

Harris Creek Baptist Church
Trent Horner
Series: BC
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Daniel and the Lion's Den
Daniel 6 NIV

It is good to be with you guys today! Hey, I've got a question right out of the gate this morning for all of us. Hey, how many people in the room this morning love animals? Raise your hand high if you love animals. All right, okay, put them down. Okay, more specifically, how many people here are pet lovers, so you don't just love animals but you're going to have a pet at your house for the rest of the rest of the rest? Okay, you can put your hands down.

Something you should know about to me as we get to know each other this morning just for a brief amount of time is that I am a lover of most animals, okay, I really like animals, but I am not a bird guy. I don't like birds. I'm just a little unclear as to where my fear of birds has come from, but my mom hated birds growing up, I think I got it from her. But I'm not a fan of those winged creatures, right? They can descend on you from above. They've got wings; they've got beaks; they've got claws; that feels like they've always got the upper hand. I am out on birds, all right? I've had a few traumatic experiences in my life with birds. I don't have time to get into those today, but what's interesting about being on our staff and being not a huge fan of birds, is that my friend, many of us know JP, he is a bird guy, all right? And he's just not a bird guy but their family is a bird family. And so, if you ever have the opportunity to go and hang out at the Pokluda house, your head needs to be on a swivel, because there might be birds flying around. They don't necessarily keep them in cages. Presley might have one on her shoulder when she walks out of her room. They might be teaching them new words or feeding them things. They love birds at the Pokluda house, but man, I am a hard out on birds.

But I will tell you this, I love dogs. I have grown up my entire life with a dog in the house. My wife and I and our three kids, we've had the pleasure of having a dog, a yellow lab named Rayleigh for about the last 11 years. She's an unbelievable dog. There she is right there (Rayleigh's picture on the screen). She loves to swim. If there's water, she's getting in it. Unfortunately, in about the past month, Rayleigh passed away. So, we lost Rayleigh recently which was super sad. We're still reeling from that a little bit. But again, Rayleigh was an unbelievably good dog. She was a well-trained dog. She loved to be in the water. If you had a ball, okay, she's chasing the ball and bringing it back and putting it at your feet. And I'm telling you, you're going to stop before she does, right? Your arm's going to fall off before she stops going to get that ball.

A lot of things to describe her but the one that stands out above them all is that she was faithful. She was a faithful dog, And when I say that, what I mean is that she was going to be where we knew she was going to be. There was about four places in our house where she was going to be at any given time. And she was reliable, you know, a lot of dogs run off when you leave them

outside, like Rayleigh's waiting for you at the back door when you leave her out because she knows she's not going to survive in the wild, right? Like she's not going to make it, but she was a faithful dog.

And this morning, we're going to open God's word and read together the story of a man whose life was marked by faithfulness. He was faithful, and so this morning we're going to take a look at a story that many of us are familiar with, and it's the story of Daniel in the Lion's Den. It's a story we all are familiar with. And so, we're continuing this morning in our series called BC, which stands for Before Christ, which is this period of time before Jesus's earthly ministry. We are going to look at the story of Daniel and the Lion's Den this morning. And as we open to Daniel Chapter 6, you can turn there in your Bibles, you can turn there on your phones, you guys at home as well, but as we turn there, I'm going to tell you where we're headed this morning. We're going to look at how faithfulness stands out, about how faithfulness stands firm, and ultimately how God's faithfulness stands forever.

And so again, we're going to be in Daniel Chapter 6, and so I'm going to give you a little bit of context for what's happening at this time in the Old Testament. So we're going to be looking at a time period between 600 and 500 BC, so some 500 to 600 years before Christ walked the earth, before Jesus hit the scene. And God's people were in captivity, so God's people were living in underneath the yoke of slavery, underneath the kingdom of Babylon. And so, again, a life of slavery, as you might imagine, was difficult, and so they had a lot of hardships as God's people. But Daniel, along with three of his friends who are famous in a story earlier in the book of Daniel that you'll know is Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, these four guys were kind of recruited to be a part of the Babylonian government from a very young age. And were set aside, and we'll see how he begins to stand out because of his exceptional qualities and the amazing job he did in his role in this foreign government. One thing you should know is that Daniel is in his 70s and 80s during this time. We're not sure of his specific age, but he's older in years, right? I tend to picture Daniel as this young guy in the story but he's, he's advanced in his years some. And then just before our story this morning, in Daniel Chapter 6, there's a transition in government. And so, King Belshazzar is the former King of Babylon, and King Darius the Mede takes over.

