

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Day 1: Faithfulness in the Face of Opposition

Reading: Daniel 6:1-10

Daniel's life teaches us that persecution for godly living is not a matter of "if" but "when." In a culture increasingly hostile to biblical values, Daniel refused to compromise his convictions. He didn't pray defiantly to make a statement; he simply continued what he had always done. His windows remained open, his prayers remained consistent, and his trust remained unshaken. Consider this: What spiritual disciplines have you allowed cultural pressure to diminish? Today, identify one area where you've compromised and recommit to faithfulness, trusting that God honors those who honor Him, even when the culture turns dark.

Day 2: The Government's God-Given Purpose

Reading: Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-17

God designed government to reward good and punish evil, yet sinful people operating in sinful systems often pervert this purpose. The same Apostle Paul who wrote about submitting to authorities was imprisoned and eventually executed by government order. This paradox teaches us that while we respect authority, our ultimate allegiance belongs to God alone. This doesn't mean rebellion or disrespect, but rather courageous faithfulness like Daniel demonstrated. The question isn't whether persecution will come, but whether we'll stand firm when it does. Pray for wisdom to navigate the tension between earthly citizenship and Kingdom citizenship with grace and conviction.

Day 3: Trust Over Fear

Reading: Job 13:13-19; Philippians 1:19-26

Daniel's trust in God wasn't dependent on deliverance from the lions' den. Like Job, who declared "Though He slay me, I will hope in Him," Daniel understood that faithfulness to God matters more than physical safety. This profound trust transforms how we face opposition. When we grasp Paul's truth that "to live is Christ, to die is gain," persecution loses its power over us. Either way, we win. What fears are currently influencing your spiritual decisions? Identify them today and surrender them to God. Trust isn't the absence of fear; it's choosing faith despite fear. God may deliver you from the lions, or He may deliver you through them—but He will deliver you.

Day 4: Influence Through Unwavering Faith

Reading: Daniel 6:19-28; Matthew 5:14-16

Daniel's faithfulness didn't just save his life; it transformed a king's theology and influenced an entire empire. King Darius's decree acknowledging the living God echoed throughout every nation and language. Centuries later, the magi—likely influenced by Daniel's testimony—traveled to worship the newborn King of the Jews. Your faithful witness in dark times carries unmistakable influence. Consider your sphere of influence—your OIKOS. Who is watching your response to cultural darkness? Your faithfulness today may plant seeds that bear fruit for generations. Don't waste the opportunity God has strategically given you.

Day 5: Remaining Faithful Until the End

Reading: 2 Timothy 3:10-17; 1 Corinthians 15:50-58

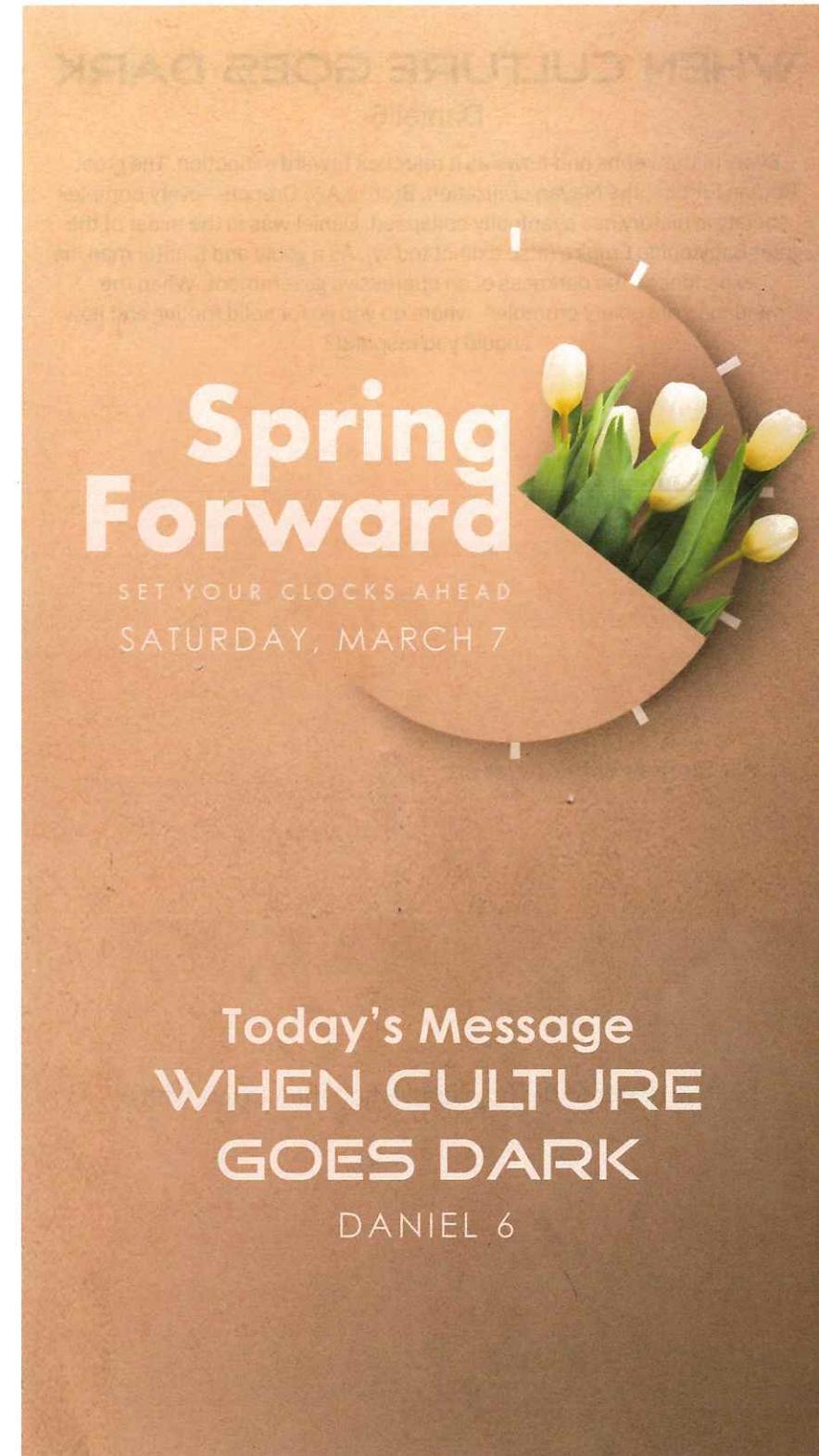
Paul's warning to Timothy rings prophetically true: evil people will flourish, deception will increase, and times will grow difficult. The trajectory of human culture apart from God always moves toward darkness. Yet in the midst of this sobering reality comes a powerful command: "But you must remain faithful to the things you have been taught." Faithfulness isn't a sprint; it's a marathon. The call isn't to be spectacular but steady. Keep worshiping when worship is restricted. Keep serving when service is criticized. Keep believing when belief is mocked. The culture will continue darkening, but you carry the light of Christ. Don't flinch. Don't compromise. Don't grow weary. Your King is coming, and either way—whether through life or death—you win.

