"Faithful, No Matter What!"

Daniel 6:1-28

5-16-2021

INTRODUCTION:

***Let Daniel's example inspire you to be <u>faithful</u>!**

I. THE PROOF OF DANIEL'S FAITHFULNESS (v. 1-20)

DANIEL HAD:

A. A Faithful <u>Testimony</u> (v. 1-9)

1. He was known for his "excellent spirit" (v. 3)

2. He was known for his spotless character (v. 4-9)

3. He was known for his "continual service" (v. 16, 20)

B. A Faithful <u>Devotional Life</u> (v. 10-11)

He was consistent in spending time alone with God:

1. Daniel didn't care what it might <u>cost</u> him
("knew that the writing was signed")

2. Daniel let nothing <u>interfere</u> or <u>change</u> his habit
("windows open. . . toward Jerusalem")

3. Daniel had set apart <u>specific times</u> to spend with God
("three times a day")

4. Daniel spent time with God <u>consistently</u>
("as he had done aforetime")

II. THE PRIZE FOR DANIEL'S FAITHFULNESS (v. 21-28)

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DANIEL HAD:

A. A Faithful _____ (v. 1-9)

1. He was known for his "_____" (v. 3)

2. He was known for his _____ (v. 4-9)

3. He was known for his "_____" (v. 16, 20)

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INTRODUCTION:

God desires consistency in our walk with Him (I Thes. 5:16-18).

There is too much "on/off" ... "cold/hot" ... "up/down" ... "in the valley/on the mountaintop" Christianity.

Prov. 20:6 - "Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?"

I Corinthians 4:2 - Stewards must be faithful

--Noah (100 years building ark)

--Joseph (in Potiphar's house - Pharaoh's court)

--Paul (in preaching the Gospel)

--Daniel (from captivity as a teenage boy to the lion's den as an old man)

Daniel is now an old man - mid 80's, yet has remained faithful to his God in pagan Babylon and Medo-Persia for 65 plus years.

To be "faithful" means to be reliable, dependable, consistent. It refers to someone who does something with full faith (and no fear of the consequences), someone who is steady - day in and day out - like "clock work."

Several statements are made in Daniel 6 to attest to Daniel's faithfulness (consistency).

EX:"He was faithful" (v. 4)

"As he had done aforetime" (v. 10)

"Thou servest continually" (v. 16, 20)

***Let Daniel's example inspire you to be faithful!**

I. THE PROOF OF DANIEL'S FAITHFULNESS (v. 1-20)

DANIEL HAD:

A. A Faithful Testimony (v. 1-9)

1. He was known for his "excellent spirit" (v. 3)

   "An excellent spirit was in him" - What a tremendous testimony to have in the eyes of the pagan world. Daniel had stubborn convictions with a sweet spirit.

2. He was known for his spotless character (v. 4-9)

   V. 4

   Why such resentment against Daniel?

   1) Jealousy - they heard he was to be exalted (6:3)

   2) Prejudice - they knew he was a Jew (6:13)

   The presidents and princes went about to scrutinize Daniel concerning his personal life as it related to his dealings as chief prince in the Medo-Persian Empire.

   No doubt they examined his:

   --ethics (money management; honesty; integrity, etc.)
   --loyalty (to King Darius)
   --ability (his competency to hold such a position of authority)
   (Daniel is over 80 years old at this time; his mind was as sharp as ever!)
   --morality

   EX: the Supreme Court nominees (Bork; David Souter)

   "Neither was there any error or fault found in him" - This does not mean that Daniel was sinless, but that he was "blameless" (I Tim. 3:2 - no one could point a finger at him to discredit him).

They "thoroughly monitored Daniel's behavior. Did Daniel work well? Was he honest in his dealings? Was he fully loyal to the king? they observed . . . they inspected . . . they inquired and checked with his secretary and staff. They could uncover NOTHING! They went after it again and again. There must be some chink in his public armor. There must be some instance of neglect, some hasty word spoken, some person mistreated, some necessary paper work overlooked. If they could find a molehill of a mistake, they would make it into a mountain of unpardonable misdemeanor. They could uncover NOTHING!" (Foster, p. 26)

V. 5

When the godless people cannot find any basis to attack you, they then will attack your religion.

"They failed to find a weakness, so they exploited Daniel's strength. Would he give up a life time habit of Quiet Time for 30 days?" (Foster, p. 28).

V. 7

"All the president's of the kingdom . . ." - An outright lie! They did not consult Daniel, and he was the premier president (6:2).

"Save of thee, O King" - An attempt to appeal to ("butter him up") Darius's pride.

Why just "thirty days?" -

1) It was long enough to catch Daniel
2) It was short enough to not get the pagan priests angry

You might say that the threat of being thrown into the lion's den put "teeth into the law."

V. 8

The pagan presidents knew that Daniel would not violate any existing law, so they then made one (legislated a new law) so as to trap him.

3. He was known for his "continual service" (v. 16, 20)

V. 20

"Whom thou servest continually" - Daniel was not a "fair weather" Christian; was not a "Sabbath Day" Jew.

He served his God consistently and daily.

