

Suggested Sermon

Entrusted with Treasure

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Introduction

The prophet Daniel is an incredible example of how to live and lead well in an ungodly culture, in chaotic times, in a secular world.

Background of Daniel:

- He was a teenager
- Young noble, possibly from the royal line of David
- Taken in the first group exiled from Jerusalem to Babylon

Daniel was tested many times and always maintained his integrity and commitment to God. Above all else, He was **trustworthy**. God had **entrusted** him with treasure of all kinds: the treasure of influence, power, favor, and more.

Daniel exhibited incredible character as an individual and as a leader. Let's consider a few of his many godly characteristics that we are called to emulate.

FAITHFUL

Daniel and his friends were the **brightest and best** that Jerusalem had to offer.

(Read Daniel 1:5-8.)

Daniel was:

Faithful when tempted

The culture of Babylon immediately tested Daniel and his friends. Would they honor God and obey His instructions about eating what was »»

“clean?” Or, would they choose to eat and drink in what the world what the world was offering them, not wanting to stand out and offend others? They must have felt tempted to enjoy the privilege offered to them, and not rock the boat.

- **What “food” or earthly pleasures does the enemy tempt us with today?**

(Read Daniel 1:9-16.)

Faithful when threatened

This passage reveals that King Nebuchadnezzar could react with a lethal response. Daniel and his friends could be at risk, as well as the leader placed over them. Daniel remained faithful even in the face of great threat.

(Read Daniel 1:17-21.)

God protected and blessed them! He gave them positions of tremendous influence and favor.

- **How does our culture today try to groom our *best, brightest, and most gifted* for the enemy’s purposes?**
- **How does the enemy try to threaten and discourage us today?**

We must stand our ground to be faithful to the Lord, no matter the temptation or threat we face. He is able to fortify us and stand alongside us for our triumph and His glory!

In Daniel 6, more than 60 years had passed since the time Daniel arrived in Babylon. He was no longer a young man, likely in his early 80s.

(Read Daniel 6:3,4.)

Jealousy reared its head. Daniel’s enemies concocted a plan. King Darius signed a 30-day ordinance, agreeing that no one could pray to any god or man other than the king, or they would be thrown into the lions’ den.

When faced with this threat, **Daniel was:**

PRAYERFUL

Daniel faithfully did what he knew he should do—he prayed! The jealous leaders were well aware of Daniel’s lifetime commitment to prayer. »»

- **What would happen today if the world knew our leaders were devoted to God and had a powerful prayer life?**
- **What would happen if you and I were known by our devotion to God and our prayer life?**

Daniel was unwavering in his prayer life. He placed his trust in God who had faithfully helped him all these years of exile in Babylon, ready to die for his faith if necessary. The king, however, was distraught, but by law, he could not retract the decree and the prescribed punishment. They threw Daniel into the lions' den. The king, who greatly respected Daniel said, "May your God, whom you continually serve, rescue you!"

- **What did Daniel think about and do during that fateful night, a captive in the den with hungry lions?**

Charles Spurgeon observed, "In any case he must have had a glorious night. What with the lions, and the angels all night to keep him company, he was spending the night-watches in grander style than Darius."¹

We all know the end of the story of Daniel's night in the lions' den. God kept Daniel safe from the lions all night long, with an angel to keep him company.

- **What lions will you face? Maybe you are facing a few right now. The same God is with you! Prayer is your strength.**

We need men and women of prayer—like never before.

STEADFAST

Daniel was steadfast in his commitment to God.

No matter who was king of Babylon over the many years, Daniel served with integrity and excellence. The various kings whom he served, promoted him throughout his lifetime.

- **How might our steadfast work and integrity position us before God and man today?**

God took what Daniel offered and positioned him for influence. Daniel was the king's top choice to lead as second in command. »»»

¹Charles Spurgeon, *Spurgeon's Sermons Volume 20: 1864* (publication place: Devoted Publishing, 2017), 41, <https://books.google.com/books?id=uq5FDwAAQBAJ&pg=PA41&lpg=PA41&dq=in+any+case+he+must+have+had+a+gl>. (Accessed November 14, 2019).

(Read Daniel 6:10, NIV) “ . . . **just as he had done before.**”

When Daniel's life was threatened, once again, he held to the right course. Daniel was steadfast in his commitment to God. He stood publicly for God, no matter the position taken by leaders or culture.

- **What has God asked you to do with steadfast resolve in private?**
- **What has He asked you to do in public, regardless of the possible backlash?**

God will strengthen you for the tests and trials when you remain steadfast in living out the gospel.

PROMISED

God entrusted to Daniel many dreams and visions. The Book of Daniel is apocalyptic.

Because of the accuracy of Daniel's prophecies, some scholars refuse to believe that Daniel wrote this book. Instead, they claim that someone else wrote the Book of Daniel many years later, reflecting what already had happened in history, rather than predicting it through divine revelation. We know that our God speaks prophetically and we can trust that He gave the revelation recorded in the Book of Daniel.

God promised Daniel many things, but He very kindly gave this promise to Daniel in the last verse of the book, “*But as for you, go on your way to the end; you will rest, and then you will stand to receive your allotted inheritance at the end of the days*” (12:13, CSB).

- **In addition to eternity, what has God promised you and what might He be asking of you today?**
- **Who will say yes to the call of God to be the Daniels of our day and time?**
- **Who will lead others with integrity, power in the Spirit, and humility before God, teaching them through example how to live a righteous life no matter the threat of the enemy? Who, if not us?**