

Doing hard things well

Daniel 9:1-12

- One of the most important and essential things of being a Christian is to become a student of scripture, a person of the book, for how can I say with assuredness that I am going to spend eternity with Jesus if I'm not familiar with its promises? In **Acts 11:26** we were told that Barnabas went to the city of Tarsus to find Paul and bring him to Antioch where they would teach new believers for a whole year what it meant to be born again, and it was there that believers were first called Christians- Christ like.
- What that means is that if you and I are going to profess to be Christians to a world that is in opposition of Christianity people are going to expect that we act like a Christian, speak like a Christian, think like a Christian, love as a Christian, and in order for us to do all of this we must know what scripture says concerning all of this.

V1-12

- **V1-2** so after Daniel has experienced interpreting Nebuchadnezzar's dream, over sixty years later, to him having his own vision during the reign of Belshazzar at least a decade earlier Daniel is now going to share with us spiritual wisdom that comes from being a student of scripture. This happens during the first year of Darius rule and is the beginning of one of the most amazing and significant prophetic passages in the Bible, notice it begins with Daniel understanding and applying prophecy **V2**.
- In order for him to do this he had to read the words of God's Prophets, even mentioning the prophet Jeremiah's prophecy of Israel spending seventy years in captivity in Babylon. He knew this from the books concerning the number of years in which all of this would happen > **Jer 29:10**- its now been over seventy years and they are free to return back to Jerusalem but many of them are refusing to do so.
- **V3-7** an understanding of scripture and a knowledge of the times you live and are in should cause you to fall on your knees and go to The Lord in prayer just as Daniel does here. The more I know about God's Word, the more I realize how far we have fallen from obeying Him, and this doesn't cause me to get puffed up, or try and bring up my resume, no sir, it humbles me, and implores me to confess my sins to Him.

- Daniel is in the midst of seeing The Lord's prophecy of Babylon falling and Israel being able to return to Jerusalem, but instead of him rejoicing he is repenting. Knowing and understanding God's Word is both exhilarating and it brings and intense happiness, and amazement of understanding God's truth.
- But it also causes a shocking realization of how sinful and disobedient we are, and how man deserves complete separation from God if not for mercies which are renewed day by day. Every part of our person has been corrupted by sin > Mind, will, body, and heart, rendering humanity spiritually dead and incapable of saving ourselves, and even after salvation we are in a perpetual war against ourselves.
- So when Daniel begins to pray notice he doesn't exclude himself but in setting his face toward The Lord, fasting as he sits in sackcloth and ashes a sign of mourning, and confesses by first suing "**we**" **V5**, and second by recognizing Who he is speaking to > Great, Awesome, a Keeper of mercy and Covenant, with those who love Him and keep His Commandments, this coming from a man who's well in his eighties.
- The older you get the more you understand and realize how imperfect and sinful we are, Daniel says we have sinned, we have committed iniquity, we have done wickedly, and rebelled, departing from your precepts and judgments. We haven't listened to your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your Name to our kings, and our princes, to our fathers and all the people of the land. Righteousness belongs to You but shame belongs to us, he doesn't exclude himself from these indictments.
- **V8-12** He makes a distinction between God and Israel saying "shame of face belongs to us because we've sinned against you" but "mercy and forgiveness belong to The Lord, even after we rebelled against Him". People love to blame shift don't we, why is this happening, where is God and His love for me, and in the midst of us trying to remove all responsibility from our side as we casually skip over our part of ignoring His Word, His commandments, all the while playing the innocent.
- This is a man who understands The Holiness of God, which in this day of utter disrespect for The Lord is sorely missing in The Church. We are okay with calling Him with people referring to God as the man upstairs, our buddy who is okay with us talking to Him anyway we feel like it, the disrespect these days is shameful. Not Daniel **V11** he refers back to the cursing from Mt. Ebal in Deut 27 to emphasize the blatant disobedience of Israel and what God said would happen if they rebelled.