



## **Culture Shift**

### **The Lion's Den – Week 5**

#### **Announcements**

**201 Dream Team Orientation** – Sunday October 12<sup>th</sup> at 5:00pm at all campuses. 201 Dream Team Orientation is the second step in Pathway and your place to learn more about how you are wired and where you can serve at Church of the King.

#### **Warm-up**

What is the biggest risk you've ever taken in your life? What happened? If you had to do it all over again, would you take the same risk?

As Daniel faced certain death for his beliefs, he put all of his trust in God to deliver him. We are going to discuss how Daniel was able to stand firm in the midst of extreme trials.

#### **Word and Application**

Daniel's life is a testimony to God's faithfulness. Having been abducted from his homeland as a teenager, Daniel saw God's favor and protection come through for him time and time again while serving in the royal court of Babylon. Towards the end of his life, Daniel experienced yet another shift when Babylon was overthrown by the Medo-Persian empire. Once again, he needed God's wisdom and power to navigate through the perils of living and working in a setting that was hostile towards God. Daniel's dependence on prayer enabled him to face and overcome death.

How can prayer give you the courage and peace to be able to face down life's hardest challenges?

**Read Daniel 6:1-4.** Think about Daniel's circumstances here. He was Hebrew and a servant of the king of Babylon. Upon Babylon's downfall his future prospects should have been grim, but instead he quickly distinguished himself as King Darius' most trusted official. It is no surprise that some Persian officials were jealous of Daniel's position.

Have you ever experienced persecution because God had blessed you with something that others wanted?

**Read Daniel 6:5.** Because the officials could find no fault in Daniel, they resorted to attacking God. By attacking God, the evil officials sealed their own fate.

How does this story help us understand the importance of godly character? What do you think is a safer place to be as a believer – under attack because of your personal wrongdoing, or under attack because of your belief in God?

**Read Daniel 6:6-9.** King Darius loved Daniel, yet he was easily coerced into signing Daniel's death sentence. How did the corrupt officials influence Darius to make such a hasty decision?

Even though Daniel had great favor under King Darius, all that quickly vanished when the officials appealed to Darius' pride. This is an important reminder that we need to put our trust in God, not in other people, no matter how strong our relationship with someone might seem at the moment.

Where you ever in a relationship where the other person's perception of you changed suddenly? How did this affect you?

**Read Daniel 6:10-11** to read Daniel's response to the plotting against him. Were his relationship or devotion to God affected by what was going on around him?

In this week's message, we learned that prayer takes us out of the pressure of the moment and into God's perspective and power. Daniel had developed a lifestyle of prayer over decades. His close, intimate relationship with the Father gave him the strength to face up to those plotting against him.

When you run into challenges, is prayer your first response or your last resort?

**Read Daniel 6:16-23** to read how God protected Daniel in the lion's den.

Daniel experienced the miraculous protection of God in the lion's den. He was confident in his obedience to God, even if it meant going against the king's decree. When he emerged unscathed from the lion's den, he gave credit to God for protecting him. The king and those around him were deeply impacted by what God had done for Daniel.

Are you facing any situations that feel similar to this story? How does Daniel's example inspire you to stand up for God?

As Christ-followers, we don't need to fear anything the world tries to throw at us. As we obey God and trust in Him, we can rest assured that He will protect us and defend us against our enemies.

## Prayer

Pray for everyone in your small group to develop a deeper lifestyle of prayer so that they can be prepared to face any challenge. Also, take time to ask for specific prayer requests from those in your small group.