

Christ Reformation Church

Tillamook, Oregon

You Must be Born Again!

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*Daniel is in the Lions' Den -
Today*

September 3, 2023

Sermon Text: Daniel 6

Scripture Reading: Daniel 6

Dan 6:3-5 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."

Did you ever learn this Sunday School song? -

1. Standing by a purpose true,
Heeding God's command,
Honor them, the faithful few!
All hail to Daniel's band!
 - *Refrain:*
Dare to be a Daniel,
Dare to stand alone!
Dare to have a purpose firm!
Dare to make it known.
2. Many mighty men are lost,
Daring not to stand,
Who for God had been a host
By joining Daniel's band.
3. Many giants, great and tall,
Stalking through the land,
Headlong to the earth would fall,
If met by Daniel's band.
4. Hold the Gospel banner high!
On to vict'ry grand!

Satan and his hosts defy,
And shout for Daniel's band.

Daniel is in the Lions' den today, and I want to show you not only that this is true, but that the tactics of Satan never change. Furthermore, just as Daniel was delivered by the Lord, so we as His people have His certain and sure promise today.

Dan 6:1-3 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.**

In the history of God's redemption of His people, we have numerous instances of His chosen ones being blessed and gifted in such a way that they are promoted by a king who recognizes that God's hand is upon them, and His Spirit in them.

Their wisdom is remarkable and their integrity without question. For example:

Gen 39:1-5 Now Joseph had been brought down to Egypt, and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the guard, an Egyptian, had bought him from the Ishmaelites who had brought him down there. (2) The LORD was with Joseph, and he became a successful man, and he was in the house of his Egyptian master. (3) His master saw that the LORD was with him and that the LORD caused all that he did to succeed in his hands. (4) So Joseph found favor in his sight and attended him, and he made him overseer of his house and put him in charge of all that he had. (5) From the time that he made him overseer in his house and over all that he had, the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; the blessing of the LORD was on all that he had, in house and field.

This is how it was with Daniel. He had been promoted and rewarded by the previous Babylonian king,

when Daniel had interpreted the handwriting on the wall.

Dan 5:29-31 Then Belshazzar gave the command, and Daniel was clothed with purple, a chain of gold was put around his neck, and a proclamation was made about him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom. (30) That very night Belshazzar the Chaldean king was killed. (31) And Darius the Mede received the kingdom, being about sixty-two years old.

And now this king of Media-Persia promotes and rewards him.

But there is another similarity. Just as Joseph ended up in prison through the evil lies and attacks of Potiphar's wife – and really ultimately from Satan – so Daniel became an object of plots by jealous, wicked men who hated Daniel for his righteousness and honest integrity.

They are particularly frightened and hateful because the word around the palace is that the king was planning to appoint Daniel as

ruler over the whole kingdom of Babylon. What would that mean for the other high officials – these satraps as they were called? Well, their self-enriching corrupt schemes would come to an abrupt halt and their own necks would be in danger.

You can imagine the evil self-enriching corrupt schemes these officials had in place. All you need do is look at our own nation's capitol today. It is common knowledge that there are elected and appointed officials who, in the course of their "service," have grown rich, very rich – though their annual salaries are relatively modest. It doesn't take a genius to realize that the wealth they gather comes from corrupt and illegal schemes. Insider trading, bribes and so on. In these dark days for our own nation, it has become obvious that our own President is one of the guiltiest.

What happens then when a Daniel comes into such a cesspool of corruption? When any man or woman is appointed or elected who is a righteous, honest person who

seeks justice and the welfare of the people they serve? What happens? This is what happens:

Dan 6:4-9 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.

I am hoping to show you three important truths that we see here in God’s Word:

1. *There is always a tendency to corruption and self-enriching wicked schemes brewing whenever man is given power and authority.* Man the sinner will, with rare exception, work and scheme to use that power for his own selfish purposes, at the expense of others. This, by the way, is also true in the visible church – it is what led to the creation of that wicked papacy and counterfeit church that is a plague on mankind.
2. Whenever a godly, righteous, man or woman is appointed to a position of trust with the goal of serving the nation or the church or their community, that person is

going to be seen as a threat to the wicked who already hold and abuse positions of power. We not only see this in our governments today, we see it (and this should be our particular concern) in the churches today. Righteous, honest Christian men and women are persecuted within church denominations and other entities because they are a threat to the wicked. *As a result, the wicked will inevitably scheme to throw the righteous into the lions' den of some type.*

3. The Lord delivers and rescues His people from the lions' den and destroys the wicked. This happens in this present world, and it is going to ultimately, finally, and fully happen on that Day when Christ comes in judgment.

