

“Faithful in Prayer”
Daniel 6:1-10
(Preached at Trinity, June 29, 2014)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. As we saw last time, under King Darius Daniel continued to distinguish himself as a man of honor and of great ability. Darius recognized Daniel’s value and quickly promoted him.

Daniel 6:3 NAU - "Then this Daniel began distinguishing himself among the commissioners and satraps because he possessed an extraordinary spirit, and the king planned to appoint him over the entire kingdom."

2. Daniel served the king faithfully. He was trustworthy and skillful in his civil leadership. But his chief allegiance was always with God and His kingdom. He was in this world and made his mark upon it, yet he refused to be conformed to the ways of this world.
3. Because of his excellence and because of the king’s promotion he was envied and despised by his contemporaries. They knew they had to discredit Daniel, yet his public record was flawless.

Daniel 6:4 NAU - "Then the commissioners and satraps began trying to find a ground of accusation against Daniel in regard to government affairs; but they could find no ground of accusation or *evidence of corruption*, inasmuch as he was faithful, and no negligence or corruption was *to be found* in him."

A. They could find no fault in him. He was diligent in his work so they couldn’t accuse him of negligence or mismanagement in any way.

He was honest and trustworthy so they could not accuse him of corruption.

B. But they did recognize him as standing out regarding his faithfulness to God. He was committed to God and His Law. He was absolutely uncompromising.

Daniel 6:5 NAU - "Then these men said, "We will not find any ground of accusation against this Daniel unless we find *it* against him with regard to the law of his God."

4. Daniel didn’t have to go about parading his religion. He simply lived a life that reflected God’s glory and holiness. One thing they noticed about Daniel was he was a man of prayer. Three times a day he retired to his quarters and knelt before God in prayer expressing his heart of praise and thanksgiving.
5. This was their point of attack.

Daniel 6:7 NAU - "All the commissioners of the kingdom, the prefects and the satraps, the high officials and the governors have consulted together that the king should establish a statute and enforce an injunction that anyone who makes a petition to any god or man besides you, O king, for thirty days, shall be cast into the lions' den."

6. This in no way changed Daniel's devotion to God. His prayer life continued without change. Tonight I want to direct your attention to Daniel's prayer life.
- I. It was Distinguishing Prayer
 - II. It was Directed Prayer
 - III. It was Dependent Prayer
 - IV. It was Disciplined Prayer
 - V. It was Defiant Prayer
- I. It was Distinguishing Prayer
- A. Daniel was known as a man of prayer
 1. Daniel's life was a testimony
He was known as a man of high character; of honesty, integrity, and ability.
He labored with excellence. In everything he did he desired to reflect the glory of God.
 2. But these pagan people also knew Daniel as a man of prayer. He prayed three times daily. He prayed continually with his window open toward Jerusalem.
 3. His prayer life distinguished him as a follower of the living God. He was a man of God.
Daniel 6:5 NAU - "We will not find any ground of accusation against this Daniel unless we find *it* against him with regard to the law of his God."
 - B. What a testimony to the people of God
 1. Does this characterize you?
 2. Do your children know you to be a person of prayer?
 3. When someone shares a need with you do you vaguely say you'll be praying for them, or do you pray with them then because you are accustomed to praying?
 4. When you are at a restaurant do you pray to give God thanks
 5. If you were prohibited from praying for 30 days would it have a life-changing effect upon you? What about our church.
- II. It was Directed Prayer
- A. Notice Daniel prayed facing Jerusalem
Daniel 6:10 NAU - "Now when Daniel knew that the document was signed, he entered his house (now in his roof chamber he had windows open toward Jerusalem)"
 1. This might have been a way of reminding himself of God's covenant promises.
 2. Jerusalem was symbolic of the presence of God. It was the city of God—His holy hill.
 3. Daniel looked towards Jerusalem as a way of reminding him that he was a stranger in the land of Babylon. It had now been almost 70 years, yet Daniel did not cease looking towards Jerusalem.
 - B. We too should take advantage of every encouragement to prayer
 1. The Bible continually draws us to prayer. It has been said that prayer is repeating God's promises back to Him.

