

As much as possible, live at peace with all men. Rom. 12?

Heb. 12:14 Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:

We are never to use our faith as a weapon of self-righteousness.

Daniel had learned to live peaceably in a world that was hostile to what he believed.

Daniel wasn't motivated by his own personal ego to prove those around him wrong.

Daniel wasn't motivated to defend God, He knew God would speak for himself.

Daniel was only motivated by a desire to follow God and give him all the glory.

When our motives are pure we can live peaceably with men. We must check our motives before responding to confrontational situations.

Conclusion

Our national identity is temporal.

Our spiritual identity is eternal.

In the end, the faithful, once vilified, will be vindicated, verified, and venerated; at least by God, if not by the world. And our God will receive glory and honor.

It is our determined and deliberate allegiance to Christ, brave acceptance of the consequences, uncompromising holiness, and stubborn steadfastness that will turn the hearts of men to God.

But even if not in our lifetime, we must defiantly respond as did the three Hebrew friends of Daniel (Dan. 3:18) by refusing to serve the gods of this age or to worship their images. That will land us in the hot seat temporarily, but we will, by the grace and mercy of God, emerge without even the odor of smoke on our clothes.

Meanwhile, in complete trust in God's sovereign will and power, we must never

Sull up

Shut up

Give up

but rather continue to

Buck up

Put up

Speak up

Pray up

Stay up

LIVING IN A LAIR

Daniel 6

Introduction

Contemporary examples of persecution

- Raymond Raines, 4th grade, Waring Elementary School in St. Louis, forbidden to pray in cafeteria; sent with fanfare to the principal, who ordered him to stop the practice; The boy continued the practice he had been taught by his parents and was repeatedly humiliated by the administration, and eventually suspended for a week. (David Limbaugh, [Persecution](#), p. 21)
- Kindergartner, Kayla Broadus; Jan. 15, '02; Saratoga Springs, NY; silenced and scolded because she folded her hands at snack time and recited, "God is great. God is good. Thank you, God, for my food." (David Limbaugh, [Persecution](#), p. 25)

News story of Muslims wanting to use a loud speaker to call worshipers to prayer in Hamtramck, MI. The same so-called wall separating church from state, which is nowhere found in the U.S. Constitution, and the First Amendment, with its "Establishment Clause" and the "Free Exercise Clause," that prohibits prayers in the name of Jesus in the public arena protects Muslims, who broadcast on public streets that "Allah is the only god." And this not once, but five times a day, from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. Christians are given the continued liberty to ring church bells. But they better not try using loud speakers to publicly declare that Jesus is the only Savior!

In a manner of speaking, you could say we live in a lair surrounded by lions masquerading as judges and civil liberties attorneys who are prowling around to find every opportunity to pounce on Christians and devour them.

The question before us relates to how we ought to respond to the challenges of dual citizenship. How do we balance our citizenship in a culture that is hostile toward Christianity and our citizenship in the Kingdom of God? For an answer, we turn to another person who was severely and unfairly persecuted for his faith in God. Dan was a God-fearing man who, with three of his buddies, would not bow to the pressure of political pressure. These men were not persecuted within the boundaries of the United States, but somewhere near Baghdad. Their names were changed to correspond to the pagan religion. It wasn't Mohammed, but something like that. They were dealt with more severely, three of them sentenced to death in a furnace of fire, and Dan in a den of literal lions.

Lived in hostile environment, not conducive to peaceful worship. We have been taken captive without having left our homeland.

Christians in America are increasingly subjected to the ferocious lions of litigation, public humiliation, paranoid school administrators, and the harassing intolerance of the tolerance police.

How Daniel managed dual citizenship successfully

I. ALLEGIANCE

Decide Dan. 1:8 Wouldn't defile himself

The time to decide is **BEFORE** you get in the crucible. As Shadrach, et al, said to Nebuchadnezzar (3:16), "We do not need to defend ourselves before you." They had decided before they ever left Judah. The question of loyalty had been decided long before the test.

ILL. **George Shultz**, Sec. of State Reagan administration, kept a large globe in his office. When newly appointed ambassadors had an interview with him and when ambassadors returning from their posts for their first visit with him were leaving his office, Shultz would test them. He would say, "You have to go over to the globe and prove to me that you can identify your country." They would go over, spin the globe, and put their finger on the country to which sent--unerringly. When Shultz's old friend and former Senate majority leader, **Mike Mansfield**, was appointed ambassador to Japan, even he was put to the test. This time, however, Ambassador Mansfield spun the globe and put his hand on the United States. He said: "That's my country." Sec. Shultz told every ambassador, "Never forget you're over there in that country, but your country is the United States. You're there to represent us. Take care of our interests and never forget it, and you're representing the best country in the world."

While living in this Babylon, remember to Whom you have pledged allegiance. Maintain your loyalty to God.

God will deliver. But if not, we still won't bow down

Trust equips us to remain faithful

II. ACCEPTANCE

Daniel continued daily worship despite threats of harm

Courage Acts 4:8-13, 18-20

Daniel and his friends were not dragged kicking and screaming to the fiery furnace and den of lions. They understood the price and were willing to pay, trusting God to deliver them.

Dan. 3:17-18

Acts 5:29 "We must obey God rather than men."

III. HOLINESS

Daniel prayed, despite the threats

The only way the jealous enemies of Daniel could ensnare him was with respect to his relationship with God. In other words, they could find no flaw in his character or citizenship. He lived a life of civil and moral integrity. Their plot would never have worked on a man of less integrity. They knew Daniel would not compromise his relationship with Almighty God. They were counting on it.

1 Peter 4:12-19

Chuck Swindoll in "Growing Deep in the Christian life", writes about a man who ordered fried chicken dinners for himself and his date late on afternoon. The manager at the fast-food outlet, however, inadvertently gave him the bag containing the bank deposit from the day's business. After driving to their picnic site the two of them sat down to enjoy some chicken, but discovered that, instead of chicken, the bag contained almost \$800! But he was unusual! He quickly put the money back into the bag, got back into the car and drove all the way back. Mr. Clean got out, walked into the food store and became an instant hero! By then the manager was frantic. The guy with all the money walked in, looked the manager in the eye, and said "I want you to know that I came in here to buy some chicken, but ended up with all this money". Well, the manager was thrilled to death. He said: "let me call the newspapers. I'm going to have your picture put in the newspapers. You're one of the most honest men I know. To which the man quickly responded: Oh no, no, don't do that. And then he leaned over closer and whispered: "You see, the woman I'm with is not my wife. She's uh, somebody else's wife!

Our culture has bought into the philosophy of **compartmentalized ethics** and **schizophrenic spirituality**. Many Christians think they can eat the delectable desserts of the world sitting at the table of God.

Daniel could have justified compromise by offering all kinds of excuses about the difficulties of living a righteous life in such a wicked environment, or about how it is better to compromise and remain free to do the Lord's work as opposed to being put to death for persisting in righteousness. He could have used the excuse that "when in Rome, do as the Romans," etc. But he didn't.

IV. STEADFASTNESS

ILL. A prophet once came to a city to convert its inhabitants. At first the people listened to his sermons, but they gradually drifted away until there was not a single soul to hear the prophet when he spoke. One day a traveler said to him, "Why do you go on preaching?" Said the prophet, "In the beginning I hoped to change these people. If I still shout, it is only to prevent them from changing me."

Daniel did not start a crusade or campaign, openly flouting his prayer practices. Instead, he continued as always, praying in his chamber with the windows open. His hope was not in swaying the ruling of the king, but in petitioning the Lord.