

## Small Group Guide: Daniel Chapter 12 - "Occupy Till He Comes"



### Opening Prayer & Icebreaker

**Icebreaker Question:** Share a moment from your past that you took for granted at the time but now look back on with appreciation. What did that experience teach you about time?

### Sermon Summary

This final study in the book of Daniel explores the prophetic vision of the end times while emphasizing how we should live in the present. Daniel receives a vision of future tribulation, resurrection, and judgment, but is told to "seal up the book" until the end. The key message: we don't know the day or hour of Christ's return, so we must "occupy till He comes" by living faithfully like Daniel did—refusing what is unclean, speaking truth when unpopular, and openly worshiping God regardless of consequences.

### Key Scripture References

- Daniel 12:1-13 (Primary passage)
- Luke 19:12-13 (Parable of the talents)

- John 5:28-29 (Resurrection to life or judgment)
- 1 Thessalonians 5:18-20 (Don't despise prophecies)
- Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21 (No one knows the day or hour)

## **Discussion Questions**

### ***Understanding the Text***

1. **\*\*What stands out to you most from Daniel chapter 12? What questions does it raise for you?**
2. **\*\*The sermon mentions that "many shall be purified, made white, and refined" (v.10). How does this connect to the age of grace we're living in now?**
3. **\*\*Why do you think God sealed up certain prophetic details from Daniel? What does this teach us about God's timing versus our desire to know everything?**

### ***]Personal Reflection***

4. **\*\*The pastor shared a personal story about holding his daughter and not knowing when those moments would end. What "fleeting moments" in your spiritual life might you be taking for granted right now?**
5. **\*\*In the parable of the talents (Luke 19), the master expected his servants to "do business" until his return. What has God given you stewardship over? How are you investing it for His kingdom?**
6. **\*\*Daniel 12:3 says "those who turn many to righteousness [will shine] like the stars forever." When was the last time you intentionally shared your faith or pointed someone toward Christ? What made it difficult or easy?**

### ***Application & Challenge***

7. \*\*The sermon highlighted three ways Daniel "occupied till He comes":\*\*

- He refused to consume what is unclean
- He spoke truth when it was unpopular
- He openly prayed and worshiped God when it was forbidden

Which of these three challenges you most in today's culture? Why?

8. \*\*The pastor said, "The darker it is, the brighter the light shines."\*\* In what specific area of your life (work, neighborhood, family, online presence) is God calling you to shine brighter right now?

9. \*\*How does understanding prophecy and the return of Christ change the way you live today?\*\* Does it create urgency, hope, fear, or something else?

### **Key Takeaways**

✓ \*\*We don't know the day or hour of Christ's return, so we must be faithful with what we've been given NOW\*\*

✓ \*\*All humanity faces a binary choice: resurrection to life through Christ or resurrection to judgment\*\*

✓ \*\*The church's mission during the "age of grace" is to be purified, to shine like stars, and to turn many to righteousness\*\*

✓ \*\*Daniel's example shows us how to live faithfully: refuse what's unclean, speak truth, and worship openly\*\*

✓ **\*\*Occupying till He comes means actively investing in kingdom work, not passively waiting\*\***

## **Practical Applications**

### **This Week's Challenge**

Choose ONE of Daniel's three examples and commit to living it out this week:

#### **\*\*Option 1: Refuse What Is Unclean\*\***

- Identify one area where you're consuming something (media, entertainment, conversation, habit) that doesn't honor God
- Take specific steps to remove or replace it with something life-giving

#### **\*\*Option 2: Speak Truth When Unpopular\*\***

- Ask God to show you one person or situation where you've remained silent about your faith
- Pray for courage and wisdom, then have that conversation this week

#### **\*\*Option 3: Openly Worship God\*\***

- Choose one public setting where you'll be more visible about your faith (prayer before a meal in public, worship music in your car, Bible on your desk, etc.)
- Don't be obnoxious, but don't hide your faith either

## **Group Accountability**

- Share which option you chose with at least one other group member
- Check in with each other before next week's meeting

## **Prayer Focus**

**\*\*Pray together for:\*\***

- Courage to live like Daniel in an increasingly hostile culture
- Wisdom to invest our time and talents for eternal purposes
- Hearts that long for Christ's return while faithfully serving in the present
- The lost in our community who need to hear about resurrection to life through Jesus
- Boldness for the global church facing persecution

**\*\*Memory Verse for the Week:\*\***

"Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament, and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever." - Daniel 12:3

## **Closing Thought**

"Occupy till He comes" isn't passive waiting—it's active faithfulness. Like Daniel, we're called to live with conviction, speak with courage, and worship with boldness, regardless of the cost. We don't know when Christ will return, but we know what we're called to do until He does.