Perhaps there are particular verses that encourage you to prayer.

2. Perhaps calling to remembrance past events when God worked mightily in your life will serve as a great encouragement as you bow before Him today.

II. It was Dependent Prayer

A. What was the content of Daniel's prayers?

1. Daniel continually gave God thanks for His blessings and power. Daniel was a man of power and prestige. He was a man of influence. But He also knew he was just a man. He humbled himself before God.
Daniel 6:10 NAU - "Now when Daniel knew that the document was signed, he entered his house (now in his roof chamber he had windows open toward Jerusalem); and he continued kneeling on his knees three times a day, praying and giving thanks before his God, as he had been doing previously."
- Daniel 2:23 NAU** - "To You, O God of my fathers, I give thanks and praise, For You have given me wisdom and power"
2. Daniel prayed to God for His protection
 - a. When Daniel and his three friends were threatened with death their first reaction was prayer
Daniel 2:17-18 NAU - "Then Daniel went to his house and informed his friends, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, about the matter, ¹⁸ so that they might request compassion from the God of heaven concerning this mystery, so that Daniel and his friends would not be destroyed with the rest of the wise men of Babylon."
 - b. Daniel knew God. He had spent a lifetime walking with God. Now in this hour of need he prayed with confidence.
3. Daniel interceded for God's forgiveness of his sins and the sins of his people
Daniel 9:3-5 NAU - "So I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek *Him* by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth and ashes. ⁴ I prayed to the LORD my God and confessed and said, "Alas, O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and lovingkindness for those who love Him and keep His commandments, ⁵ we have sinned, committed iniquity, acted wickedly and rebelled, even turning aside from Your commandments and ordinances."

B. Do you continually humble yourself before God?

1. Are you continually going before Him praising Him and thanking Him for His wonderful blessings upon your life
2. Do you recognize your great dependence upon Him in everything? Do you humble yourself beneath His sovereign dominion?
3. Are you quick to recognize your sinfulness and bow before Him in confession?

III. It was Disciplined Prayer

- A. Daniel established a regular pattern of prayer in his life
Daniel 6:10 NAU - "Now when Daniel knew that the document was signed, he entered his house (now in his roof chamber he had windows open toward Jerusalem); and he continued kneeling on his knees three times a day, praying and giving thanks before his God, as he had been doing previously."
1. Regularity was key to Daniels powerful prayer life. He maintained regular seasons of prayer
 2. Daniel was a busy man. He has many responsibilities.
 3. Although his day was filled with activity he still maintained a disciplined prayer life.
- B. A busy schedule is no excuse for not praying
1. Jesus maintained a priority of prayer while He was upon the earth
 - a. His life was hectic with activity—He was unbelievably busy
Mark 1:32-33 – “And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils. ³³ And all the city was gathered together at the door.”
 - b. While this should read as hyperbole or an overstatement we should imagine that hundreds had gathered at His door. They had waited anxiously for the Sabbath to end. As soon as darkness fell they flocked to the door of Christ.
 - c. He must have ministered to them into the late hours before the crowded finally dispersed.
 - d. This would be good cause to sleep in the next morning. Surely He must have been exhausted. But this wasn’t His plan. This wasn’t His priority.
Mark 1:35 – “And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.”
 2. Paul’s life was incredibly busy
 - a. He was involved in several major missionary campaigns
 - b. There were times when he had to make a living working with his hands refusing to receive support from the church
 - c. He had the personal oversight of several churches
2 Corinthians 11:28 NAU - "Apart from *such* external things, there is the daily pressure on me *of concern* for all the churches." - μέριμνα - *care, anxiety*
 - d. He had numerous pastors under his watchful care.
 He wrote to Timothy and Titus as his own sons in the faith
 He gathered the elders of Ephesus and rehearsed the care he had given to them.
Acts 20:20 NAU - "I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly and from house to house"

