

They Could Find No Charge Against Him (Daniel 6:1-6)

Expository Lessons from the Book of Daniel

I. Introduction

- a. Continuing our series: Lessons from Daniel. Last week we discussed the humbling of the extremely wicked king, King Nebuchadnezzar. God, in His mercy, warned the king several times, then eventually brought the king down. Wonderful ending, as the king comes to his senses and gives glory and honor to God. Such a powerful conversion.
- b. Today we move on to the beginning of **Daniel 6**. We are closing in on the story Daniel is most famous for – the lions den – but you will have to wait a few weeks for that lesson!
- c. Daniel started his book recounting events he experienced as a young boy. We are now probably decades later. Daniel has served under several Babylonian and Persian kings, now under King Darius.
- d. So far, we have been inspired, convicted, and seen the blessings of Daniel's character and personal righteousness in the areas of humility, prayer and fasting, and courage to confront evil.
- e. Today, we look at Daniel's personal righteousness in how he approached *his work or employment*, his "day job."
- f. Now many of us are in different places. When we discuss employment or work, I am referring to the work God has given you to do outside of church meetings, your personal devotionals, eating and sleeping. This might include
 - i. a 9-5 (or longer!) job,
 - ii. your work as a student studying and learning, or
 - iii. your work running a household and raising children.

Everyone has work in their lives, which for most of us consumes at least one-third of our days and a half of our days when we are not sleeping!

g. Questions:

- i. How did Daniel handle himself at his day job? What did his performance look like? What did his character look like?
- ii. How are we to handle ourselves as Christians in our day jobs? What should our performance look like? What should our character look like?

- iii. Why does this matter? (How we handle ourselves at our jobs.)
 - iv. What are the traps Satan lays for us around our work? If so, how can we avoid these?
 - v. Does God use our employment to bless us and fulfill His purposes?
- h. Read **Daniel 6:1-6**.
- i. Three things said about Daniel in this short passage:
 - 1. The king put Daniel in charge of his kingdom so that he (the king) might not be troubled.
 - a. The king's complete trust and confidence in Daniel.
 - b. 120 governors (Daniel starts with 1/3 or 40)
 - c. Distinguishes himself from the other two and is given the whole Persian kingdom to oversee/run!
 - 2. There was an excellent spirit in Daniel.
 - 3. Daniel's enemies (many were jealous of him) could find no fault in Daniel. (Complete integrity.)
 - ii. Many things we could look at in Daniel's character and example. We will focus on the following:
 - 1. Daniel's humility
 - 2. Daniel being full of the Holy Spirit
 - 3. As Christians, what example should be we setting in our employment?

II. Humility and Work

- a. In his book, Daniel emphasizes the importance of humility.
 - i. Lifts up Susannah's humility and obedience (**first chapter in the LXX**)
 - ii. Lifts up the humility of his 3 friends, including in Abendago's prayer. (**ch. 3**)
 - iii. Gives the account of how God humbled King Nebuchadnezzar, and how this was a wonderful thing. (**ch. 4**)
 - iv. Daniel's own example

1. King Nebuchadnezzar: Can you tell me my dream and its interpretation? (**ch. 2**)
 - a. Daniel's answer: No one can. But the God of heaven alone and He has revealed it (through me).
2. Prayer and fasting (**ch. 9**)
- v. Daniel is a humble man. He really values the quality of humility.
 1. My experience with a client: "This child of mine is really humble."
- b. Someone who is truly humble before God is humble in every aspect of their life before God.
 - i. **Question:** What do you call someone who acts one way in one area of their life but is not in another? **Answer:** a hypocrite!
 - ii. "God resists [or opposes] the proud, but gives grace to the humble." (**James 4:6, 1 Peter 5:5**).
 1. This includes opposition or grace in our roles as spouses and parents, in the home, at our jobs, at school, etc.
- c. If you have a truly humble spirit, it will be evident in your work and be blessed by God!
 - i. Humble people learn quickly.
 1. Not afraid to make mistakes (which is a big part of learning)
 2. Ask tons of questions, not afraid of others knowing that he or she do not know something
 3. Doesn't get his or her self-worth by "being perfect"
 4. Really enjoys growing and the journey of discovery, making mistakes and learning from them.
 - ii. Pathway Law core value of Humility.
 1. Posted on a sign in the office for all to see (staff and clients!)
 2. "If this is a problem for you, you won't like working here!"
 3. The tale of two attorneys (one humble, one not!)
 4. This is a daily challenge for me! The past few weeks:

