over us

Daniel 6:1-16 - Thirty Days to Slow the Spread...

Intro – Daniel 6 is a famous account of great faith and a miraculous deliverance ^{Heb. 11:33}. But this chapter also contains a great lesson in practical godliness. For in Daniel 6 we get to observe how faith is lived out in a faithless society...get to see how to be godly while serving a godless government. Daniel's example is worth following because he followed hard after God ^{1 Cor. 11:1}. We would all do well if we *dared to be a Daniel*. God places him in the top three of OT people ^{Ezek. 14:14}. But alas, very few have his fortitude, courage, and godly character. Daniel was a man of great devotion to his work, his government, and his God...but there was a pecking order to his devotion and that conviction brought him under condemnation from his enemies. We ought to "*Dare to be a Daniel*", but we are often too *scared to be a Daniel*. As believers we should definitely *prepare to be a Daniel*. Devotion Capitulation

DEVOTION

- Daniel was a man of great devotion in every area of his life captivity/new king/King of kings
 - He had devotion in his work life education & vocation
 - He showed devotion in loyal service to his nation loyal to homeland & land of captivity (x's 2)
 - Be he reserved uncompromising devotion for his God. the Lord had his highest loyalty.
- Daniel distinguished himself in his work life
 - Daniel demonstrated a commitment to excellence in everything he did.
 - When stolen away as adolescent...forced re-education in a godless institution...
 - ...he graduated top of class Dan. 1:19-20
 - Daniel is now in his 80's but his work ethic is still evident to all
 - Dan. 6:3 Daniel had the Protestant work ethic before there were any Protestants
- Work is a good thing that is ordained by God.
 - God made us to labor, not be lazy - ^{Eccles. 9:10}
 - 1 Thes. 4:11-12 2 Thess. 3:11-14
 - We are live out our faith by faithfully laboring in our various vocations
 - Eph. 6:5-8 (doing God's will) Col. 3:22-24
- Daniel's devotion was exhibited in laboring for a foreign nation.
 - He served Babylon for 70 years (as a captive Jew/slave)
 - When Babylon was conquered he then began to serve the Medes & Persians
 - Daniel worked hard for his captors (like Joseph did)
 - Daniels abilities and work ethic stood out so much that the new administration promoted him to top dog - Dan. 6:3
- Daniel's commitment to excellence brought him into conflict with the loafers at work
 - Dan. 6:4 The skilled are often reviled by those they outshine - ^{Eccles. 4:4}
 - Why are achievers assailed in our society? The mentality of lowering achievers to elevate loafers is an ungodly attitude. should emulate not denigrate
 - A good work ethic may bring you into work conflict...it did for Daniel.
- They could find no dirt on Daniel 6:4b

- Daniel was one of kind...he was a clean politician – no skeletons in his closet
- Titus 2:8 1 Peter 2:12-15 1 Peter 3:16
- The only “fault” they could find had to do with his faith Daniel 6:5
 - Daniel’s faith was open and evident for all to see.
 - His faith stood up to scrutiny
 - Can people tell you are a Christian by the way you work and live?
- The lawmakers scheme and propose a bill that will trap Daniel Dan. 6:7
 - 30 days with no prayer.... except to the king
 - This law flattered the king
 - It elevated the kingdom as the chief benefactor and sustainer.
 - The king and kingdom gave all the hand-outs so no hands-up to anyone except the government. Government is seen as the chief loyalty/government is first priority/government is god
 - The law was signed, and the trap was set
- What was loyal Daniel to do? (he was very loyal to the government)
 - Daniel 6:10 He righteously resisted and disobeyed the unjust law
 - Daniel was devoted to his vocation, and he faithfully served the nation...
 -but he had an uncompromising devotion to his God
 - Birds of his feather have a pecking order of devotion - the King of kings comes before kings
 - Government is not god & God is over government
- Daniel’s prayer life did not change though the law changed (capital offence)
 - God is the sustainer and supplier of all things (not government) James 1:17
 - Prayer is a priority... it is an essential Col. 4:2
 - The busy Daniel wasn’t too busy to pray 3 times a day Ps. 55:16-17 Ps. 119:164
- When man’s law and God’s law come into conflict; we must choose Gods law
 - Acts 4:19 Acts 5:29
 - “one who would break and unjust law must do so openly, lovingly and with a willingness to accept the penalty” (MLKJ – letter from Birmingham jail)
 - Daniel was living out 1 Kings 8:46-49 and no law was going to stop him.
 - He opened his widows and openly prayed...enemies observed/pounced by law

CAPITULATION

- End with a practical application by a comparison of Daniel’s devotion to our capitulation
- Three years ago our government declared churches non-essential and closes them
 - Some under threat of fines (1.2 million fine given last week to a church in Cal. for non-compliance)
 - There was talk in our church about “what if the police come? (rumor of a \$1500 fine)
 - It was sold to us as “15 days to slow the spread”
 - Easter services were shuttered world wide (for the first time in history)
 - Church leaders eagerly complied and became spokespersons for the policy
- God says “don’t forsake the assembling of yourselves together...” Heb. 10:25 Col. 3:16 (1 day in 7 devoted to...)
 - Government said, “don’t meet, don’t greet, don’t sing...”
 - Pastor Bob resisted this overreach and said “NO!” (thank him)
 - Not many dare to be a Daniel because we are scared to be a Daniel (lion’s den). As God’s people we need to prepare to be a Daniel for next time government overextends it authority.
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