



Daniel – Thriving in Babylon

Part 4 – Consistency in Babylon

Key Passage

Daniel 6: 16-23

¹⁶Then the king commanded, and Daniel was brought and cast into the den of lions. The king declared to Daniel, “May your God, whom you serve continually, deliver you!” ¹⁷And 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. ¹⁸Then the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; no diversions were brought to him, and sleep fled from him.

¹⁹Then, at break of day, the king arose and went in haste to the den of lions. ²⁰As 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?” ²¹Then Daniel said to the king, “O king, live forever! ²²My 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.” ²³Then the king was exceedingly glad, and commanded that Daniel be taken up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no kind of harm was found on him, because he had trusted in his God.



First Thoughts

The truly difficult thing for those who do distance running is finishing well. Most anyone can run 1 mile. It is exceptionally difficult to run 13 miles or 26 miles. – The same is true in life for Christians. Though it may not seem like it, starting out with Christ, following Christ in our early years, is simple, dare I say easy, at least easier. We wrongly imagine that with the passing of time our walk with Christ will get easier. Perhaps in some ways it does, but for the most part running and finishing well is not an easy task. There are so many opportunities to turn aside, so much opposition on the path, so many promises of a better way that finishing well is truly difficult.

Daniel shows us we as Christians can “run the tape” in our race through this life. The key to running and finishing well? Consistency. A life that is built on consistently trusting in God is one that runs well and finishes well.

BELONG

Start the group with an opportunity for community. We want this to be a place where the body of Christ can **belong** by sharing their lives with one another in genuine fellowship.

- How is everyone’s week going? Any life updates?
- What is something the group can be praying about?
- What is something the group can praise this week?
- Who comes to mind when you think of a Christian who “finished well?” What made them able to finish well?
- How consistent are you in your walk with God?
- Do you have a consistent time to meet with God?



Believe

Move into the relevant Bible passages and read along together. This is where the body of Christ can learn together to **believe** in Jesus more and love Him better.

6 It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom 120 satraps, to be throughout the whole kingdom; ²and 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. ³Then 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. ⁴Then 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. ⁵Then 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."

⁶Then these high officials and satraps came by agreement to the king and said to him, "O King Darius, live forever! ⁷All 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. ⁸Now, 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." ⁹Therefore King Darius signed the document and injunction.

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. ¹¹Then these men came by agreement and found Daniel making petition and plea before his God. ¹²Then 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." ¹³Then 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."

¹⁴Then the king, when he heard these words, was much distressed and set his mind to deliver Daniel. And he labored till the sun went down to rescue him. ¹⁵Then these men came by



agreement to the king and said to the king, “Know, O king, that it is a law of the Medes and Persians that no injunction or ordinance that the king establishes can be changed.”

¹⁶Then the king commanded, and Daniel was brought and cast into the den of lions. The king declared to Daniel, “May your God, whom you serve continually, deliver you!” ¹⁷And 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. ¹⁸Then the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; no diversions were brought to him, and sleep fled from him.

¹⁹Then, at break of day, the king arose and went in haste to the den of lions. ²⁰As 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?” ²¹Then Daniel said to the king, “O king, live forever! ²²My 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.” ²³Then the king was exceedingly glad, and commanded that Daniel be taken up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no kind of harm was found on him, because he had trusted in his God. ²⁴And the king commanded, and those men who had maliciously accused Daniel were brought and cast into the den of lions—they, their children, and their wives. And before they reached the bottom of the den, the lions overpowered them and broke all their bones in pieces.

Daniel lays out for us a way to consistently walk with God.

Consistency in Courage

One thing that becomes exceptionally clear is that Daniel has a courageous faith— He is bold about God. Daniel is not timid, wimpy, or scared about his faith in God.

How do we know? -- We see evidence of his courageous faith.

Daniel’s consistency in courage, his courageous faith, is evidenced by his public witness. (v.5). – There is no public/private divide in Daniel’s life. Everyone knows that he is a man of faith, presumably because he told them so. The modern notion that we are meant to have a private faith that does not interfere with our public lives is unbiblical. We are Christians at all times, or we are not Christians at any time.

Daniel’s courageous faith is also evidenced by his commitment to godly conduct (v.4). – This is truly a miracle, a politician who no one is able to find fault with. Daniel’s faith had enough fortitude, enough courage that when he was faced with pressure to compromise, he stood fast.

Daniel’s courageous faith is evidenced by his commitment to God no matter the cost (v.10). – Daniel was going to honor God come what may! He had every reason to begin to crawl here. “Well maybe I will pray in my room with the door closed.” “Well, it’s only for a short season.” “Well, I need to set an example for the other people as to what good citizenship looks like.” However, he stood fast because his



commitment to God was greater than his commitment to man and he had enough courage to honor that commitment even if it cost him something.

