

LIVING LIGHT IN BABYLON KEY TRUTHS FROM THE BOOK OF DANIEL

AT THE RED DOOR COMMUNITY CHURCH

OVERVIEW

The overarching purpose of our Daniel series was to help us cultivate a vision for how we can live faithfully to God in our time, and to equip us to live light in our time and place. To “live light” is to live free from enslavement to the ways of the world and to live as salt and light by pursuing faithful obedience to the way of Jesus. From this series came several key truths which we thought it helpful to highlight. This was an important series in the life of our church, and we didn’t want to move on from it quickly and not allow the truths God revealed to sink deep into our hearts and minds.

1. SOVEREIGNTY

God is sovereign and therefore has ultimate power and authority.

This means that

- Despite how things might appear, he is in control and is active in all human history to bring about his desired purpose which is the ultimate deliverance of his people. (Daniel 12)
- He has authority over all kingdoms, empires and rulers and he both raises up and deposes those in positions of power. (Daniel 2:21).

In light of this therefore

- We don't need to fret and worry about all that is going on in the world, we don't need to fear those in power and be anxious about their decisions.

2. ASSIMILATION

Babylon isn't just an ancient city; it is a spirit actively seeking to destroy the people of God by assimilating them to the ways of the kingdom of darkness.

This means that

- Our real enemy are the spiritual forces at work in our time and the true battle we fight is not against flesh and blood.
- We will continually face resistance and persecution and other strategies seeking to lead us to be unfaithful to God and assimilate us to the ways of the culture around us. (Daniel 1:3-8).

In light of this therefore

- We need to be wise to the schemes of Babylon to assimilate us. These schemes that seek to cut us off from Godly community, captivate us with the delights of Babylon, confuse us with lies and deception and finally cause us to compromise what we know to be good and true.

3. EXILE

Just as Daniel was an exile in Babylon, we too are exiles in a culture hostile to what we hold true.

_This means that

- We should not fit in to the culture around us and this should not surprise us.
- Just as God enabled Daniel to flourish in exile, his plan and his call to us is that we also would flourish in exile as we seek to love and serve the city to which we have been called. (Daniel 1:17-19).

_In light of this therefore

- We are not to assimilate with or separate from the culture around us but we are to seek the peace and the prosperity of our city.

4. RESOLVE

What Daniel and his 3 companions resolved to do and not do enabled them to stand against the temptation to assimilate to the culture in which they lived and stay faithful to God.

_This means that

- Daniel and his 3 companions knew God, they knew the way of God and therefore they knew what they needed to be resolved to. (Daniel 1:8)
- Their resolve strengthened them to resist bowing the knee in worship to anything other than Yahweh. (Daniel 3:16-18)

_In light of this therefore

- We need to orient our whole lives to knowing God and his ways that we would cultivate deep convictions and resolves that will enable us to resist all temptation to bow the knee in worship to anything other than Jesus.

5. PRAY

Daniel was a man committed to prayer and he prayed in accordance with what mattered to God.

_This means that

- He had a pattern (3 times a day), a place (his upstairs room), and a posture (humbly on his knees) of prayer which he persisted in no matter what was going on around him. (Daniel 6:10-11).
- In times of desperation, he turned to God in fasting and prayer with prayers of repentance, confession, intercession, and petition. And he prayed in alignment with what mattered to God – his city (Jerusalem) and his people. (Daniel 9:1-19).

_In light of this therefore

- We must embrace and resolve to become people of prayer who make it our daily practice to pray, who also pray as a matter of priority in the face of all challenges and who pray in accordance with what matters to God, which is his Church.

6. APOCALYPSE

Chapters 7-12 in Daniel are what is known as Apocalyptic Literature. These chapters record what God revealed to Daniel about Jesus and his coming.

_This means that

- Apocalypse does mean the end of the world. The word means to reveal.
- The apocalypse God gave to Daniel through divine encounter and vision was to reveal Jesus, his coming and his victory and to bring strength and encouragement through the revealing.

_In light of this therefore

- We need to seek God for our own apocalypse in our time and place. That is, God revealing Jesus to us. Reminding us of his second coming but also revealing his work in our current time.

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