

Uncommon: Different on Purpose

Uncommon Courage

Daniel 6:1-23

When was the last time you displayed courage? Maybe a terrifying situation arose, and you had to overcome it (standing up to a bully, telling that girl how you feel, taking a stand for righteousness at work, cliff jumping in California)? In the Bible, the OT word for courage is *AMATS* and the NT is *THARROS* which means *to have confidence and firmness of purpose in danger or testing*. It carries the idea of strength, boldness, and alertness. It's all over the Bible.

“Wait for the LORD; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the LORD!” Psalms 27:14

“So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him.” 2 Cor 5:6-9

Main Idea: Uncommon Courage Demonstrates a Total Trust in God

“It 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. 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.’ 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. 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. 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. 11 Then these men came by agreement and found Daniel making a petition and plea before his God. 12 Then they came near and said before the king, concerning the injunction, ‘O king! Did you not sign an injunction, that anyone who makes a petition to any god or man within thirty days except to you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions?’ The king answered and said,

‘The thing stands fast, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be revoked.’ 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.’ 14 Then the king, when he heard these words, was much distressed and set his mind to deliver Daniel. And he labored till the sun went down to rescue him. 15 Then these men came by agreement to the king and said to the king, ‘Know, O king, that it is a law of the Medes and Persians that no injunction or ordinance that the king establishes can be changed.’ 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. 18 Then the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; no diversions were brought to him, and sleep fled from him. 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?’ 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.’ 23 Then the king was exceedingly glad, and commanded that Daniel be taken up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no kind of harm was found on him, because he had trusted in his God.” Daniel 6:1-23

I. Uncommon Courage is to be IN the World, Not OF the World

Daniel was in his 80's by the time this event takes place. He was born in Judah, but when he was 15, King Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians invaded his country and arrested him along with many other young, strong, smart men to have them indoctrinated into Babylonian culture and lifestyles (part of conquering). There he lived, worked, and served for some 70 years as an exile. During this time, the Babylonian Empire fell to the Medo-Persian Empire and Daniel adjusted to it.

King Nebuchadnezzar: *“Then the king gave Daniel high honors and many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon and chief prefect over all the wise men of Babylon.” Daniel 2:48*

King Darius: *“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.” Daniel 6:3*

How was Daniel so useful and celebrated by two different kings/empires? It's because he ultimately served another king who held his primary allegiance! Being courageous to walk with the Lord will objectively make you a better man/woman, spouse, parent, employee, citizen, friend, and neighbor! So much so, that others may become jealous and desire to take you down.

“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. 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.' " **Daniel 6:4-5**

Daniel hadn't done anything wrong. He was honest, loyal, peaceful, and never lied. No matter how hard they looked, they couldn't find any real fault in him. In the end, the only thing they could use against him was his faith, so they turned his devotion into something they treated like a crime.

Main Idea: Uncommon Courage Demonstrates a Total Trust in God

II. Uncommon Courage Sticks with Biblical Convictions

Whether it was legal or illegal, Daniel was going to walk with God! He could have compromised to play along with this "the King is God for a Month" plan, but that wasn't going to happen as he was firmly fixed in his convictions.

"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." **Daniel 6:10**

"They will perish, but you will remain; they will all wear out like a garment. You will change them like a robe, and they will pass away, but you are the same, and your years have no end." **Psalms 102:26-27**

The world we live in will always test whether we will live by our convictions, or will we compromise them to fit in or to gain a personal advantage? A good metric for Biblical convictions is always being willing to do/say what the Bible commands and always respectfully refusing to say/do what the Bible prohibits regardless of the consequences. And, embracing both convictions in love above all!!!

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III. Uncommon Courage Trusts in God through the Trials of Life

Daniel was arrested and thrown into the lion's den. He did not apologize for praying or beg for his life. In fact, we do not hear anything from Daniel's mouth until after he is delivered from the lion's den the next morning. Listen to his testimony!

"Then Daniel said to the king, 'O king, live forever! 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.'" **Daniel 6:21-22**

Thankfully we aren't in danger of the lion's den for praying, but we face trials in our own lives as well. It simply isn't true that following Jesus makes you immune to pain, suffering, persecution, and opposition. The truth is the opposite...

"I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world." **John 16:33**

"Be strong and courageous. Do not fear or be in dread of them, for it is the LORD your God who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you." **Deut 31:6**

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As always, Daniel is not the hero of Uncommon Courage because Daniel is not the hero of the Bible. Daniel points to the hero by being a foreshadowing of him! Did you notice any resemblances to the story of Daniel to Jesus?

Both Daniel & Jesus:

- Were blameless, but falsely accused, victims of deceit and corruption.
- Placed in a hole. A stone covered the entry along with a government seal.
- Were feared dead and gone but were alive and well early one morning.

"Just as Daniel was sealed in the lion's den, so also Christ was sealed in the tomb, and this was the petty human ruler's way to seal the fate of both these great servants of the Lord. And in both cases, that human sealing led to greater glory for God, when he brought Daniel up out of the pit and He raised Christ up out of the tomb."

Ligon Duncan

I don't know what you are facing, that is an opportunity to Uncommon Courage, but I can promise you that Jesus can give it to you the same way he provided it for Daniel. Because he died for your sins and rose again, you can totally trust in Him!

Sources and Further Reading Opportunities

- **CSB Study Bible** – Trevin Wax, Ed. (2017)
- **Exalting Jesus in Daniel** – Danny Akin (2017)
- **Tony Evans Study Bible** – Tony Evans (2019)
- **Spurgeon Study Bible** – Charles Haddon Spurgeon (2017)
- **Bible Exposition Commentary** – Warren Wiersbe (1996)
- **Jesus in the Lion's Den?** – Matt Smethurst (2013)