So, I'm going to begin in verse 1 of Daniel Chapter 6. Here we go, Verses 1 and 2.

1 It pleased Darius to appoint 120 satraps to rule throughout the kingdom, 2 with three administrators over them, one of whom was Daniel. The satraps were made accountable to them so that the king might not suffer loss.

And so, in the opening verses of Daniel Chapter 6 we see kind of the way the government is set up. And so satrap is probably a term you're unfamiliar with, I was unfamiliar with it. But think, there was 120 provinces in the Kingdom of Babylon. So, 120 different portions of land with one official over each of those provinces, and each one of those 120 officials is a satrap, right? So, think, mayor; that's a pretty comparable thing for us now. And so then over those 120 mayors if you will there are three administrators, and so three vice president level government officials, and one of those is Daniel. And so that should stick out to us for two reasons. One, I kind of already mentioned, this is a foreign government. And so, for a foreigner, someone who's not one

of the people of this day to rise in government to the rank of a vice president is very, out of the ordinary. And we're going to see why in the story this morning. And second thing is, he's between 70 and 80. And so as you might imagine, over that amount of time, there's been some transition in government in this area. So for someone who's a foreigner to withstand the test of transitions in government, to stay at this level of government is significant. And so we're going to keep reading here. In verses 3 through 5 it says,

3 Now Daniel so distinguished himself among the administrators and the satraps by his exceptional qualities that the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom. 4 At this, the administrators and the satraps tried to find grounds for charges against Daniel in his conduct of government affairs, but they were unable to do so. They could find no corruption in him, because he was trustworthy and neither corrupt nor negligent. 5 Finally these men said, "We will never find any basis for charges against this man Daniel unless it has something to do with the law of his God."

And so what we see about Daniel in this opening passage is that he was a man of faithfulness. And so my first point this morning is that

1. Faithfulness stands out.

Faithfulness stands out, we see that about Daniel. He has developed this track record of faithfulness in his work. And it is of devotion to God where God has honored that and allowed him to move up in what he does. Daniel is loyal; he's consistent, when he says he's going to do something, he does it. Daniel's life is marked by faithfulness. In the book of Colossians, the third chapter, verse 23, it says **"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters," (Colossians 3:23)**. And we see Daniel really exemplify this verse in his life. He's faithful, he's consistent, and he's excellent in what he does.

And it goes on to say that he wasn't just faithful, but they couldn't find any charges against him. And what a thing to be said about us, right? If we could be a people, that if a hundred people went to dig up things on us, what would they find if we traded places with Daniel, right? If we traded places, you or I and we had 100 people going to work to try and dig up things on us, what would they find? You see, we get an incredible example from Daniel, of what it looks like to live in the light. But what would they find on us if this was us in the story? If people were to go and check our bank statements, go and check our text threads, go and be a fly on the wall at our office at work or at home or when we're with the kids all day, or our internet search history. What would they find?

Friends, this is one of my favorite things about working on staff at Harris Creek is that we place this high value on authenticity. What that means is we want to be people that live out in front, that we don't have anything to hide. That we don't have any ghosts in the closet, that we live in community with one another. We confess our sins to one another. We ask for forgiveness. We're reconciled to one another, and we keep living right. We don't want to be people that are a slave to our past, and we want to cover things up and hide things about ourselves. We get a great example early on in this story about Daniel in the way that he is a person who will live in the light. In 1 John 1:7 it says, **"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have**

fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.” When we are walking in step with God, we have nowhere to hide. We can be people that live out in front. We don’t have anything to fear because of our faith in Jesus.

The last verse says here that the only thing they could find on Daniel was to use his faithfulness against him. There was nothing that they could do, no scheme that they could create for anything in Daniel’s past. And so, they have to use the thing that they know about Daniel, which is that he’s going to be faithful to God and find a way to use that against him, right? So Daniel’s faithfulness, his relationship with God is the only thing that they can use to entrap him.

We lack the ability to be faithful on our own, and it’s because of our relationship with God that we have the ability to be faithful. Verses six through nine, we’re going to keep reading, it says,

6 So these administrators and satraps went as a group to the king and said: “May King Darius live forever! 7 The royal administrators, prefects, satraps, advisers and governors have all agreed that the king should issue an edict and enforce the decree that anyone who prays to any god or human being during the next thirty days, except to you, Your Majesty, shall be thrown into the lions’ den. 8 Now, Your Majesty, issue the decree and put it in writing so that it cannot be altered—in accordance with the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed.” 9 So King Darius put the decree in writing.