- e. In spite of this amazing schedule, Paul was a man who spent hours in prayer.
2 Timothy 1:3 NAU - "I thank God, whom I serve with a clear conscience the way my forefathers did, as I constantly remember you in my prayers night and day"
- 3. This is true of all who are pious
1 Timothy 5:5 NAU - "Now she who is a widow indeed and who has been left alone, has fixed her hope on God and continues in entreaties and prayers night and day."
- 4. We often think of great people of prayer as being people with much free time
 - a. We think of prayer warriors as being little old ladies strong in the faith who give themselves to much prayer.
 - b. It is easy to brush off our limited prayer to having such a busy life We have work and children and so many responsibilities.
 - c. The truth is some of the busiest people have been the greatest prayer warriors.
 - d. Luther: "I have so much business I cannot get along without spending three hours daily in prayer."
- 5. We must make prayer a priority
 - a. Luther: As it is the business of tailors to make clothes and of cobblers to mend shoes, so it is the business of Christians to pray."
 - b. We must pray throughout the day but we must set aside times to pray. We must plan to pray.
Adoniram Judson:
"Arrange thy affairs, if possible, so that thou canst leisurely devote two hours every day, not merely to devotional exercise, but to the very act of secret prayer and communion with God ... to be resolute in His cause. Make all practical sacrifices to maintain it."

IV. It was Defiant Prayer

- A. Daniel soon heard the news—His prayer life was threatening his ability to lead in the king's service.
 - 1. Daniel knew he had to take drastic action. The entire future of his life was at stake. What was he to do?
Daniel 6:10 NAU - "Now when Daniel knew that the document was signed, he entered his house (now in his roof chamber he had windows open toward Jerusalem); and he continued kneeling on his knees three times a day, praying and giving thanks before his God, as he had been doing previously."
 - 2. His course of action was to pray. He knew that the Judge of all the earth is worthy of all of his life.
 - 3. The name Daniel in Hebrew has three syllables – Dan-i-el. Each one has a particular meaning. "Dan" means "judge." The "e" sound (i) means "my," and "El" is the abbreviated form of Elohim meaning "God." So Daniel's name means "God, my judge" or "God is my judge."
 - a. He lived his life before God, not men.

- b. Daniel lived his life as a reflection that God was His Lord and King.
 - c. Daniel had seen Nebuchadnezzar's reign come to an end and then Belshazzar and now Darius is reigning for a period. But Daniel knew he was serving the King of kings.
 - 4. When he learned that his life was being threatened because they had seen him praying to his God he knew his only hope was to pray more.
- B. Our commitment to God must be steadfast and at times even defiant
 - 1. We've seen this with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego who refused to bow before Nebuchadnezzar's statue.
 - 2. Now Daniel is faced with a decision. Does he obey the decree of Darius and lift up his prayers to the king or does he continue serving the Living God? Daniel had only one option.

Conclusion:

1. How do you view your life before God? Is it something you do on the side, or is it your entire life?
2. Daniel and Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego knew there was only one kind of life they could live—a life dedicated in service to God. They obeyed Him, they communed with Him continually in prayer.
Nothing would keep them from this life under the majestic reign of God.
3. Before I close, consider carefully this situation in Daniel's life. How easy it would have been to rationalize his situation.
 - A. He was about to be promoted to the highest office in the land.
Daniel 6:3 NAU - "Then this Daniel began distinguishing himself among the commissioners and satraps because he possessed an extraordinary spirit, and the king planned to appoint him over the entire kingdom."
 - B. He might have been tempted to rationalize how much influence such a high position would offer to him.
Perhaps well-meaning friends encouraged him to compromise.
After all, think about his influence in the government.
After all, it is only for 30 days. Perhaps he could keep his relationship with God a private matter. No one needed to know.
But they *would* know because praying was Daniel's custom.
 - C. Daniel's heart was, God IS my life. He is everything to me. I will not turn back from serving Him in the least degree. He went to his house with his windows wide open and he served the living God.
4. Do you make small allowances do and then rationalize them? Or is it known by all that you serve the living God exclusively? How do people know you? Are you willing to sacrifice your testimony of God's power in your life?