

Daniel 6:1-5, 25-28
In the World But Not of It – Part Two

WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA?

Main Idea of the Sermon: We are citizens of heaven AND YET called to be Present, Faithful, and Salt and Light in this world.

STRUCTURE/OUTLINE OF THE SERMON

- I. Introduction
- II. Covenant vs. Common Grace
- III. Getting a Grip
 - A. The church is called to holiness.
 - B. The church is called to mission.
 - C. The church is called to good timing.
 - D. The church is called to suffering and weakness.
 - E. The church will be better for America if we recognize it as part of the kingdoms of this world, rather than a subdivision of the church or a favorite stepchild of God.
- IV. The Text: Daniel
 - A. Faithful
 - B. Present
 - C. Salt and Light
 - D. Sum: Daniels commitment to reality.
- V. Freedom and Liberty for All
- VI. Some Final Thoughts

GOSPEL CENTRALITY

Following God reveals the gospel. The gospel is the apex of the story of Scripture – it is the good news of the cross, resurrection, and ascended glory of Christ. Blurring the line between the church (and our story) and the nation (and its story) distorts the gospel; it gets in the way of the kingdom; it hides the glory of God.

KEY WORDS/THEMES

1. **Covenant** – “A covenant, in its normal sense, is an elected, as opposed to natural, relationship of obligation under oath” (G. Hugenberger). God’s covenant is clearly directed to specific people in the Bible – creation, Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses,

Israel, David, JESUS, and through Jesus to the Church. There is no emphasis on a special covenant given to any nation state, especially a modern nation state.

2. **Common Grace** – “Common grace, as an expression of the goodness of God, is every favor, falling short of salvation, which this undeserving and sin-cursed world enjoys at the hand of God; this includes the delay of wrath, the mitigation of our sin-natures, natural events that lead to prosperity, and all gifts that humans use and enjoy naturally” (S. Storms).
3. **Principled Pluralism** – Christians should take a missionary posture in the public square, focusing on the message of the gospel and demonstrating its relevance as public truth. In order to do so, we must gain a deep understanding of our cultural context so we can proclaim the gospel and work out its implications in a manner faithful to Scripture and meaningful in the cultural context. “The gospel is only known to be true when it is experienced as the liberating power that it is. Evangelization is the antidote to domestication. The power of the gospel as liberating truth, as release from illusion and alienation, as light out of the darkness and confusion, is known when people are receiving it as news” (L. Newbigin).
4. **Subsidiarity** – This tenet holds that nothing should be done by a larger and more complex organization which can be done as well by a smaller and simpler organization. In other words, any activity which can be performed by a more decentralized entity should be.

KNOWING AND BEING KNOWN

- As we consider freedom and liberty, how might we better emphasize using those two things to love our city well, instead of merely focusing on our internal doctrinal purity?
- What are some bespoke ministries you can think of right now that your city, neighborhood, or workplace needs?
- What things or ideas have your gaze instead of God?

RESPONDING IN PRAYER

- Pray for our church – that we would work for gospel transformation in our communities by being present, faithful, and salt and light.
- Pray for those among your family, friends, and community who have not put their trust in Jesus – that they would respond to the gospel and find their identity in Christ.