So we see what they come up with. They basically go to the king and say, hey, king, your majesty. They try to puff him up. And they say, you should put a law into place that says it should be illegal for any person to pray to any other God or any other person for the next 30 days. So, he signs it into writing. One thing to take note of, and I think I see this in my life some, is that when we’re being deceived, or we’re being led in the wrong way, often times we want to speed up that decision making process. We want people to process something quickly so that we can get our way. And we see that, right? We see that in the story a little bit. As they’re trying to rush this king through a decision, and that’s going to come back to bite him in a minute, and we will see that.

Verses 10 through 12, it says that,

10 Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before. 11 Then these men went as a group and found Daniel praying and asking God for help. 12 So they went to the king and spoke to him about his royal decree: “Did you not publish a decree that during the next thirty days anyone who prays to any god or human being except to you, Your Majesty, would be thrown into the lions’ den?” The king answered, “The decree stands—in accordance with the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed.”

I got a question for you this morning, what do you do, when things don’t go your way? You know what happens in your life when the steering wheel gets jerked or when what you were hoping to happen doesn’t happen or life turns out a way different than what you expected. What

happens to the status of your heart? What happens in your mind? Where does your mind begin to race? What we see about Daniel this morning is that his faithfulness stands firm.

2. Faithfulness stands firm.

That's my second point this morning, that faithfulness stands firm. Faithfulness stands firm when we're squeezed, when we're pressed in from the sides. When things don't go the way we thought they would, that's where we really get to learn a lot about someone's faith, about our faith. We can say a lot about where our faith resides and where it stands, and yet when we're squeezed, and when we're oppressed, we'll find out. And so again, point number two, faithfulness stands firm.

I want to tell you guys an area of my life where I lack a track record of faithfulness. So if I were to describe to you over the course of the past 10 years the amount of gadgets, strategies, apps, or things to try and stay in shape, it would be laughable. I'm convinced that it's the new thing that's going to be the thing that cures this for me. Like I am so undisciplined when it comes to working out and staying in shape. I'm going to give you a brief list of the things I've tried, and this is just a brief list, it's much longer than this. I've tried CrossFit, Camp Gladiator, running in our neighborhood, half marathon training, Rush Cycle, a Peloton, a friend's home gym, another gym, a fitness app, another fitness app. Like I've tried tons of things in regards to trying to stay in shape, and yet I am so undisciplined. And the thing that's more frustrating than that is my wife Whitney, who some of you know is perhaps the most disciplined person in my life specifically as it relates to staying in shape; my wife is hyper-disciplined. About five days a week you can count on her getting up before any of me or our three kids are awake, she's going to go get in a rigorous workout. She's going to come home. She's going to shower. She's going to spend some time with Jesus, and then she's going to be ready to attack her day because she's disciplined right? She's developed a habit of discipline. She's got a track record of faithfulness in this area.

And so I begin to wonder what is the difference between her and I, like why is she disciplined and why am I not? And I think underneath that, there's somewhere my wife has developed a belief, she has a belief that staying in shape, it matters, right? That ultimately, it's going to have an effect on the longevity of her life and the health at which she is able to live. In her former life, she was a nurse, and so I'm certain a lot of that comes in there. But man, my wife is disciplined, and I am not. In my role as Community Pastor here at Harris Creek, as I shepherd and watch over the flock here, the one thing that I know is that we are all the same. We all lack faithfulness, right? We lack the ability to be faithful on our own. You see in community, which is the area that I spend most of my time on, that's the majority of my job. In community, we struggle to even meet consistently. We struggle to meet once a week in community together. We struggle to practice the one another's of scripture. We struggle to practice what it says in James 5:16 "to confess our sins to one another." We lack faithfulness in community, we lack faithfulness in our marriages, we lack faithfulness to our spouse, and our devotion to our spouse, and we lack the faithfulness in our marriages to root out conflict and sin where it exists and to be reconciled in our marriages. We lack faithfulness in our singleness, we lack faithfulness to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus and our hearts are going from this place to that searching for fulfillment when we know it's not going to satisfy us. As a people right here at Harris Creek, and you at home, we know that we are generally an unfaithful people, and while we miss the mark, man the good news is the story's not over, right?

