

It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom 120 satraps, to be throughout the whole kingdom; ² and over them three high officials, of whom Daniel was one, to whom these satraps should give account, so that the king might suffer no loss. ³ Then this Daniel became distinguished above all the other high officials and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him. And the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom. ⁴ Then the high officials and the satraps sought to find a ground for complaint against Daniel with regard to the kingdom, but they could find no ground for complaint or any fault, because he was faithful, and no error or fault was found in him. ⁵ Then these men said, "We shall not find any ground for complaint against this Daniel unless we find it in connection with the law of his God." ⁶ Then these high officials and satraps came by agreement^[a] to the king and said to him, "O King Darius, live forever! ⁷ All the high officials of the kingdom, the prefects and the satraps, the counselors and the governors are agreed that the king should establish an ordinance and enforce an injunction, that whoever makes petition to any god or man for thirty days, except to you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions. ⁸ Now, O king, establish the injunction and sign the document, so that it cannot be changed, according to the law of the Medes and the Persians, which cannot be revoked." ⁹ Therefore King Darius signed the document and injunction.

Daniel 6:1-9

Pray

We are not of this world, but we are in this world

We were not destined to be here forever, but we are here now

We have a hope that one day the world will be restored, but now we live with its brokenness

We are called to this world, but were not called by the world

The book of Daniel is a prime example of what it means to follow God in a hollow culture

All of us find ourselves subject to different aspects of this world

The laws of the land, rules in our parents' house, requirements of our job, we are all subject to something above us

In this story we will look at, you need to know that Daniel, although serving as a high official, was subject to a kingdom and a culture he did not agree with

Babylon had invaded Jerusalem and Judah three separate times, each time becoming more brutal and taking more people

The Jewish people were taken and forced to assimilate to this new kingdom and culture while at the same time attempting to hold onto their religious roots

Their homes were destroyed, their marketplaces and business were destroyed, and even the temple they worshipped in was destroyed

They were in this new culture, but not of this new culture

I think Daniel offers us some valuable lessons on what it means to maintain your faith in a culture that doesn't share the same faith as you

And how to maintain your faith when you're in the palace or the prison

¹⁰ When Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he went to his house where he had windows in his upper chamber open toward Jerusalem. He got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he had done previously. ¹¹ Then these men came by agreement and found Daniel making petition and plea before his God. ¹² Then they came near and said before the king, concerning the injunction, "O king! Did you not sign an injunction, that anyone who makes petition to any god or man within thirty days except to you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions?" The king answered and said, "The thing stands fast, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be revoked." ¹³ Then they answered and said before the king, "Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, O king, or the injunction you have signed, but makes his petition three times a day."

Daniel 6:10-15

A couple observations to note:

-Daniel had developed a rhythm and practice of prayer three times a day. Daniel's prayer life was not his spare tire, it was his steering wheel

-Although taken captive, Daniel served as a high official in Babylon

-Daniel proved that you could do that right thing and still have bad things happen to you

¹⁶ Then the king commanded, and Daniel was brought and cast into the den of lions. The king declared^[b] to Daniel, "May your God, whom you serve continually, deliver you!" ¹⁷ And a stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet and with the signet of his lords, that nothing might be changed concerning Daniel. ¹⁸ Then the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; no diversions were brought to him, and sleep fled from him.

Daniel 6:16-18

What the story of Daniel shows us is that faithfulness will lead you to both the Palace and the prison

Not only was Daniel faithful to God, but he was faithful to his work and his assignment

This faithfulness led Daniel to being one of three high officials that oversaw 120 local rulers

While in the same story, this same faithfulness led Daniel straight to a lion's den

It's true, that faithfulness to God will take you to some really high highs and some low lows

Faithfulness to God is not transactional in that if I stay faithful, then God must do what I say/need

Faithfulness is telling God I trust you, even if things don't work out well

Faithfulness is not based on my circumstance, but on my closeness to the Father

What I have seen in my time in the church is that everyone can be faithful when life is good

When I have money, time, families doing good, and friend groups are secure, I can be faithful all day long

But it's much harder to be faithful when your broke, family is chaotic, friends have betrayed you, health has declined

Perhaps so many people leave church and walk away from their faith when life gets tough, is because their faithfulness is based on what God can do for them rather than who He is

If Daniel's faithfulness was based on what God can do for him, he would have abandoned his faith years before the lion's den

if we are faithless, he remains faithful 2 Timothy 2:13

But his faith was rooted in the character of God, not in the circumstance of his day

¹⁹ Then, at break of day, the king arose and went in haste to the den of lions. ²⁰ As he came near to the den where Daniel was, he cried out in a tone of anguish. The king declared to Daniel, "O Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?" ²¹ Then Daniel said to the king, "O king, live forever! ²² My God sent his angel and shut the lions' mouths, and they have not harmed me, because I was found blameless before him; and also before you, O king, I have done no harm."

Daniel 6:19-22

²⁵ Then King Darius wrote to all the peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth: "Peace be multiplied to you. ²⁶ I make a decree, that in all my royal dominion people

are to tremble and fear before the God of Daniel, for he is the living God, enduring forever; his kingdom shall never be destroyed, and his dominion shall be to the end. ²⁷ He delivers and rescues; he works signs and wonders in heaven and on earth, he who has saved Daniel from the power of the lions.”

Daniel 6:25-27

Daniel's ability to remain faithful through the lion's den was enough evidence to show King Darius that Daniel's God was alive

Perhaps your greatest tool for evangelizing to your friends and family is faithfulness

Your faithfulness is less about you and more about showing others who God is

Your faithfulness to continue to come to church when your family doesn't, shows them that God is working in your life

Your faithfulness to give shows that you have submitted your entire life to Christ

Your faithfulness to forgive people who have hurt you shows that you have received healing and can grow through pain

Faithfulness is not simply about how I look, but it directly points to God and his character. People are watching you, and how we act and react to the storms of life give them a glimpse into who God is

Three ways to remain faithful:

1. Be Rooted in Prayer

¹⁰When Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he went to his house where he had windows in his upper chamber open toward Jerusalem. He got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he had done previously.

Daniel 6:10

Emerge Core Value

Consistent communication is key to remaining faithful

This is what they teach you in pre-marital counseling

The moment we become lone wolves and distant from those we were in relationship with, we open ourselves up for the enemy to work and bring division

2. Get Under Direct Spiritual Leadership

You need someone who is more spiritually mature than you to encourage you, challenge you, answer questions, process life with, complain to etc...

I am a product of serving under spiritual leadership that helped me remain faithful

I believe a key to remaining faithful is having a pastor or leader

Your faith will grow and your faithfulness will increase when you watch and serve, and lead under healthy mature leadership

3. Distance Yourself from People who don't value your faith (temporary)

If you struggle to remain faithful or have thought about walking away, you need to separate yourself from people who are not helping you grow closer to Christ

The quickest way to stop following Jesus is to stop attending church and hang around people who don't follow Christ

³³ Do not be deceived: "Bad company ruins good morals"

1 Corinthians 15:33

Which one of these points can you work on?

What do you need to do this week to remain faithful?