So here we have this wicked, evil, satanic plot of Daniel's enemies. They looked and looked. They searched through all the records and files they could find. They interviewed all the people who had

any contact with Daniel. They put his life under a microscope *with the prejudice and desire to find something they could use against him. But they could not.*

“but they could find no ground for complaint or any fault, because he was faithful, and no error or fault was found in him.”

Now, just pause a moment here and look carefully at this statement. It is an amazing thing. If YOUR life or MY life were subjected to an examination like this, could this be said of us? I doubt it. All business dealings, all income tax returns, all other financial records, all performance at our work, our family life, every email, every recorded word.... micro-examined by people who hate us and who desired to destroy us! This is what they did to Daniel, and yet –

“but they could find no ground for complaint or any fault, because he was faithful, and no error or fault was found in him.”

There is a handful of people in the Bible who, I believe, are a kind of picture of Christ's righteousness. Daniel was one. Joseph was another. And therefore:

Is it surprising that when the perfect Son of God came into this world, He was subjected to the very same kind of plots and conspiracies to destroy Him.

NOTE: Realizing this, we need to be very wise in our own day when we read or hear the media reporting the "news." *Satan is always at work to attack and accuse the righteous. His tactics never change.* We are bombarded with these lies by a wicked propaganda machine today, and often the target of those attacks is going to be a Daniel, man or woman, who is seeking righteousness.

NOTE 2: There was an "elite" class in Daniel's day that was responsible for these corruptions and attacks. The attacks did not come from the common people – they knew that Daniel's honest integrity was for their benefit. No, the attacks came from this wicked,

corrupt, self-serving elitist class and so it is typically today.

Well, the plot thickens:

Dan 6:5 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."

Peter announced to the wicked rulers in Jerusalem:

Act 4:18-20 So they called them and charged them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. (19) But Peter and John answered them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge, (20) for we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard."

It's always the same. You can recognize Satan's hand in it if you are wise to this. Think of the Roman empire in the early centuries. Their propaganda machine made Christians the enemy when Rome burned and when the barbarians sacked the

city. “It’s these Christians’ fault. They have offended our gods. They are cannibals. They are not patriots because they refuse to burn incense to Caesar.” And on and on it went. St. Augustine wrote that massive reply to these charges – *The City of God* – and he proved the obvious, among other things – that when the barbarians sacked the city, it was the Christian church that the barbarians refused to enter and which gave safe sanctuary to citizens.

But it has always been the tactic of Satan *to use the righteousness and the faithfulness of Christ’s people to Himself as grounds for persecution and accusations.* To twist and pervert honesty and godliness and make it a crime.

Dan 3:8-12 Therefore at that time certain Chaldeans came forward and maliciously accused the Jews. (9) They declared to King Nebuchadnezzar, “O king, live forever! (10) You, O king, have made a decree, that every man who hears the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and

every kind of music, shall fall down and worship the golden image. (11) And whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast into a burning fiery furnace. (12) There are certain Jews whom you have appointed over the affairs of the province of Babylon: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. These men, O king, pay no attention to you; they do not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up.”

Well, so it was happening again –

Dan 6:5-13 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 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 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.”

There is a huge list of lessons here for us today:

1. We should expect, as antichrist increases, to see being a Christian made into a crime. We can expect such laws to be enacted.
2. We can expect a kind of national religion to be legislated which is to be the only authorized religion. (Think of what Rome has done down through the centuries in this regard – genuine Christians were persecuted and martyred. In England the “established” church persecuted the Reformers. There is not to be an established church in this

nation, according to our Constitution, but....).

3. The Christian's response to such evils – *keep right on keeping on.*

(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.

The Christian's victory is overcoming by faith in Christ. This evil world can take our possessions, it can take our physical lives, but that is all it can do. Christ cannot be take from us.