And so let's keep reading this story together. The very beginning of verse 10 that I just read, I think is honestly where this story in some ways hinges, we could spend our whole morning on verse 10. This is what it says "Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published", there's a lot that can happen after those three dots. This story could have gone a very different way, and in theory, we look at this story and we think Daniel had a decision to make, right? He sees that this decree is put into place, and so now he's got a decision to make. And so we're going to read and see what Daniel did, but I always think it's interesting what did Daniel not do? Like what are the things he could have done that he didn't do in that moment?

Here's a few things that I thought about. You know Daniel could have just continued to pray and be faithful to God and just closed his windows and locked his door so no one would know about it, right? If no one knows that he's praying, he's in good shape because no one would have been able to accuse him, right? So, he could have closed the windows and the doors. No one would have known. He could have said: "hey God, you know I've been faithful to you my entire life for as long as I can remember. I have three times a day prayed faithfully to you, right? You can count on me. So, I'm pretty useful to you, right, like there's a lot that you've done through me, and so it's not going to do you any good or me any good to be thrown into that lions den, and so I'm just going to take a break from praying for 30 days, and I'll see you on day 31. And we'll keep on marching down the road." He didn't do that. You know another thing he could have done is he could have gone to the king and he could have said, "hey king, here's the deal, I've got a lot of PTO saved up in my PTO bank, and so me and my family, we're going to take a vacation to the dead sea and we'll be back in 30 days, right, and we'll keep on trucking." He didn't do that either. What did Daniel do?

He was faithful. It says he does the thing he had always done. Daniel was the person that he always was, he was faithful. You know, there wasn't really a decision to be made. What I'm convinced of is that Daniel had made the decision about what he was going to do when his faith was tested years ago, when he placed his faith and his hope and his trust in his God. In that moment, he didn't have to go and sweat through a decision and think through, man what am I going to do? And come up with all these strategies. Daniel knew he was going to be faithful to God no matter what came his way. And so, I wrestled with that. What would I have done, what option would I have chosen? What would you have done, what would you have done if your faith was made illegal? If it was illegal for you to pray, and you knew that the punishment for praying was to be thrown into a den of lions, what would you have done? I don't know how much time you spent thinking about lions recently. I don't know how often you go to the zoo or if you watch videos of lions on YouTube, but I'm telling you right now, lions eat people. They are not friendly. And so, as I was preparing for this message, I was like, man, I need to be reminded about lions. Like it's been a minute since I've been to the zoo or I've been close to a lion. And so, let's watch this quick video clip to refresh our minds.

Like what – like are you kidding me? Okay real talk, as I was looking for videos of lions, like I don't remember lions sounding like that. It's almost like he had something stuck like he was trying to get it out. But listen, all the videos of lions were like that, like they turn into velociraptors or something, right? It's insane. Can you imagine? So it wasn't a den with a lion. It was the den of lions. Like there's many lions, okay, and so this wasn't like a new type of

punishment. There were folks that had gone to the den of lions and obviously it had not turned out well many times before this, and so Daniel was acutely aware of what that fate was going to look like if he was still faithful. He knew that was possible. And so, we don't have a lot of details about that decision making process, but what we know is ultimately, Daniel was faithful, and why he was faithful is because he trusted in the Lord.

Proverbs 3:5-6 says, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding, but in all your ways, acknowledge him and he will make your paths straight." Daniel exemplifies that in this passage, but I'm interested to know, and I thought about this for myself. Man, what are the things that you would go to the lion's den for, like what are the things that you have said, you've decided man, my life will be about this? And no matter what comes my way, I will always be about this, for my family, we're going to be this way no matter what. I will always be about this for my family. We're going to be this way no matter what. No matter what happens, we will always be characterized by this. For me, my kids, my family, like what are the things that we've drawn a line in the sand and we said no matter what, this is how we will be. What would you go to the lion's den for?

We're going to keep reading verses 13 through 15.

13 Then they said to the king, "Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, Your Majesty, or to the decree you put in writing. He still prays three times a day." 14 When the king heard this, he was greatly distressed; he was determined to rescue Daniel and made every effort until sundown to save him. 15 Then the men went as a group to King Darius and said to him, "Remember, Your Majesty, that according to the law of the Medes and Persians no decree or edict that the king issues can be changed."

That's interesting, right? That's interesting. So essentially, they go and say, hey king, remember that thing you did, we've got to follow through on that, right? When you sign something into law at this day and time, which isn't that different from now, the king can't go back on it, he can't say three days later, hey scratch that, we're going to do something different. Like it's done, the fate's sealed, so they have to go and throw Daniel into the lion's den. And it's like, you just want to shake this king. You want to say, dude what were you thinking? Like you didn't consider what kind of consequences this action was going to have? We know that the king and Daniel had some sort of basic friendship at minimum, and so if he was going to throw this guy into the lion's den, then he should have thought twice. But he didn't.

