



Going Deeper

Daniel 6 – Part 2

The Night the Lions Fasted

1. Daniel is teaching us about a life that's Gospel shaped and Gospel driven. Evaluate this popular phrase with your community; "Take time to do whatever makes your soul happy". Does this statement resonate a Christian virtue?

2. Part of the church's task in EVERY AGE is to diagnose the culture's particular and peculiar sicknesses and bring GOSPEL answers and hope to the culture's angst. Read these two quotes and discuss:

"Every age has had its darkness and its dangers. The task of the Christian is not to whine about the moment in which he or she lives but to understand its problems and respond appropriately to them."

Carl Trueman. The Rise and Triumph of the Modern Self

"Postmodern relativism has made deep inroads into many people's minds, resulting in an erosion of the concepts of truth, morality, and the value of human life. Put that together with the cult of the self, and you are well on the way to engineering an egocentric society, where truth and morality can be defined in such a way as to make sure it is "I" who survive."

John Lennox

3. Daniel is HATED and subsequently punished (attempted murder) for righteousness sake. What can you, our church, our tribe (evangelical church) do to strengthen resolve for this kind of grit?

4. The story features Darius (King/Emperor) as a people pleaser. While knowing the right thing to do he simply followed the angry crowd to appease them. Proverbs contrasts “the fear of the Lord” vs. “the fear of man”. How do you develop and form a deeper fear of God and fight the fear (or approval) of man?

5. Daniel’s message isn’t just about “THAT” God saves; it’s also teaching us about the method (“HOW” God saves).

Daniel 3:29 – “...There is no other god who is able to rescue IN THIS WAY”

God’s method is not around the trouble, avoiding the pain, ignoring the pain or dismissing human evil and suffering. God’s method is to ENTER into the pain.

“I could never myself believe in God, if it were not for the cross. The only God I believe in is the one Nietzsche ridiculed as ‘God on the cross.’ In the real world of pain, how could one worship a God who was immune to it? I have entered many Buddhist temples in different Asian countries and stood respectfully before the statue of the Buddha, his legs crossed, arms folded, eyes closed, the ghost of a smile playing around his mouth, a remote look on his face, detached from the agonies of the world. But each time after a while I have had to turn away. And in imagination I have turned instead to that lonely, twisted, tortured figure on the cross, nails through hands and feet, back lacerated, limbs wrenched, brow bleeding from thorn-pricks, mouth dry and intolerably thirsty, plunged in Godforsaken darkness. That is the God for me! He laid aside his immunity to pain. He entered our world of flesh and blood, tears and death. He suffered for us. Our sufferings become more manageable in the light of his. There is still a question mark against human suffering, but over it we boldly stamp another mark, the cross that symbolizes divine suffering. ‘The cross of Christ... is God’s only self-justification in such a world as ours...’ ‘The other gods were strong; but thou wast weak; they rode, but thou didst stumble to a throne; But to our wounds only God’s wounds can speak, and not a god has wounds, but thou alone.”

John Stott