Rom 8:31-39 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? (32) He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? (33) Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. (34) Who is to

condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. (35) Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? (36) As it is written, “For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.” (37) No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. (38) For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, (39) nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Well, here come the lions:

Dan 6:14-18 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.

NOTE: There is no doubt that this is a prophecy of the sealing of Christ in the tomb. All human resources had been unable to rescue Daniel – even the king was bound by one great and inviolable (and foolish) law – the law of the Medes and Persians!

We are also meant to see here that the Lord brings His people into situations and settings where there is no hope. Where all human hope has been exhausted. Where there is no escape left, just like at the Red Sea.

2Co 1:8-10 For we do not want you to be unaware, brothers, of the affliction we experienced in Asia. For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself. (9) Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead. (10) He delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us. On him we have set our hope that he will deliver us again.

What is your situation this morning? Is it more hopeless than Daniel in the lions’ den? I doubt it – but the truth remains the same, we must persevere in trusting Christ and know that the day of our deliverance is coming.

And so it was for Daniel-

Dan 6:18-23 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.

This was still another one of those events which, if we had a time

machine, we would want to go back and be there at this moment. What must have been the king's reaction when he heard Daniel's voice? Will we see this king in heaven? I think there is a real possibility.

God had sent *an angel* to protect Daniel. He shut the lions' mouths. Made them into house cats – *temporarily*. Shutting their mouths is an expression for something more – after all, they had claws as well. But they could not harm Daniel. Did Daniel see the angel? I suspect so and it would not be the last time an angel came to Daniel (see chap 9).

Now, consider the swift and terrible justice of God against the wicked as still another picture of the Day when Christ comes:

Dan 6:24 And the king commanded, and those men who had maliciously accused Daniel were brought and cast into the den of lions—they, their children, and their wives. And before they reached the bottom of the den, the

lions overpowered them and broke all their bones in pieces.

This is meant to show us the Lord's protection and vindication of His beloved, called, and sanctified people – His Daniels. And it is meant to show us this:

Heb 10:30-31 For we know him who said, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay." And again, "The Lord will judge his people." (31) It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

As we close here, I want us all to consider this truth about our God. He is a consuming fire. He will repay. Those evil ones who hated Him and conspired against His church – end up receiving the same fate they tried to send Daniel to. You can read about the very same truth in the book of Ruth when Haman hung on his own gallows. The Pope who would send Christ's true people to hell will end in that very hell himself.

And we need to soberly consider something else in this regard to the Lord's justice –

those men who had maliciously accused Daniel were brought and cast into the den of lions—they, their children, and their wives.

Many professing Christians actually do not like God. They like the partial God who loves everyone and always works as they think he should, but they don't like the God who casts Korah and his wife and children into the pit. And they don't like the God who casts these evil men in Daniel's day into the lions' den, along with their children and their wives.

Whatever God does is right and just. One of the truths I am seeing played out consistently in this world is this – *Fathers and mothers can take their children to heaven or to hell.* We know that in God's electing mercy there are exceptions – that many of Christ's people have been saved out of wicked families. But this is a general and biblical

truth – *Fathers and mothers can take their children to heaven or to hell.* We can bring God’s blessing or His curse upon our families. Blessing if we faithfully follow Christ, as Daniel did, or curse if we reject or even just disregard the Lord.

Some time back I preached a sermon series entitled *Train up a Child.* And in the first message of that series I emphasized that if we are going to raise Godly children, we must be Godly ourselves. We must know and follow Christ ourselves because a tree with a rotten root cannot bear good fruit. And though that truth should surely be self-evident to anyone who claims to be a Christian, I have learned since that there were people who hated hearing that.

Listen, surely any genuine Christian parent can have a Prodigal child. We know this and understand it. But, when we see a pattern of one child after another growing up rejecting the Lord and loving the world, it is time to submit ourselves to some very honest examination. I grew up with

just this very thing. A supposed Christian home, yet it was only the Lord’s mercy that I was saved out of it. It was the very same thing in Verla’s family. And in my grandparents’ family.

These enemies of Daniel, enemies of the Lord, took their wives and children to hell.

Daniel took his to heaven. We must dare to be a Daniel.