As we keep reading verses 16 through 18, it says,

16 So the king gave the order, and they brought Daniel and threw him into the lions' den. The king said to Daniel, "May your God, whom you serve continually, rescue you!" 17 A stone was brought and placed over the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the rings of his nobles, so that Daniel's situation might not be changed. 18 Then the king returned to his palace and spent the night without eating and without any entertainment being brought to him. And he could not sleep.

I wonder what the walk down to the lion's den was like for Daniel. I wonder what he was thinking about. Like we see there's nothing in Daniel's past that we can look back and say he was faithful for the majority of his life, but there was this big blunder, there was this thing where he was unfaithful. Daniel's been faithful. Daniel was faithful, and yet here he is walking, left, right, left, right, down to the lions. And so, I wonder what he's thinking about. Like what kind of conversation is he having with God in that moment. God, I mean, I've been faithful, and yet here I am. This is what you give me. This is how you reward me for my faithfulness. Like I imagine that was a difficult walk. I wonder what he was thinking at this point. All Daniel had left was his faith, there was nothing else that he could lean on but his faith.

What are the things that you do in your life that only can be explained because of your faith in God? I've thought about that for myself, like what are the things that me, my wife, our family, that if people were to look at us, the only explanation for those things is because of our faith in God. I'm challenged by that because I feel like that list is pretty small for me, but I think we should be, we should wrestle with that. What are the things that we do that require faith that actually require faith?

It seems that the king had second thoughts in the story, which is interesting, right? So, he knew he obviously hadn't thought a lot about it, but at this point, he knows where Daniel's going, he knows what's going to happen. And so, we see that he stayed up all night. He had a hard time sleeping, he didn't sleep at all, he didn't eat, he is wrestling with this all night. Which says something, right? That's interesting, I imagine, the king's night did not go well.

Verses 19 through 23,

19 At the first light of dawn, the king got up and hurried to the lions' den. 20 When he came near the den, he called to Daniel in an anguished voice, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to rescue you from the lions?" 21 Daniel answered, "May the king live forever! 22 My God sent his angel, and he shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in his sight. Nor have I ever done any wrong before you, Your Majesty." 23 The king was overjoyed and gave orders to lift Daniel out of the den. And when Daniel was lifted from the den, no wound was found on him, because he had trusted in his God.

I wonder why the king was running at the first light of dawn to go and see what happened. It's only two options, right, either he knew that Daniel was going to be dead, and he just needed to go make sure for himself, because they had some sort of relationship, and he just needed to see it with his own eyes. Or, somewhere in the back of his head, he wondered if God was going to save Daniel from the lions right? And so, he races to the lions' den and plot twist, Daniel's alive.

And so, what we see God do is what God always does, God is faithful. He saves, which is what His job description says. God fulfills His job description; He loves stacking the cards against himself and He comes through and does the unimaginable. He saves David from the lions' den. And verse 23 is resounding, it says **"And when Daniel was lifted from the den, no wound was found on him, because he had trusted God."** Ultimately, it's our faith in God that saves us. We lack the ability to be faithful apart from God and we see that in Daniel. In that lion's den,

Daniel's faithfulness didn't matter, it was God's faithfulness that mattered in the lion's den. It's because God was faithful.

As we finish the last few verses in the story, it says,

24 At the king's command, the men who had falsely accused Daniel were brought in and thrown into the lions' den, along with their wives and children. And before they reached the floor of the den, the lions overpowered them and crushed all their bones. 25 Then King Darius wrote to all the nations and peoples of every language in all the earth:

And listen to this because this is amazing. It says this king, this foreign king, we don't – again we don't know if King Darius had a faith but here is the testimony he gives about Daniel's God. It says,

“May you prosper greatly! 26 “I issue a decree that in every part of my kingdom people must fear and reverence the God of Daniel. “For he is the living God and he endures forever; his kingdom will not be destroyed, his dominion will never end. 27 He rescues and he saves; he performs signs and wonders in the heavens and on the earth. He has rescued Daniel from the power of the lions.” 28 So Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus[b] the Persian.