B. A Faithful Devotional Life (v. 10-11)

Three questions:

--What does any relationship need to make it healthy? - Communication

--What should be our primary relationship? - God

--Do you communicate with God consistently?

*Your answer to this questions reveals whether or not prayer is a conviction with you.

He was consistent in spending time alone with God:

1. Daniel didn't care what it might cost him
("knew that the writing was signed")

   Civil disobedience to government is justified for the believer when man's law comes into conflict with God's law.

   It could have cost Daniel his life! What a high price to pay to pray.

   Are you willing to sacrifice whatever it will take to meet with God on a consistent basis? (less sleep; TV; recreation, etc.)

   If you are convicted about the need to meet God daily, you will make the time and effort.

2. Daniel let nothing interfere or change his habit
("windows open. . . toward Jerusalem")

   "Toward Jerusalem" - cp. I Kings 8:44; II Chron. 6:20, 21, 36-39).

   Why didn't Daniel pick another room to pray in?

   --This was his room that faced Jerusalem (I Ki. 8:44)

   --He was accustomed to pray in this location

   --He did not want to lose his testimony (others knew his habits)

   Many things will interfere with your prayer life, if you let them.

Examples:

(SEE: Interference in Acts 16:1ff)

How did they know that Daniel was making "supplication" (asking something of God)?

--In the O.T. and even in the N.T., when they prayed, they prayed <u>out loud</u>

3. Daniel had set apart <u>specific times</u> to spend with God ("three times a day")

We should pray: at all times; throughout the day ("without ceasing") . . . Yet we still need those times alone (set apart).

EX:--The Lord Jesus
--King David (Ps. 55:17)

"Three times a day" (cp. David - Ps. 55:17).

To the Jew, praying three times a day was associated with the morning, noon, and evening sacrifice (cp. Acts 3:1; 10:30).

We need good prayer habits <u>before</u> a time of crisis to encourage us in a time of crisis (EX: Dan. 2:6, 9, 10).

Human nature: Whatever you decide to do at "any time" and in "any manner" will probably be done at <u>no</u> time and in <u>no</u> manner!

Schedule God into your day! (make Him your priority)

We forget <u>optional</u> things; we never forget <u>needs</u>.

Is your devotional time a need? It should be!

4. Daniel spent time with God consistently
("as he had done aforetime")

"As he did aforetime" - Daniel didn't begin praying to spite those who opposed him (he had been praying all along).

V. 12

"The Law of the Medes and Persians" could not be changed - even by the
king! (cp. v. 8, 15).

Other historical support for irreversible laws according "to the Medes and
Persians" -

--Esther 1:19; 8:8
--Diodorus Siculus (BIC 17 paragraph 30:5, 6)

V. 14

Darius feared God, so much as to later confirm Cyrus' decree and to allow the Jews to rebuild their temple without hindrance (Ezra 6:1-12).

No doubt Daniel's testimony spawned such an attitude and such favor on the part of Darius.

"Till the going down of the sun" - Medo-Persian law called for the execution of a penalty the same day as the sentencing.

Darius is like Herod (Mark 6:26) who did not want to kill John the Baptist, but because of his irrational words (an oath) would not reverse it.

V. 15

This is the first time that the principle of law being above the ruler is seen among the Gentile world (The USA Government functions this way as a democratic republic; our country is governed by laws not mere rulers).

V. 16

Daniel didn't fuss, fight, or become furious. Rather, he was cool, calm, and collected (Foster, p. 29).

"He will deliver thee" - lit. "May he deliver thee." In other words, the king is saying, "God must deliver you (because I have done all I could to save you and have failed)."

V. 18

The distressed king
--would not eat
--would not be entertained
--could not sleep

"Daniel's enemies undoubtedly spent the night riotously celebrating the death of Daniel" (Walton, p. 53).

V. 20

"A lamentable voice" - a voice of anguish (a voice of fear, concern, and sorrow)

II. THE PRIZE FOR DANIEL'S FAITHFULNESS (v. 21-28)

V. 22

"Innocency was found in me" - God never promises deliverance to the guilty, the sinful, those who knowingly violate God's principles and then ask God to "vial them out"; but He does deliver the righteous!

God's deliverance from the lion's mouth is mentioned elsewhere in Scripture:

--The psalmist (ps. 91:9-16 *v. 23)
--Paul (II Tim. 4:17)
--Daniel (Heb. 11:33)

V. 23

"Because he believed in his God" - Daniel was faithful because he was <u>full</u> of <u>faith</u>!

<u>Faith</u> is the victory! (I Jn. 5:4)

V. 24

The principle of Gal. 6:7 (sowing and reaping) is again vindicated!

EX: <u>Haman</u> hung on the gallows he built for Mordecai (Esther 7:9-10).

Psalm 7:15-16 - "He made a pit, and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made. His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate."

Psalm 94:23 - "And He shall bring upon them their own iniquity, and shall cut them off in their own wickedness; yea, the Lord our God shall cut them off."

To have wives and children thrown in also was typical of the cruelty of the Persians (cp. Herodotus III).

[It is not a Hebrew (or Biblical) practice - Deut. 24; Ezek. 18]

V. 26

God is noted as "steadfast forever..."

Daniel's consistency (faithfulness) was simply a reflection of his God's consistency.