

Today, we are going to talk about who we are and how we live courageously. How do you know who you are?

### LOOK IN

Everything is up to me.  
Authentic Self (Young Gen)  
Who does me want to be?

### LOOK AROUND

Find people like me who  
like me. Group up. I am  
who I hang out with.

### LOOK UP

Life is designed and  
determined by God.

## BIG IDEA #1: Identity isn't found in me, in them, but in Him.

We pick up the story of Daniel in Daniel 6. He was likely a touch over 80 years old at this time in his life. Daniel was the favorite of the king. He had experience, wisdom, a sense of history, leadership, a good reputation, ability, attitude, and revelation from the God of heaven.<sup>1</sup>

**DANIEL 6:6-9** **6** So these administrators and satraps went as a group to the king and said: "May King Darius live forever! **7** The royal administrators, prefects, satraps, advisers and governors have all agreed that the king should issue an edict and enforce the decree that anyone who prays to any god or human being during the next thirty days, except to you, Your Majesty, shall be thrown into the lions' den. **8** Now, Your Majesty, issue the decree and put it in writing so that it cannot be altered—in accordance with the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed." **9** So King Darius put the decree in writing.

A 30-Day Moratorium Was Put on Prayer - Pray to Anyone but King Darius - Lion's Den for You

## BIG IDEA #2: My first loyalty is ALWAYS to God.

**DANIEL 6:10-11** **10** Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before. **11** Then these men went as a group and found Daniel praying and asking God for help.

**Daniel was practicing faithful disobedience.** He knew what was expected. He prayed anyway - not privately in front of an open window. He prayed anyway - not just once but 3 times. He prayed anyway - not hiding his devotion but getting on his knees giving thanks to God and asking for his help.

Faithful disobedience is when we choose to obey God instead of man because God's commands and calling supersede the demands and expectations of man.

When should a Christian practice *faithful disobedience*?

1. When the commands of the king contradict the commands of God.
2. When your heart is ready to face opposition in a way that shows your devotion to God.
3. When you are willing to pay the price for your courage.

- Faithful disobedience rejects the ungodly cultural standards of our day.

**BUT DON'T MISS THIS...Daniel's FAITHFUL DISOBEDIENCE was driven by his COURAGEOUS devotion.** What does courageous devotion demand of us today?

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<sup>1</sup> MacArthur, J., Jr. (Ed.). (1997). The MacArthur Study Bible (electronic ed., p. 1236). Nashville, TN: Word Pub.

It takes courage to stand up to the *world's broken views in ways that honor the Lord*. [Here is the challenge](#):

What is **ACCEPTED** in one generation will be **CELEBRATED** by the next and **NORMALIZED** in the next generation.

**Illus:** 3s Company - Come and Knock on Our Door

Dad wouldn't let me watch. Couldn't ACCEPT unmarried people living together. Next generation of shows, the trend continued was CELEBRATED and now, living together outside of marriage has been NORMALIZED. Even many in the church don't have an issue with it.

What is being **accepted today** that will be **celebrated tomorrow** and **normalized in years to come**?

*As believers, we must interrupt this cycle in our homes and in our lives. We can also be salt and light to interrupt this cycle in our communities. What does faithful disobedience mean for you and me?*

- Faithful disobedience rejects the **over-sexualization of our kids**. ([DADS - Protect and Provide](#))
  - **Protect kids from inappropriate content.** We have a battle going on in one of our communities over content in the library, but the biggest threat to our kids isn't found on the shelf of a library. It is found in their pocket. Yes, we should protect our kids on all sides and in all places, but the greatest danger is accessed on their phones, not with their library cards. *Groeschel - why fight temptation when you can remove it?* See the series resources. [Give your kids freedom online by locking down their devices!](#)
  - **Provide a Godly picture of healthy relationships.** Here's where I want to mess with you. Some parents rightly stand against clearly sinful relationships and messages on sex while encouraging their kids to date too early potentially leading to just as concerning and sinful relationships. We must provide a picture of the future for our kids where they don't need a boyfriend or girlfriend to fit in at middle school or high school. We can't unintentionally undermine their future relational success by OVERSEXUALIZING our OWN KIDS.
- Faithful disobedience requires the **value of all life, all races, and every man, woman, and child created in God's image**. ([Battle for Our Identity - Let's hit the big issues of our day](#). Ready? Let's go!)
  - **Biblically, my gender isn't identified, it is recognized.** Your gender is God's gift and God's design for your life. I AM someone who was fearfully and wonderfully made by God.

**Pastor Jon Tyson:** [Gender has been used to use and abuse others, but removing gender or presenting genders as socially interchangeable isn't the solution for yesterday's abuses.](#)

- **Biblically, my identity is in Christ** - not my race, not my politics, not my gender, and not my social circles. Jesus has given each of us a completely new identity.  
  
