

Thriving in Babylon
Trusting God Through It All
Daniel 6:1-28

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I. God Wants Us to Engage with the Culture Around Us

We've got an amazing illustration of what Jeremiah told exiles, like Daniel, to be doing in Babylon.

Jeremiah 29:4-7 "Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat their produce. Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease. But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare."

God wanted the exiles to engage with the cultural, economic, and social life of the city, while holding onto their identity as His people.

God has called us to do the same thing and it's what we hear from Jesus in **Matthew 5:13-16**.

A. Engaging the Culture Should Affect What You Do and Where You Choose to Do It

Daniel had the heart and leadership gifts to have been a full-time prophet, but he spent his entire life using his gifts out in the marketplace.

If you have a marketplace job, that is God's work and He has you there to be salt and light as well being one of the best at doing whatever it is you're supposed to be doing at that job.

B. Engaging the Culture Should Include a Concern about Who You Are and How You Do What You Do

V. 3-4 describe Daniel doing what he did with excellence, as far as his skills were concerned, but also doing it with integrity and character.

In the New Testament, Christians are told to live blamelessly before the world. That doesn't mean being sinless or perfect, but it does mean giving them no cause to accuse you of wrong-doing. See **Luke 1:6; Acts 24:16; I Cor. 10:32; 2 Cor. 6:3; Phil. 2:15; I Thess. 2:10**.

II. God Wants Us to Be Willing to Suffer and Ready to Be Misunderstood by the Culture Around Us

No matter how hard you work and how blameless you try to live, the world will still come after you from time to time because we frighten them and they don't understand how or why we live the way we do.

In one verse Daniel goes from being distinguished to being despised and Daniel did nothing to bring that about.

We have a choice of whether or not we'll be faithful and not be surprised when we're despised!

I Peter 4:12, 14 “Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you... If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.”

A. Form a Habit of Prayerful and Thankful Communion with God in Your Life

Daniel 6:10 “... He got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he done previously.”

B. Build a Personal History of God’s Faithfulness in Your Life by Serving Him Year after Year

Regardless of your age or how long you’ve walked with the Lord, never sit back and think that your past faithfulness to God is so well established that it’ll never be challenged or tested again.

C. Keep Putting Your Trust in God Regardless of How Unjust Your Circumstances Might Be

Despite decades of Daniel’s faithful service and his track record of personal excellence and integrity, the king signed an edict that put Daniel’s life in jeopardy.

Serve with excellence and integrity, but don’t be surprised when you’re not rewarded for it.

I Peter 3:14-17 ““But even if you should suffer for righteousness’ sake, you are blessed. And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled. “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; “having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed. “For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.”

Daniel shows us what we should be doing when we’re treated unjustly.

Daniel 6:23 “... So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no wound was found on him, because he had trusted in his God.”

III. You’ll Never Have the Courage to Suffer Well Until You Know and Love the One Who Suffered Most for You

If you make too much of Daniel and his example, instead of the Greater Daniel – Jesus– who was a living, dying, conquering sacrifice for us, then you won’t have the courage you need to suffer well or to suffer very long.