- a. “Seems like you are frustrated. Good for us to talk through this.” Answer: “Not sure if you have the capacity to handle my matter.”
 - b. Behind on a matter. Client upset. Humble myself. Own it. Communicate. Don’t make excuses. Don’t shade (lie!) about what is going on. Apologize. Put in the work. Make it right.
5. “.... But they [Daniel’s enemies] could find no charge or wrongdoing or fault against him because he was faithful.”
- a. This supernatural level of integrity is an upward call!
 - b. Honesty is a key piece of humility.
- d. Humility characterized Daniel.
- i. I think Daniel’s humility is one reason the king had such complete confidence in him. Completely trusted him. And Daniel had, over time, grown extremely competent.
 - ii. Daniel’s example is really important for us.
 - iii. **Question:** Are we treasuring, focused, and prioritizing humility in our own hearts and lives, in our spouse’s life, in our children, in each other, including in our work?
 - iv. Godly humility is a prerequisite to spiritual growth, closeness to God, receiving His grace, and being used for His purposes.

III. The Holy Spirit and Our Work

- a. In many places, we learn that Daniel was filled with the Holy Spirit.
 - i. “The Lord heard [Suzannah’s] voice, and as she was being led away to be put to death, *God aroused the holy spirit* of a young boy whose name was Daniel.” (**Introduction of LXX, vs. 45**)
 - ii. “So the enchanters, the magicians, and the diviners of the Chaldeans came in, and I told them the dream; but they did not make known its interpretation to me, until at last Daniel came in (whose name is Belteshazzar.... And who has *the Spirit of the Holy God* in him).” (**Daniel 4:7-8**)
 - iii. “But Daniel excelled beyond them, because there was an *excellent spirit* in him....” (**Daniel 6:4**)
- b. Read **Isaiah 11:1-3**

- i. A prophecy of the Spirit of God coming down on Jesus at His baptism
 - ii. The 7 qualities of the Holy Spirit
 - 1. Wisdom
 - 2. Understanding
 - 3. Counsel
 - 4. Might
 - 5. Knowledge
 - 6. Godliness
 - 7. Fear of God (shall fill Him)
 - iii. We see all these qualities in Jesus. We also see them in Daniel!
- c. Remarkably, we receive this same Holy Spirit at the time of our baptisms.
- i. “Then Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call.” (**Acts 2:38-39**)
- d. But, we can have more or less of the Spirit!
- i. “Seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, *full of the Holy Spirit* and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.” (**Acts 6:3-4**)
 - ii. “Your money perish with you, because you thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money! ... Repent therefore of this wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thoughts of your heart may be forgiven you. For I see that you are poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity.” (**Act 8:20-23**)
 - 1. Peter speaking to Simon, a sorcerer who had come to faith, been baptized, had received the Holy Spirit but then had fallen into sin and wickedness. Clearly not “full of” the Holy Spirit!
 - iii. “If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father *give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!*” (**Luke 11:13**)

- e. Daniel was full of the Holy Spirit and its wisdom, which had a tremendous impact on his work.
 - i. Wisdom to lead the entire Persian empire! Can you imagine the complexity and challenges of this?!
 - ii. We see Daniel's wisdom in his one-on-one interactions.
 - iii. His competence, where the king can say here's my kingdom Daniel, "I don't want to be troubled."
- f. We are to be full of the Spirit, more and more.
 - i. To navigate our lives.
 - ii. To lead in the church (even administrative matters!)
 - iii. In our work.
 - iv. **Questions:**
 - 1. Do my work colleagues see me as a wise person at my job?
 - 2. Does my boss say to me: take this, as I know that if you handle it I will not need to worry about it; this will be done excellently.

IV. As Christians, what example should we be setting at work?

- a. William Law, *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life*.
 - i. Written in the early 1700s.
 - ii. He walked the talk. He gave 90% of his income to the poor and lived off 10%.
 - iii. Highly educated. Born to a very wealthy family. Yet lived according to the Scriptures, which messed up his "nice life."
 - 1. Refused to swear an oath of allegiance to the king, which had massive consequences on his career (not given a position in the Anglican Church).
 - iv. In his book, he addresses holiness, being set apart for God's special purposes in all areas of our lives, including our employment/work.
- b. He provides helpful insights into how we ought to think about our work and how we ought to devote it to God.
 - i. God is holy. He is everywhere, knows everything, made everything. No part of our lives is hidden from His sight and His care.