You have every reason to back down too. You may get fired, you may experience a hostile work environment, you may lose friends. In this life we must choose if we will have the courage to be committed to honor Christ above all or will we sacrifice that commitment on the altar of cowardice and personal convenience?

Consistency in courage made Daniel useful to God. Will we follow Daniel's example and live with courageous faith?

Consistency in Habit

Daniel did not start praying when things got tough, he had a habit of meeting with God. (v. 10)

Daniel's habit of meeting with God was his source of strength. – He prayed as much as he ate. The implication here is that as much as he needed strength from food, he also needed God to give him strength just as much. In fact, it seems he was more desperate for the power provided prayer here because he was willing to die for it.

Let me ask you, do you have a habit of meeting with God? What's more, let me ask, are you so desperate to meet with God that you are willing to die for it?

You cannot walk effectively for God, or walk closely with God, if you do not have a habit of meeting with him. If you do not meet regularly with God, then you have no source of renewable energy for this Christian life. Essentially, an avoidance of meeting with God makes you a ship stranded at sea with no hope of being useful or ever making it back to harbor.

I want you to understand this, meeting with God through prayer and Bible reading is your only hope of obtaining the power of God in this everyday existence of life.

Ills. On July 19, 1969, the astronauts who manned Apollo 11 needed 7,500,000 pounds of thrust in order to reach an escape velocity of 17,500 MPH and get out of the gravitational pull of earth. For this, it took 5,625,000 pounds of fuel – Meeting with God in prayer and Bible reading is the fuel that ignites the power of the Holy Spirit in you that enables you to escape the pull of the world aiming to suck you in. – Some of us walk around so defeated because we are never able to know God, escape temptation, and be of any use to the Kingdom. Yet, we never make an effort to meet with God. To get the fuel that he offers.

Let's kill our excuses before we move on.

- "I pray throughout the day" – No you don't. – This sounds super spiritual, but people who run from God in the morning don't typically find him the rest of the day!
- "I don't have time." – We are time rich and attention poor. We have time to do what we want in life.



FIRST BAPTIST SIMPSONVILLE UPSTATE CHURCH

- “I don’t know how.” – Here is a great devotional: Truth for Life: 365 Daily Devotions (A Gospel-Saturated Gift Devotional for the Entire Year - Includes a Yearly Bible Reading Plan that can be found on Amazon or visit this [link](#) for some great devotional resources.

Consistency in Habit means we are desperate to meet with God, and we will do whatever it takes to make it a consistent part of our lives.

Consistency in Trust

Daniel displays a consistent trust in God, a consistent faith in God. – Trust or faith is certainty that God can and will take care of you spiritually, eternally, and, if he chooses, physically.

Hebrews 11:1 – “Assurance” – “Conviction” – Faith is a certainty that God is, and God can. And faith is that Christian virtue that makes us able to walk closely with God and for God despite the circumstances.

Hebrews 11:32-33 – All of the Christian life is accomplished “by faith” that God is, and God can.

Most of us never experience the fullness of the Christian life because we never step out in test, in faith, to believe that no matter where we find ourselves, God is and God can. So, we miss the abundant life that Daniel experienced because we are sure that God is who he says he is or that God can do what he says he will do in the situation where we find ourselves. Instead, we play it safe, avoid trouble, stay out of the lion’s den and we live lives devoid of faith and devoid of God because we are never in situations to see God move

When you step out God will meet you there, even if it’s in the lion’s den (v. 22).

Let me give you one better, when we step out in faith, we find a Savior who is willing to take our place in the lion’s den. Daniel who was unjustly accused and thrown into a pit that was sealed by heavy stone points us to Christ who was unjustly accused and crucified and placed inside a pit that was sealed with a heavy stone for our sins. Praise God, like Daniel, the pit could not hold Jesus, and Jesus is even stronger than Daniel. Daniel was pulled out of the pit by the power of the King, but Jesus busted out of the pit on the third day by the resurrection power of the Father. Daniel’s enemies were defeated by the King’s power. Jesus’ enemies were defeated by his own power because He is the King. Again, and again and again, Daniel points us to Jesus.

Trust in Jesus. Jesus Christ died for your sins. He rose again to prove that your sins are forgiven. Though you deserve death, though you deserve the pit, Jesus took your place in the pit.

Trust in Jesus. Live like Daniel. – Learn to walk consistently with God.



BECOME

Wrap up the discussion by asking some closing questions. We can **become** more like the people God is calling us to be by reflecting on what we've learned and applying it.

- How can I cultivate a healthier and more consistent walk with God?
- How can we plan now to finish well?
- What are the biggest obstacles to finishing well in the future?