DEACONS ON CALL

Brad Friesen and Archie Haris

WEEKLY EVENTS

- **WORSHIP:** Sundays at 9:45 AM
- **SMALL GROUPS:** Sundays at 11 AM
- **DEEP DIVE:** Wednesdays at Noon and 6:45 PM
- **FIRST KIDS:** Wednesdays at 5:30
- **FIRST YOUTH:** Wednesdays - MS 5:30 PM; HS 6:45 PM



WHEN CULTURE GOES DARK

Daniel 6

Every culture ebbs and flows as it marches toward extinction. The great Roman Empire, the Mayan civilization, Bronze Age Greece—every complex society in history has eventually collapsed. Daniel was in the midst of the great Babylonian Empire (also extinct today). As a godly and faithful man, he experienced the darkness of an oppressive government. When the foundation of society crumbles, where do you go for solid footing and how should you respond?

1. Persecution is _____.

a. Sinners with power are _____.

b. It is better to die for a conviction than to live with a _____.

2. Trust is _____.

3. Deliverance is _____.

4. Influence is _____.

* Daniel had a tremendous impact on his _____!

Scripture References (In order of use): 2 Timothy 3:12; Roman 13:3-4; 1 John 5:19; Job 13:15; Philippians 1:21; 2 Timothy 3:13-14a; 1 Corinthians 15:58
Referenced Works: The Book of Daniel (Douglas Simpson); Daniel (Philip Davies); Lectures on Daniel the Prophet (H. A. Ironside); Daniel (Rodney Stortz)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever had to stand up for something you believed in when it wasn't popular or easy? What happened?
2. Is there anything from the sermon you would like to discuss?
3. Read Daniel 6:1-5. What made Daniel stand out among the other administrators? Why do you think his colleagues targeted his faith specifically?
4. Read Daniel 6:10. What is significant about Daniel's response when he learned about the law? What does "just as he had always done" tell us about his character?
5. William Pitt said, "A fearful society will always comply." In what ways have you seen fear used to control people in recent years? How do we resist fear-based manipulation while still being wise?
6. Read 2 Timothy 3:12. Do you truly believe that "everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution"? What does persecution look like in our context today?
7. Read Philippians 1:21. How does Paul's perspective that "dying is even better" change the way we approach persecution, cancel culture, or opposition today?
8. Daniel's faithfulness influenced King Darius and possibly even the magi who later sought Jesus. Who is watching your life right now? How might your faithfulness in difficulty impact your OIKOS (sphere of influence)?

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

- **Bold Witness:** Identify one area where you've been compromising or hiding your faith out of fear. Take one bold step to live more openly for Christ this week.
- **Trust Exercise:** Write down one situation causing you anxiety or fear. Pray Job 13:15 over it daily: "Though he slay me, I will hope in him." Practice trusting God with the outcome.
- **Influence Assessment:** Make a list of people in your OIKOS. If you have a list, revisit it and update it. Pray for one person each day this week, asking God to use your faithfulness to impact them for Christ.