

WAY TO PRAY

Daniel 6

INTRO: Turn your Bibles, or turn them on, to Daniel chapter 6. The Old Testament book of Daniel. I will give you time to find it. Today, I want to look again at the subject of PRAYER. I am preaching specifically on the title, "WAY TO PRAY", as in, "Way to pray Daniel", and, "Oh, that's the way to pray"!

Daniel is one of the great men of prayer that we see in the Word of God. He was serious about prayer. Not many people get arrested for praying, but Daniel did. We have the account in the 6th chapter of Daniel. The key verse is v 10.

Daniel 6:10 *"Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days."*

Underline that verse! Write in the margin of your Bible, "Key Verse on Prayer."

Now, let me ask the familiar question – If you were arrested for being a person of prayer, would there be enough evidence to convict? Daniel prayed in secret, but he did not keep it a secret that He was a man of prayer. Everyone knew that Daniel was a praying man, even his enemies. Does anybody know that you are a person of prayer?

Let me set the scene with a short introduction to this book and particularly this 6th chapter... Let me start by saying, this is a beloved Bible story—and no wonder. There are so many dramatic elements to this narrative; the jealousy of political subordinates, the vanity of a king, the integrity of Daniel, the power and preservation of God. It even has wild animals and violence. This is an incredible true tale told by the Holy Spirit.

Daniel, whose name means, "God is my judge" is the main human character and author of the book. He was an Israelite youth who was from, either the royal family, or of the nobles (Ch. 1: 3-4). He was taken captive when Nebuchadnezzar conquered Jerusalem in the third year of Jehoiakim, king of Judah (Ch. 1: 1-2). This was the year 605 B.C.. Daniel was well educated and became a court official and maintained an official position in the Babylonian kingdom until the Persians conquered Babylon. Daniel then became an official in the Persian kingdom, during the reign of King Cyrus, in 536 B.C. (Daniel 6:28). So Daniel lived through the entire seventy years of Babylonian captivity (Daniel 10:1).

By the time we get to chapter 6, a new King has ascended the throne, King Darius. By now, Daniel has well proven himself to be a man of great wisdom and ability. He has also made a name for himself as a man of integrity, and as one who loved the Lord His God.

Let's read a few verses together in **Chapter 6: 6-10** *"So (many officials that Darius had set over his kingdom), these governors and satraps, thronged before the king, and said thus to him: "King Darius, live forever! 7 All the governors of the kingdom, the administrators and satraps, the counselors and advisors, have consulted together to establish a royal statute and to make a firm decree, that whoever petitions any god or man for thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions. 8 Now, O king, establish the decree and sign the writing, so that it cannot be changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which does not alter." 9 Therefore King Darius signed the written decree. 10 Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days."*

PRAY WITH ME this morning and lets ask God to speak to our hearts today.

I want us to look at Daniel's prayer life for just a few minutes this morning. Notice...

I) THE COMMITMENT TO PRAYER: v 10 *"Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days."*

Notice how committed Daniel was to praying. The verse says, "when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home...and prayed" Real commitment is demonstrated in our desire to follow through.

Steve Brown, in his book, *Approaching God*, stated, "...before you begin the hard work of prayer, you must make a commitment to prayer, no matter what, so that it becomes an essential part of your life... Prayer, if one is going to be successful at it, must constitute a major commitment." (pp. 43,45)

Lets ask ourselves, how committed are we to prayer? How often do we pray? And when we pray, how earnestly do we pray? These are some of the questions we looked at last week, but I wonder, did anything change this past week with our prayer lives?

Daniel was committed to prayer. The decree was issued, he was made aware of it, and at that point he had a decision to make. If he prayed to God, according to the decree, he would be thrown into the den of lions and killed. But Daniel had long been committed to prayer. His relationship with God dictated that he spend time with God every day in prayer. So, for Daniel, it was no hard decision. The Word of God says, he went back to his room, after hearing what had happened... and he knelt and prayed, as always.

Can I ask, in your relationship with God, what things are you COMMITTED to? Are you committed to anything when it comes to God, or do you relate to God, only in a crisis, or when it's a convenient time?

