

The Book of Daniel

Lesson 6: Daniel in the Lions' Den -- Daniel 6:1-28

Daniel is an old man now, somewhere past eighty, and he has outlasted an empire. The Babylon he was carried into as a boy has fallen, and now the Medes and Persians rule, and Daniel, of all people, has risen to the very top of the new administration. He is so excellent, so trustworthy, so free of corruption that the king plans to set him over the whole kingdom. And that, it turns out, is dangerous. Excellence makes enemies. The other officials cannot stand the thought of this foreign exile ruling over them, and so they go hunting for something, anything, to use against him.

But here is the most beautiful detail in the whole chapter, a quiet testimony to a life well lived. They search and search, and they can find nothing. No scandal, no fraud, no negligence, no secret sin to expose. "They could find no ground for complaint or any fault, because he was faithful, and no error or fault was found in him." So they finally admit defeat in the most backhanded way possible: "We shall not find any ground for complaint against this Daniel unless we find it in connection with the law of his God." The only way to trap a man like Daniel is to make his faithfulness to God illegal.

So they flatter the king into signing a decree: for thirty days, no one may pray to any god or man except the king himself, on pain of being thrown to the lions. It is a trap built precisely around Daniel's known habit of prayer. And when Daniel hears that the document has been signed, he does not panic, and he does not hide. He goes home, to the upstairs room with the windows open toward Jerusalem, and he gets down on his knees, just as he had done before, three times a day, and he prays and gives thanks to his God. No drama. No defiance for its own sake. Just an old man keeping his standing appointment with heaven, as he always had.

And so Daniel is thrown to the lions, and the king, who loves him and tried desperately to save him, spends a sleepless night and runs to the den at dawn. "O Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you?" And the voice comes up out of the pit: "My God sent his angel and shut the lions' mouths." This lesson is about a life so consistent that its enemies could only attack its faith, about prayer that becomes the unshakable rhythm of a soul, and about the living God who shuts the mouths of lions for those who trust in Him.

Group Discussion: Daniel's enemies could find no fault in him at all, except his devotion to God (6:4-5). What does it say about a person's life when even their enemies can find nothing to accuse them of? How would our lives change if we lived with that kind of integrity, knowing we are always before the eyes of God?

Personal Reflection: When the decree was signed, Daniel simply continued his lifelong habit of prayer, three times a day, as he had always done (6:10). How would you describe the current

rhythm of your own prayer life? What would it take to build the kind of steady, daily communion with God that would hold you steady in a crisis?

Read Daniel 6:1–28

Study Questions

1. Daniel's enemies could find no fault in him because "he was faithful, and no error or fault was found in him" (6:4). What does this reveal about the kind of integrity God works in His servants? Why does a life of consistent faithfulness matter, both for our witness and before God who sees all things (Proverbs 10:9)?
2. Integrity means being the same person in private as in public, when no one is watching as when everyone is. Where do you sense a gap between your public reputation and your private life? What is one area where God is calling you to greater integrity this week?
3. When the unjust decree was signed, Daniel did not hide his faith or stop praying, but neither did he make a defiant show; he simply continued as before (6:10). What does this teach about quiet, steady faithfulness under pressure? How is consistent obedience often a more powerful witness than dramatic gestures?
4. Daniel's faith had become a daily habit long before the crisis came, which is exactly why the crisis could not shake it. What spiritual habits are you building now that will hold you steady when testing comes? Why can we not wait until the storm to start building the house?

5. Daniel prayed three times a day, with thanksgiving, even knowing it could cost him his life (6:10). What does this reveal about the place of prayer in a faithful life, and about prayer as communion with God rather than merely asking for things? How does a praying life shape a person over the years?
6. Daniel gave thanks even as a death sentence hung over him. Where do you struggle to maintain gratitude and prayer when life is hard or frightening? What might change in you if prayer and thanksgiving became your steady response to trouble rather than an afterthought?
7. The king said to Daniel, "May your God, whom you serve continually, deliver you!" and afterward declared that Daniel's God "works signs and wonders" and "is the living God, enduring forever" (6:16, 6:26–27). How did Daniel's faithfulness become a witness that led even a pagan king to honor the true God? What does this teach about how God uses a consistent life to display His glory to others?
8. Our lives are always preaching something to those who watch us, our families, coworkers, and neighbors. What message is your life currently sending about the God you serve? What is one way your daily conduct could more clearly point others to Christ?
9. Daniel testified, "My God sent his angel and shut the lions' mouths" (6:22), and he was delivered because "he had trusted in his God" (6:23). Yet faithful saints are not always

rescued from death in this life (Hebrews 11:35–39). How does this deliverance display God's power and faithfulness without promising that the godly will always be spared earthly harm? And how does Daniel's rescue from the den point us to the deeper deliverance God gives His people, from death itself, through the resurrection of Christ (Romans 8:31–39)?

10. Look back across the whole chapter, from the plot of envious men to the old prophet praising God in the lions' den. Name one specific way Daniel's integrity, his life of prayer, and the faithfulness of the living God are reshaping how you will live, pray, and trust God this coming week.

Digging Deeper

Reflect on these passages: Proverbs 10:9, whoever walks in integrity walks securely; Psalm 55:16–17, calling on God evening, morning, and noon; Matthew 5:14–16, letting your light shine so others glorify your Father; Romans 8:31–39, nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ; Hebrews 11:32–39, the faith of those delivered and those not delivered, all commended by God.

More studies available on ChurchOfChristBibleStudies.com