BUILT DIFFERENT – Week 2

When Conviction Costs You, Faithfulness When Following God Isn't Easy

Main Scripture: Daniel 6:1–28

Key Verse: Daniel 6:10
Daniel's story reminds us that living a holy life doesn't mean we will avoid difficult circumstances. It means we remain faithful to God regardless of what circumstances come our way.

Introduction: What Is Your Faith Worth?

We live in a world where people are constantly pressured to compromise.
Compromise your convictions to get ahead. Compromise your values to fit in. Compromise your beliefs to avoid criticism. Compromise your relationship with God to make life easier.

The problem is that compromise rarely happens all at once. It usually begins with small decisions that slowly move us away from what we know is right.

Daniel understood what it meant to live in a culture that didn't honor God. He had been taken from his homeland, placed in a foreign government, and surrounded by people who worshiped other gods.

Yet Daniel never allowed his surroundings to determine his convictions.
In Daniel 1, we discovered that Daniel decided not to compromise. In Daniel 6, we discover what happened when that decision became costly.
Daniel had enemies who wanted to destroy him.

They couldn't find anything wrong with his work, his leadership, or his character. So they decided to attack the one thing they knew Daniel would never compromise: his relationship with God.

They convinced King Darius to issue a decree that nobody could pray to any god or person except the king for thirty days. Anyone who disobeyed would be thrown into a den of lions.

Daniel knew about the decree. He knew the consequences. But he continued doing what he had always done. Daniel teaches us that conviction isn't proven when obedience is convenient.

Conviction is proven when obedience becomes costly.
Let's look at five lessons from Daniel's life.

1. Your Character Should Speak Before Your Mouth Does

Daniel 6:1–5

Before Daniel ever faced the lions' den, he had already established a reputation.

The king had appointed Daniel to a position of great authority. Daniel distinguished himself because of his exceptional qualities. The other officials became jealous and began looking for something they could use against him.

But notice what they discovered.

They couldn't find corruption, dishonesty, or negligence in Daniel's life.
Daniel's enemies had to admit that the only way they could find fault with him was to make his faithfulness to God the issue. Think about that.

They examined his professional life. They examined his personal life. They examined his leadership.
They examined his decisions.
They couldn't find anything.

Daniel's character was so consistent that his enemies couldn't find a weakness to exploit.

Matthew 5:16 – Jesus teaches that our light should shine before others so they see our good works and glorify our Father in heaven.
Our lives should point people toward Jesus. We don't live holy lives to impress people; we live holy lives so people can see the difference Christ makes.

Colossians 3:23–24 – Whatever we do, we should work at it wholeheartedly as serving the Lord rather than people.
Daniel understood that his work was ultimately an act of service to God. His faithfulness wasn't limited to prayer or worship. It showed up in his everyday responsibilities.

What would people discover if they examined your life?
Would they see honesty? Would they see integrity? Would they see someone who keeps their word? Would they see someone who treats others with respect?

We cannot live one way on Sunday and another way Monday through Saturday.

Holiness is not just what happens at an altar. Holiness is reflected in how we live every day.

2. Don't Change Your Devotion Because Your Circumstances Change

Daniel 6:6–10

The officials convinced King Darius to sign a law that prohibited anyone from praying to another god or person for thirty days.
When Daniel learned about the decree, he faced a decision.

Would he stop praying? Would he hide his faith?
Would he compromise his convictions to protect his position?

Daniel 6:10 tells us that Daniel went home, opened his windows toward Jerusalem, and prayed three times a day, just as he had done before.
I love that last phrase: "Just as he had done before."

Daniel didn't suddenly become a man of prayer when trouble arrived. He was already a man of prayer. His devotion wasn't dependent on his circumstances.

When life was good, he prayed. When life was difficult, he prayed. When prayer was accepted, he prayed. When prayer became dangerous, he prayed.

Daniel's prayer life was not determined by his circumstances; it was established by his convictions.

1 Thessalonians 5:17 – Scripture instructs us to pray continually.
Prayer is not supposed to be something we turn to only when we have a problem. It is supposed to be part of our daily relationship with God.

Psalm 119:11 – The psalmist declares that he has hidden God's Word in his heart so that he might not sin against Him.
We build spiritual strength before the battle arrives. God's Word and prayer help establish convictions that will hold us steady when pressure comes.

3. Obedience Doesn't Guarantee an Easy Outcome

Daniel 6:11–17

Daniel's enemies knew exactly where to find him. They found him praying and immediately reported him to the king.
King Darius was distressed. He realized that he had been manipulated into signing a law that would put Daniel's life in danger.
The king tried everything he could to rescue Daniel, but the law could not be changed.