If you want to be a prayer warrior, someone who can move Heaven with their prayers, you have to be committed to it.

II) THE CONCERN OF PRAYER: vv 10b-11 *"...with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days. 11 Then these men assembled and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God."*

For Daniel, prayer was an expression of his personal devotion to, and his dependency upon God. His main CONCERNS when praying, was making sure he conveyed his thankfulness to God for all that God had done, and humbly making his request known to God for the current needs of his life.

Philippians 4:6-7 *"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."*

What are the main concerns of your prayers?

I) THE COMMITMENT TO PRAYER: v 10

II) THE CONCERN OF PRAYER: vv 10b-11

III) THE CONSISTENCY IN PRAYER: v 10b *“with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days.”*

There was a consistency in Daniel's prayer life. 3 times a day!

Jesus taught in **Luke 18:1** that, *“we ought always to pray and not give up.”*

Paul said in **1 Thessalonians 5:17** that, we are to *“pray without ceasing.”*

King David said in **Psalms 55:16-17** *“As for me, I call to God, and the Lord saves me. 17 Evening, morning and noon, I cry out in distress, and God hears my voice.”*

How often do you pray? Do you have a set time to pray? Is there any consistency to your prayer life at all? I HOPE YOU ARE PRAYING AT 10:30 every morning with Filip and I. That's a good place to start, but you need to aspire for more. Listen, you will never be greater than your prayer life. And your prayer life will never be great until you have consistency in it.

Look, three times a day is all Daniel prayed. But notice what great effect it had. He had...

A) Favor: v 11-22 “Then these men assembled and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God. 12 And they went before the king, and spoke concerning the king's decree: “Have you not signed a decree that every man who petitions any god or man within thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions?” The king answered and said, “The thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which does not alter.” 13 So they answered and said before the king, “That Daniel, who is one of the captives from Judah, does not show due regard for you, O king, or for the decree that you have signed, but makes his petition three times a day.” 14 And the king, when he heard these words, was greatly displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him; and he labored till the going down of the sun to deliver him. 15 Then these men approached the king, and said to the king, “Know, O king, that it is the law of the Medes and Persians that no decree or statute which the king establishes may be changed.” 16 So the king gave the command, and they brought Daniel and cast him into the den of lions. But the king spoke, saying to Daniel, “Your God, whom you serve continually, He will deliver you.” 17 Then a stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the signets of his lords, that the purpose concerning Daniel might not be changed. 18 Now the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; and no musicians were brought before him. Also his sleep went from him. 19 Then the king arose very early in the morning and went in haste to the den of lions. 20 And when he came to the den, he cried out with a lamenting voice to Daniel. The king spoke, saying to Daniel, “Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?” 21 Then Daniel said to the king, “O king, live forever! 22 My God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths, so that they have not hurt me, because I was found innocent before Him;”

I) THE COMMITMENT TO PRAYER: v 10

II) THE CONCERN OF PRAYER: vv 10b-11

III) THE CONSISTENCY IN PRAYER: v 10b

A) Favor: v 11-22 CONTINUED Favor wasn't the only effect of Daniel's consistent prayer life. Notice...

B) Future: vv 26, 28 "I make a decree that in every dominion of my kingdom men must tremble and fear before the God of Daniel... So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian."

Just a little time consistently spent with God in prayer pays big dividends!

IV) THE CONDITIONS FOR PRAYER: v 10

A) He Had a Specific Place for Prayer: v 10a "Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed..." Daniel prayed facing Jerusalem. That's where the Temple was before being destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar. Do you have a place for prayer? Where is it?

B) He Had a Specific Posture for Prayer: v 10b "...he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days." It's not the position of our body that God cares about, it's the posture of our heart. Daniel knelt before God in acknowledgement of who God was. That's the WAY TO PRAY!

CONCLUSION: People look around and they ask, "Where is the God of Daniel?" But God looks around and asks, "Where are the Daniel's of God?" Dare to be a Daniel, Dare to be a Person of Prayer.