

Daniel: The Cost of God Honoring Behavior

Daniel 6

- **It is one thing for persecution to come in the form of pressure to do something against the will of God.**
- **It is another thing for persecution to come in the form of pressure to stop doing what is the will of God.**

- **Today we look at Daniel who faced a situation that forced him to choose between the commands of the government and the commands of God.**
- **There has been a change in leadership. Babylon has been conquered by the Persians, and Darius the Mede is the new leader.**

- **Daniel, blessed by God's favor, had done so well under Nebuchadnezzar that Darius not only kept him but also elevated his influence and power.**
- **All too often the blessings of God upon an individual or group have been cause for others to be jealous, seeking ways to discredit and remove the person or group.**

I. The Enemy Targets the Godly.

Daniel 6:1-5

¹It 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.

I. The Enemy Targets the Godly.

Daniel 6:1-5

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.”

I. The Enemy Targets the Godly.

- **Once in power Darius appoints 120 satraps, which are protectors of the kingdom.**
- **Daniel is one of three appointed to administer over the satraps.**
- **God blessed Daniel with wisdom and favor which results in Darius planning to set him over all the officials in the kingdom.**
- **This caused jealousy among the other officials, and they devised a plot against Daniel.**

I. The Enemy Targets the Godly.

Daniel 6:6-9

⁶ Then these high officials and satraps came by agreement 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.

I. The Enemy Targets the Godly.

Daniel 6:6-9

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.

I. The Enemy Targets the Godly.

- **Danial was neither corrupt nor negligent. However, he was devout in his worship of God and his faithfulness to God's law.**
- **The plot was to create a scenario that would force Daniel to choose between loyalty to the government and loyalty to God.**
- **They knew Daniel well enough to know that it was a sure thing that he would choose faithfulness to God.**

I. The Enemy Targets the Godly.

- **For you and me this begs the question, is our faith so evident that others would come to the same conclusion about us?**
- **They focused on Daniels commitment to prayer. He would pray three times a day in a manner that could be observed by others.**
- **His faithfulness was viewed as a target the officials could capitalize on.**

II. The Faithful Choose Immediate Obedience.

Daniel 6:10

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.

II. The Faithful Choose Immediate Obedience.

- Today we are pressured to remain quiet about our biblical beliefs and the gospel.**
- We are told that we are trying to force our morality on others and that we are violating the peace of others when we point out sin and declare the truth of God's Word.**
- Like Daniel, we are being threatened with punishment for staying faithful to God and His commands.**

II. The Faithful Choose Immediate Obedience.

- **Notice that Daniel refused to equivocate under the pressure of his life being threatened. This is because He feared God more than man.**
- **While man may be able to impact our earthly experiences and even our wellbeing, it is God that holds our eternity.**

II. The Faithful Choose Immediate Obedience.

Daniel 6:13

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.”

II. The Faithful Choose Immediate Obedience.

- The officials emphasized that Daniel was not truly one of them but a Jew.**
- They then painted Daniel as someone who did not respect the king.**
- This is the accusation of believers today. We are different. We don't respect the freedom of others. We don't trust the government or our leaders.**
- In essence we are dangerous to the wellbeing of our culture and our society.**

III. God Defends the Godly.

Daniel 6:16-17

¹⁶ Then 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!” 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.

III. God Defends the Godly.

- **We cannot avoid persecution. As stated last week we are not called to a life of comfort and safety.**
- **Standing our ground on biblical principles and convictions runs the risk of incurring the disdain of an ungodly world.**

III. God Defends the Godly.

Daniel 6:19-22

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?”

III. God Defends the Godly.

Daniel 6:19-22

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.”

III. God Defends the Godly.

- **Daniel is delivered because God wanted to demonstrate that Daniel was “blameless” and that he had “done no harm.”**
- **Is this the case for all believers who are falsely accused? No.**
- **Many innocent believers have died for their faith unjustly.**
- **Revelation reminds us of the martyrs at the throne of God who cry out for justice.**

III. God Defends the Godly.

- **To die for your faith is not the worst thing that could happen to you. This was Daniel's understanding.**
- **To die in your sins was far worse.**
- **In fact, to die for your faith as a martyr is to be considered an honor.**
- **Sometimes God will vindicate you in the here and now, but if not, be assured that the truth will be revealed and justice will be served.**