You see, sin never has victory. Death has no sting, because we've read the back of the book. We know ultimately that God wins. We have nowhere and nothing to fear, and we see God come through in the life of Daniel. He was trustworthy, and he was diligent. He was a man of character and ultimately God was faithful on his behalf. And it wasn't who Daniel was, it's whose He was. It wasn't who he was, it was whose he was. Point number three this morning, my last point, is that

3. God's faithfulness stands forever.

Man, what an amazing ending to this story. Again, we don't know if King Darius was a follower of Jesus. We don't think that he was. He could have been – we're unsure, but we see him give a testimony of the faithfulness of Daniel's God. I mean, what an incredible testimony to Daniel's faith and the faithfulness of his God. I imagine what sort of outcomes happen throughout this kingdom because of this decree that was sent out to all the people in the kingdom of Babylon. Again, we see that the incredible faithfulness of Daniel stands forever and that it lasts and endures because of his God.

As we close, I want to read you, in a different way, some of the details of the story. And as I read them, just consider what other story this sounds like. Who else this sounds like. A seemingly blameless man, incredibly faithful to God was sent to die because of the jealousy of those who were angered at his promotion. He was condemned to death by the schemes of his accusers and the decrees of the land. He was thrown into a stone room, intended to be his grave, and a stone was rolled over the entrance. On a morning, the stone was removed, and he comes out victoriously and glorifying God. And ultimately pagans give honor to God because of him, and

his enemies are judged. Isn't it unbelievable that a story some five to six hundred years before Jesus' earthly ministry points to a coming Messiah. Man isn't it unbelievable that we get to read a book inspired by God. God's Word that points over and over again in this Old Testament to a coming King. A coming Jesus that would ultimately save us on the cross. Unbelievable, all of the similarities in this story to the story of Jesus.

As I began our time this morning, I talked about our dog Rayleigh. She was a faithful pet, and she was loyal. We could count on her. My question, that I want to leave you with this morning is, are you faithful? You know, first off, there may be many people in this room this morning that have never placed their faith in Jesus. And so, my hope and my prayer for you is that God's stirring inside of you, and if that's something, we would love to discuss that with you. We'll have a team down here in front of the stage after the service this morning. We would love for today to be the day that faith starts in your life.

And for those of us that are already walking with Jesus. Are we faithful? Are you living a life of faithfulness? Here's what I know to be true, is that we're all faithful to something, right? We're all faithful to something, and whether we're faithful to our hobbies or other things that we enjoy, we can be faithful to good things. But ultimately, what's going to matter at the end of our lives was our faith in Jesus. Man, do you have a faith this morning? Are you living a life of faith? My hunch is that if we were able to talk to Daniel today, and we got to talk to him for five or ten minutes, it would be real clear that the thing that he cared about most, the thing that he was going to be faithful to, and we see that in the story, was his God.

As I look across the crowd, I see a lot of familiar faces, and I see a lot that I don't recognize. And just for a minute, it would be amiss if I didn't talk about community for just a minute. My role on staff here at Harris Creek is the Community Pastor, and I get to oversee life groups. And what I know is that God has designed us to live in relationships with other people, in Biblical community and the biggest gift, as I think about life groups, the biggest gift that they give us is that they remind us about the faithfulness of God. That as we walk through this life, we lose sight of God's faithfulness in our lives. And so what we need and what we get to do in communities, is we get to remind one another of who God is. We get to point to God and said, hey, it doesn't matter what you do, be reminded of how God's been faithful to you. And so there's just really two places we can be this morning. Either we're in community or we aren't, and so for those of you who aren't in community this morning, I would love to encourage you to take a next step towards living in community. For those of you who are at home and just streaming in, figure out what it would look like to get involved in community where you are. For us here this morning, life groups is the way that looks at Harris Creek. We have Life Group 101 a few times throughout the year. It would be my joy to help get you involved in a life group. But just know, we were not designed to live life on our own. We weren't designed to do this in isolation. We would love to get you involved in community this morning.

I'm going to pray to close us out this morning, that we would be faithful and we would be found faithful in God's eyes. Let me pray. God, thank you for this morning. God thank you for the examples that we have in Daniel. Thank you for his life of faithfulness, God, but thank you ultimately for your faithfulness to him. Lord, I do pray for us this morning. God, that we would be reminded of the way that you love us God. We would be reminded of the way that you sent

Jesus for us. And so, in any place in our lives, God, where we lack faithfulness, would you give us courage, God, would you give us the ability to be faithful. God, we love you. We are thankful for this time to be reminded of who you are this morning. In your name, I pray. Amen.