**\*\*Final Question:\*\***

What would change in your life if you truly believed Jesus could return at any moment?

## 5-Day Devotional: Standing Firm Until He Comes



### **Day 1: Refusing What Is Unclean**

**Reading:** Daniel 1:8-16

#### **Devotional:**

Daniel's refusal to consume the king's meat was more than dietary preference—it was a declaration of allegiance. In a foreign land offering every comfort and pleasure, Daniel chose holiness over convenience. Today, the world presents countless "choice meats"—entertainment, philosophies, relationships, and pursuits that compromise our witness. Like Daniel, we face a daily decision: will we consume what aligns with God's standards or what satisfies temporary appetites? This isn't legalism; it's love-driven obedience. Daniel's commitment didn't diminish him—God blessed his faithfulness with wisdom and favor. What "unclean" things are you consuming that dull your spiritual sensitivity? Ask God for courage to refuse what dishonors Him, trusting that His provision exceeds the world's offerings.

## **Day 2: Speaking Truth When It's Unpopular**

**Reading:** Daniel 5:17-28

### **Devotional:**

When summoned before King Belshazzar, Daniel could have softened his message or sought royal favor. Instead, he spoke devastating truth to power: "Your kingdom is finished." Speaking truth when it's unpopular requires both courage and love—courage to risk rejection, love to care more about souls than approval. Our culture increasingly labels biblical truth as offensive, yet silence is not kindness; it's abandonment. Jesus spoke hard truths wrapped in compassion. We're called to do likewise—not with arrogance or harshness, but with conviction and grace. The question isn't whether people will like our message, but whether we'll be faithful messengers. Who needs to hear truth from you today? Pray for boldness tempered with gentleness.

## **Day 3: Worshiping Openly Despite Opposition**

**Reading:** Daniel 6:6-10

### **Devotional:**

Daniel knew the decree. Pray to anyone but the king, and face the lions. Yet he opened his windows and prayed as always—publicly, consistently, faithfully. His worship wasn't performative rebellion; it was unwavering devotion. When culture forbids Christian expression, will we hide our faith or display it? Daniel's example challenges our comfort-seeking hearts. He didn't pray secretly to stay safe; he prayed openly because God deserved his worship regardless of consequences. Today, opposition may not mean lions, but it might mean social ostracism, professional costs, or family tension. Daniel teaches us that worship isn't circumstantial—it's foundational. How visible is your faith? Are you willing to let others see your devotion, even when it's costly?

## **Day 4: Living in Light of Eternity**

**Reading:** Daniel 12:1-3; John 5:28-29

### **Devotional:**

Daniel received stunning prophecies about the end times, yet God's final instruction was simple: "Go your way." Don't obsess over timelines—occupy faithfully. The promise of resurrection should transform how we live today. Some will awaken to eternal life, others to judgment. This binary reality demands we examine where we've placed our trust. Our good intentions, moral efforts, and religious activities cannot save us—only Christ's righteousness covers our sin. But for those in Christ, eternity changes everything. Temporary discomfort becomes bearable. Sacrifice becomes purposeful. Persecution becomes privilege. We're not merely surviving until Jesus returns; we're investing in an eternal kingdom. What would change in your daily life if you truly believed resurrection awaits?

## **Day 5: Occupying Until He Comes**

**Reading:** Luke 19:11-27

### **Devotional:**

Jesus' parable of the talents answers our uncertainty about His return: occupy till I come. We don't need to know the day or hour; we need to be faithful with what He's given us. The servant who buried his talent wasn't punished for losing it but for doing nothing with it. Occupation isn't passive waiting—it's active investment. God has given you time, gifts, relationships, resources, and influence. How are you multiplying them for His kingdom? Are you making disciples, loving neighbors, serving sacrificially, and shining light in darkness? Like Daniel, who faithfully served through multiple kingdoms, we're called to consistent obedience regardless of cultural climate. The King is returning. Will He find you busy about His business or buried in complacency?