Daniel was thrown into the lions' den. Here is something we need to understand: Daniel did the right thing, but he still experienced a difficult consequence. Sometimes we mistakenly believe that if we are faithful to God, everything will work out the way we want.

We think obedience should guarantee comfort. We think faithfulness should guarantee success. We think doing God's will should keep us from difficult situations.
But Daniel's story reminds us that obedience doesn't always make life easier. Sometimes doing what is right will put you in a difficult position.

2 Timothy 3:12 – Scripture teaches that everyone who desires to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will face persecution.
Following Jesus does not guarantee that everyone will agree with us or approve of our decisions.

Acts 5:29 – Peter and the apostles declared that they must obey God rather than human beings.
There are moments when we must decide whose approval matters most. Daniel understood that honoring God was more important than protecting his position.

4. God Is Faithful Even When the Outcome Is Uncertain

Daniel 6:18–23

King Darius spent the night fasting. He couldn't sleep because he was concerned about Daniel. Early the next morning, the king hurried to the lions' den and called out to Daniel.

He asked whether Daniel's God had been able to rescue him.
Daniel answered that God had sent His angel and shut the mouths of the lions.

Daniel was alive!

Notice something important: Daniel didn't escape the lions' den before the danger arrived. God met him in the middle of it. Sometimes God delivers us from the fire. Sometimes He walks with us through the fire.
Sometimes God removes the obstacle. Sometimes He gives us strength to face it.

Daniel's deliverance reminds us that God's power is greater than the circumstances surrounding us.

Hebrews 11:33–38 – This passage describes people who experienced incredible deliverance through faith, but it also describes faithful people who endured suffering and persecution.

This is important because faith does not always produce the same earthly outcome. Some were delivered from danger; others remained faithful through suffering.

Romans 8:38–39 – Paul declares that nothing in all creation can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. Our confidence is not that life will always go the way we want. Our confidence is that nothing can separate us from God's love.

5. Your Faithfulness Can Become Someone Else's Testimony

Daniel 6:24–28

Daniel's deliverance did more than save his own life. It became a testimony to an entire kingdom. King Darius issued a declaration that people throughout his kingdom should honor and respect the God of Daniel.

Think about what happened.
Daniel's private devotion became public testimony. Daniel's personal conviction became a national declaration. Daniel's faithfulness helped someone else recognize the power of God.
Daniel never knew how far his faithfulness would reach.
He simply decided that he would remain faithful to God.

Philippians 2:14–16 – Paul calls believers to live in a way that shines like stars in the world, holding firmly to the word of life.
Our lives should stand out in a world that often operates differently from the values of God's Kingdom.

1 Peter 2:12 – Peter encourages believers to live such good lives among unbelievers that others may see their good deeds and glorify God.
People are watching how we respond to pressure, how we treat others, and whether our faith is genuine.

You may never know how many people are watching your faithfulness.

Your children are watching. Your grandchildren are watching. Your coworkers are watching. Your neighbors are watching.

The way you live today may influence someone's decision to follow Jesus tomorrow.
Don't underestimate what God can do through one person who refuses to compromise.

Conclusion: Built Different

Daniel was not different because he was stronger, smarter, or more talented than everyone around him.

He was different because he belonged to God.
He lived in Babylon, but Babylon did not live in him.
He worked in a culture that didn't honor God, but he refused to surrender his convictions.
He faced opposition, but he continued praying.
He faced the lions, but he never abandoned his faith.
And through it all, God remained faithful.

Church, we are living in a world that will constantly pressure us to compromise.

The question is not whether we will face pressure. The question is what we will do when that pressure comes.
Will we stand? Will we remain faithful? Will we continue to live according to God's Word?
We are not called to be different simply for the sake of being different. We are called to be holy because we belong to a holy God.
When culture changes, we will stand on His Word. When compromise becomes convenient, we will choose obedience. When following Jesus becomes costly, we will remain faithful.

Not because we are strong enough on our own, but because the Holy Spirit empowers us to live the life God has called us to live.
We are His people. We are set apart. We are BUILT DIFFERENT.

1 Thessalonians 5:23–24 – Paul prays that God would sanctify believers completely, reminding them that the One who calls them is faithful and will do it.

This is the heart of holiness. God desires to do more than change our outward behavior. He wants to transform our hearts through the power of the Holy Spirit.

For those who have never surrendered their lives to Christ, today is the day of salvation. For those who are saved but have allowed compromise into their lives, today is a day of renewed surrender.

For those seeking entire sanctification, today is an opportunity to present yourself completely to God and trust Him to sanctify you wholly.