

Spiritual Integrity
Daniel in the Lions Den
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Daniel Chapter Six

The first six chapters of Daniel have recounted how Daniel and his friends dealt with their pagan captors without violating the law and will of God. Refusing to eat the king's food; refusing to bow down to an idol; being thrown into a den of hungry lions for praying to God. Considering our world today (especially what's happening to Christians in the middle east), **how does the book of Daniel encourage or challenge you as a Christian? Using one or two words, how would you describe Daniel and his friends?**

The term that came to mind for me is SPIRITUAL INTEGRITY. **What is INTEGRITY?**

I put it this way: Integrity is being true to who you are no matter who is watching.

Therefore: Spiritual integrity is being true to who I am IN CHRIST no matter who is watching, even if my very life is at stake!

- King Darius appointed Daniel and two others as his top leaders over the whole government.

Daniel 6:3 (ESV)

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.

- Daniel's diligence combined with obedience to God had raised him to a high place.
- **What often happens when God's people are recognized for their talent and ability?**
- These "high officials" set out to get Daniel, but couldn't find grounds to accuse him.

Verse 5 in THE MESSAGE paraphrase tells us:

They could find no evidence of negligence or misconduct. So they finally gave up and said, "We're never going to find anything against this Daniel unless we can cook up something religious."

Lesson: Spiritual integrity invites opposition...expect it!

Jesus said:

Matthew 5:11 (ESV)

11 "Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.

1 Peter 4:14 (ESV)

14 If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.

- These enemies of Daniel tricked King Darius. They suggested for 30 days he should declare himself god and anyone who prayed to any other god should be fed to the hungry lions. *"Put it in writing!"*
- **Why would the king fall for this idea?**

- **Verse 8: Why did they urge the king to put it in writing?**

Daniel 6:10 (ESV)

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.

- *“Daniel knew the document had been signed...”* **What does that tell us?**
- **Why did Daniel pray with the windows open? How could he have avoided danger for 30 days? What does “...as he had done previously” tell us? The name “Daniel” in Hebrew means God is my judge. How did he live that out? Flip side: Why didn’t he pray in the street?**

Lesson: Spiritual integrity is fueled by prayer.

Adrian Rogers said: “A lot of kneeling will keep you in good standing.”

Lesson: Spiritual integrity should be a way of life.

Lesson: Spiritual integrity should be obvious but not obnoxious.

- Daniel didn’t carry a picket sign or stage a sit-in at the palace. He just OPENLY worshiped God as he always had.
- Of course, his enemies knew he’d pray. He had SPIRITUAL INTEGRITY!
- Spiritual integrity causes people to know what to expect of God’s people.
- And of course they reported him to King Darius. Look at how the king reacted:

Daniel 6:14 (ESV)

14 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.

- **Why did the king react this way? What does it mean that he “labored” all day to rescue Daniel? He was the king, why couldn’t he just overlook this?**
- The king was in a bind. A “catch 22” situation! He felt he had no choice.
- He gave the order for Daniel to be thrown to those hungry lions. But as he did, he said...“May your God, whom you serve continually, deliver you!”
- **Why would a pagan king who wants people to worship HIM say that?**
- Verse 17 tells us a stone was put over the pit and the king sealed it with his signet ring. **Why would it be important to seal that opening? Can you think of another opening sealed that way?**
- The king had a sleepless night. Verse 18 says no diversions were brought to him to make him sleep. No ZZZquil; no Red Box movies; no singers with royal lullabies. It was a “Hard Days Night!” This king who was so opposite of Daniel had come to care for him greatly.

Proverbs 16:7 (ESV)

7 When a man’s ways please the Lord, he makes even his enemies to be at peace with him.

Daniel 6:19–22 (ESV)

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.”

Lesson: Spiritual integrity opens the door to deliverance! (But, let’s be real about that.)

- God promises never to leave or forsake us. But those who are martyred for their faith remind us that deliverance isn’t always physical rescue in this life, but eternal deliverance in Heaven.

Daniel 6:23–24 (ESV)

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. 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.

Lesson: Spiritual integrity leaves revenge to God.

Romans 12:19 (ESV)

19 Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.”

- As if it wasn’t enough for Daniel to be delivered, this is where the story really gets good!

Daniel 6:25–27 (ESV)

25 Then King Darius wrote to all the peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth: “Peace be multiplied to you. 26 I make a decree, that in all my royal dominion people are to tremble and fear before the God of Daniel, for he is the living God, enduring forever; his kingdom shall never be destroyed, and his dominion shall be to the end. 27 He delivers and rescues; he works signs and wonders in heaven and on earth, he who has saved Daniel from the power of the lions.”

Lesson: Spiritual integrity is a witness to unbelievers and brings glory to God.

Lesson: Spiritual integrity also results in reward to God’s people. If not in this life, in Heaven!

Daniel 6:28 (ESV) simply says:

28 So this Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

- Any final thoughts or observations?

So, What’s the Takeaway?

If you only remember two words from today’s lesson, remember: Spiritual integrity. Being who I am IN CHRIST no matter who’s watching, and even if my life is at stake!

- Spiritual integrity should be a way of life.
- Spiritual integrity should be obvious but not obnoxious.
- Spiritual integrity invites opposition...expect it!
- Spiritual integrity leaves revenge to God.

- Spiritual integrity opens the door to deliverance! If not in this life, in Heaven
- Spiritual integrity is a witness to unbelievers and brings glory to God.
- Spiritual integrity also results in reward to God's people. If not in this life, in Heaven!
- Will we live with Spiritual Integrity this week no matter who is watching?