

Home Group Notes for Nobody's Looking (Daniel 6:1-5 / 10:1-14)

CHILDREN'S stories often portray Daniel as a young lad when he is thrown into the den of lions. But the prophet may have been in his eighties when this happened.

1. This section of the story opens with Babylon now under the rule of Darius the Mede. Once again, Daniel finds himself at the top of the government:

"Then this Daniel became distinguished above all the other high officials and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him."
(Daniel 6:3, ESV)

Christians are also supposed to be people whose lives are filled with the presence and works of the Holy Spirit:

"Repent and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself." (Acts 2:38-39, ESV)

Discuss: Daniel excelled because of his competence, trustworthiness, integrity – and because God gave him supernatural gifts and intervened in his life. How does the gift of the Holy Spirit shape our lives and help us?

2. GOD gave Abraham this promise:

"... in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed..."
(Genesis 22:18, ESV)

Discuss: In the story of Daniel, how do Abraham's descendants bless people of other nations?

3. It was Paul's hope that Christians would be...

"...blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world..." (Philippians 2:15, ESV)

Discuss: How have you seen Christians shine as lights? How can we help each other shine? What lessons can we learn from Daniel about how to preserve our integrity and live by God's values?

4. DANIEL'S job was to oversee the satraps who governed the kingdom and make sure the king didn't get ripped off. He did such a good job the king wanted to appoint him over the whole kingdom, and this didn't go down well. The two other high officials and the satraps decided to find out what Daniel got up to when nobody's looking.

“Then the high officials and the satraps sought to find a ground for complaint against Daniel with regard to the kingdom, but they could find no ground for complaint or any fault, because he was faithful, and no error or fault was found in him.” (Daniel 6:4, ESV)

It is incredible that Daniel managed to work at the heart of Babylon and avoid compromising his integrity.

Discuss: We can find our consciences pricked and come under pressure to tell “white lies” and compromise our values in work, home and even the church. Where have you felt under pressure and how can we support one another?

5. LATER in the story of Daniel he is visited by a heavenly figure and given this message:

“Fear not, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand and humbled yourself before your God, your words have been heard, and I have come because of your words.” (Daniel 10:12, ESV)

Discuss: What comfort does it bring to know that the God of heaven hears your prayers and sees you as you wrestle with whatever it is you are trying to think through?

Read Psalm 51:10-15 as a prayer:

*Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from your presence,
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and uphold me with a willing spirit.
Then I will teach transgressors your ways,
and sinners will return to you.*