Some worldviews say that your **role in society is predetermined by your race**. You are either the oppressed or the oppressor based on skin color alone. Even with the racial struggles we continue to face as a country and the damage it does to all of us, classifying someone based on the color of their skin shows what we believe about God's design. YOUR SKIN COLOR ISN'T A CURSE that makes you a victim. YOUR

SKIN COLOR ISN'T AN EXCUSE for you to MISTREAT PEOPLE. You were created in the image of God to know your value and to treat all people with dignity and respect.

I believe that in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, Slave nor Free, Male nor Female. We are one - one family - as such, every member of the family is of equal worth and value not only in God's eyes but mine, too. **Hear this:** any modifier that we put on our Christianity limits the work of Jesus in our lives.

**When I know that my identity is in Christ, I am not looking for Jesus to affirm the person I have chosen to be but to correct me to be more like Him.**

*Daniel had the courage of his convictions because he knew that he was one of God's chosen.*

**DANIEL 6:12-13** **12** So they went to the king and spoke to him about his royal decree: "Did you not publish a decree that during the next thirty days anyone who prays to any god or human being except to you, Your Majesty, would be thrown into the lions' den?" The king answered, "The decree stands—in accordance with the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed." **13** Then they said to the king, "Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, **pays no attention to you, Your Majesty, or to the decree you put in writing.** He still **prays three times a day.**"

**DANIEL SHOWS US COURAGE IN ACTION:** Daniel had never attempted to hide HIS DEVOTION to God and a KING'S DECREE wouldn't change that.

**BIG IDEA #3:** I am 100% OK being FOUND FAITHFUL to God.

**Be warned:** When you are faithful to the Lord, your faithfulness may become a target for others.

Jesus - just like they HATED ME, they will HATE YOU. Better understanding just like they HATED ME while I was in the WORLD, they HATE ME in YOU right NOW.

When you are in the crosshairs, remember:

- Don't take it personally. It's not about you. It's about Christ in you.
- Don't get defensive. Innocent people don't defend themselves.
- Don't respond in anger. Anger never produces righteousness.
- Don't stop living visibly for the Lord.

Daniel had lived for over 60 years in Babylon. **His loyalty to the rulers was well known (5:13); in spite of that loyalty, his consistent faithfulness to God brought this threat.**<sup>2</sup>

**BIG IDEA #4:** I will live FAITHFULLY even if people seek to hurt and harm me.

**DANIEL 6:16** **16** So the king gave the order, and they brought Daniel and threw him into the lions' den. The king said to Daniel, "**May your God, whom you serve continually, rescue you!**"

**DANIEL 6:17-20** **17** A stone was brought and placed over the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the rings of his nobles, so that Daniel's situation might not be changed. **18** Then the king returned to his palace and spent the night without eating and without any entertainment being brought to him. And he could not sleep. **19** At the first light of dawn, the king got up and hurried to the lions' den. **20** When he came near the den, he called to Daniel in an anguished voice, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to rescue you from the lions?"

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<sup>2</sup> MacArthur, J., Jr. (Ed.). (1997). The MacArthur Study Bible (electronic ed., p. 1237). Nashville, TN: Word Pub.

God could choose to save Daniel. God could have chosen to martyr Daniel. God could have rescued Him or could have allowed him to be consumed by the lions. **NO MATTER GOD'S DECISION FOR MY LIFE, I WILL TRUST HIS PLAN.**

**BIG IDEA #5:** I will trust God when my devotion is tested.

When your devotion is tested, pray for courage. Pray for strength. Pray for boldness. Circle people around you who know you, love you, and have them pray with you and for you. Daniel prayed, thanked God, and asked for help. How did God answer His prayers?

**DANIEL 6:21-23** **21** Daniel answered, "May the king live forever! **22** My God sent his angel, and he shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in his sight. Nor have I ever done any wrong before you, Your Majesty." **23** The king was overjoyed and gave orders to lift Daniel out of the den. And when Daniel was lifted from the den, no wound was found on him, because he had trusted in his God.

For 30 days Darius was addressed as God by the people in his realm (v. 7). But Daniel served the true God, who did what Darius could never do: shut the mouths of lions to protect one who depended on Him.<sup>3</sup>

**TOC:** Pray that we would live with an undivided heart. Pray that we have the courage to do what God calls us to do and to trust His rescue. Pray that we would live set-apart lives showing that He is God and we are not. Pray that we would be sent into the world to influence the world without being wrongly influenced by the world.

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<sup>3</sup> Pentecost, J. D. (1985). Daniel. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, p. 1349). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.