- ii. Every person should live his or her entire life devoted to God. This includes their job/employment, no matter what they do for work.
 - 1. “Men of worldly business, therefore, must not look upon themselves as at liberty to live to themselves, to sacrifice to their own humors and tempers, because their employment is of a worldly nature.” (*A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life*, p. 31.)
 - a. We can’t compartmentalize our lives, living one way at church, but living differently at our jobs.
 - 2. “Men may, and must differ in their employments, but yet they must all act for the same ends, as dutiful servants of God, in the right and pious performance of their several callings.” (*A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life*, p. 32.)
 - a. No difference if you are serving as a minister, clergy, tradesman, or some other profession.
 - b. “When it can be shown, that men might be vain, covetous, sensual, worldly minded, or proud in their worldly business, then it will be allowable for clergymen to indulge the same tempers in their sacred profession.”
 - 3. “This is the common business of all persons in this world. ... men and women, rich and poor, must, with bishops and priests, walk before God in the same wise and holy spirit, in the same denial of all vain tempers, and in the same discipline and care of their souls; not only because they have all the same rational nature, and are servants of the same God, but because they all want the same holiness, to make them fit for the happiness, to which they are all called. It is therefore absolutely necessary for all Christians, whether men or women, to consider themselves as personas that are devoted to holiness, and so order their common way of life, by such rules and reason and piety, as may turn it into continual service unto Almighty God.” (*A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life*, p. 33.)
- iii. We should approach our work/employment with the same spirit and devotion that we approach prayer and giving to the poor (almsgiving).
 - 1. Jesus had firm warnings for those who prayed and gave to the poor to be seen by others, praying out of pride, seeking the praise of others, seeking glory from the world.

2. When we pray and give to the poor, we are to do so with a spirit of humility. For this we will be blessed! We are to bring this same spirit to our work/employment which will also produce blessing, *or the opposite if we don't!*
 - a. "If a man labors to be rich, and pursues his business, that he may raise himself to a state of figure and glory in the world, he is no longer serving god in his employment; he is acting under other masters, and has no more title to a reward from God, that he that gives alms, that he may be seen, or prays that he may be heard of men. For vain and early desires are no more allowable in our employments, than in our alms and devotions. For these tempers of worldly pride, and vainglory, are not only evil, when they mix with our good works, but they have the same evil nature, and make us odious to God, when they enter into our common business of our employment." (*A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life*, p. 34.)
- iv. Our work/employment should take on much less significance than our work of holiness, and the blessings of eternal rewards.
 1. We are to engage in our work only to the point we can "live above the world."
 2. "[Our work/employment] must have no more of our hands, our hearts, or our time, than is consistent with a hearty, daily careful preparation of ourselves for another life." (*A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life*, p. 35.)
 - a. We have renounced this world. How can we glory in it? **(Luke 14)**
 - b. How are we to glory in our wealth and worldly treasure, when we are to rejoice when it is taken away from us due to persecution?
 - c. We are preparing for an eternal reward. This takes time, energy, and devotion.
 - i. Time in the Word of God before work.
 - ii. Praying throughout the day.
 - iii. Keeping our head and heart pure from the world.

3. William Law speaks of “enduring our work/employment” (p. 35), even as we excel and bring glory to God through it.

v. Scriptures

1. “If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.”
(Colossians 3:1-2)
 - a. William Law: Christians are to “live above the world”, above our work/employment.
2. “Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; but as He who called you is Holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, ‘Be holy, for I am holy.’”
(1 Peter 1:13-16)
3. “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that *He might present her to Himself as a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.*”
(Ephesians 5:25-27)

V. Conclusion

- a. Daniel excelled in his work. King Darius had complete confidence in Daniel’s ability and trustworthiness, entrusting His kingdom to Daniel to run.
 - i. Daniel was humble, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom.
- b. Yet, Daniel never compromised. He lived “above” his work. His heart was not pulled into the wicked world he lived in and oversaw!
 - i. He fulfilled what was before him, day by day, living a righteous, uncompromising life. *May we do the same!*
 - ii. This is hard! This is also a great blessing! God’s way is good and desires what is good for us. He will help us!
 1. Examples of striving for righteousness in my work last week, and the blessings that came from this.