

## Prayer as Allegiance, Resistance & Witness Daniel 6

### Prayer as Allegiance



#### Faith

Daniel survived 2 empires, 2 cultures - Babylonian and Persian.

Each had their own Gods.

Each had ways of drawing him away from a life of faith.

He was an exile, he was given a pagan name - Belshazzar.

But he kept his relationship with the God of his people.

He kept faith.

Let me teach you a very simple method of prayer that Christians have used for centuries.

In fact, Daniel modelled this.



Morning Prayer - I am yours. Let me know and do your will today.



Mid-day Prayer - I remember I am yours throughout the day.



Night-time Prayer - Show me how I have lived well and how I may amend my ways. Grant me peace.  
This is where it all begins, the rhythm of prayer.

What begins simple and short can grow and expand as needed.  
Even a child can do this, why should an adult not?

### Commitment

When others plotted against him because of his successes they tested his commitment.  
They tricked the King into making an irrevocable edict.  
For 30 days, the only person anyone could pray to, was him.  
In other words, he was being declared a God.  
Anyone who broke the rule would be thrown to the lions.  
30 days isn't that long.  
During the season of Lent, we fast for 40 days from something.  
For others, 30 days is an eternity.  
Ask someone who is waiting for a job offer, or a baby, or something they long for.  
Couldn't Daniel have just given himself a break from God for 30 days?  
Couldn't he just go along with calling Darius a God?  
Couldn't the early Christians just gone along with the rest of their culture to say Caesar is Lord?  
Couldn't the Chinese believers just renounce Jesus and avoid execution or imprisonment?  
Couldn't our Syrian Armenian Orthodox Christians or the Ethiopian Orthodox Christians  
turn their back on their heritage of being Christians for nearly two thousand years  
so that ISIS would not execute them?  
Or the girl at Sandyhook, when face with a gunman who asked if she was a Christian simply say, "No?"  
We will likely never face such a question in a country with freedom of religion.  
Our commitment is not shown by life or death decisions.  
What erodes our faith are the small decisions we make about how we treat other people.  
How we think and act on a daily basis.  
Persecution brings purity to faith.  
Comfort brings complacency.  
But prayer, for the persecuted and the peaceful is the same.  
When was the last time you prayed for the persecuted church?  
Or for the church at all?

### Love

A Christian Prays not because they must, but because they want to.  
That desire, however, supersedes and centres all other desires.  
All longings are placed before God for whom we long.  
By this point in his life, Daniel is an older man.  
But what anchors his identity, what centres his world is his relationship with God.  
It isn't a ritual for him.  
It is at the core of who he is.  
If you truly love them, you don't deny them.  
You do not remain silent or separated from them.

Intimacy is based on an open heart.

### Prayer as Resistance



#### Counter Cult of Power

Daniel was the most powerful man in the entire Persian Empire next to the King.  
He understood power.

We have a saying that "Power Corrupts," and that "absolute power corrupts absolutely."

Daniel had that power in his hands in a culture of dominance and power.

Babylon and Persia were absolute cultures of power and influence.

But Daniel maintained an identity not touched by power.

He did this through prayer.

What are the aspects of power in our day and age?

Technique - creating methods, "science," systems, get rich, get healthy schemes.

Efficiency - What is the easiest, fastest way to success, fame, power, wealth, influence?

Self-Reliance - We can make this happen, you can do it, nothing can stop you, the power of positive thinking.

These powers only leave those who are broken behind.

In fact, these power create broken people!

How long will we be plagued by the A when we were told we should have an A plus?

The values of our culture of comfort, ownership, education and self-worth.

Prayer rejects these outright.

"Your will be done on earth as it is in Heaven."

Not my kingdom, not our Kingdom, not F3C, not Metro Vancouver, Not the Dominion of Canada,

The United States of America, Not Russia, not China, not Syria, not Babylon, not Persia, not Israel!

Daniel's prayer was not about dominance but about resisting the power that be.

We are not ruled by Hollywood or the Media and their values.

Our allegiance is not to what is popular or powerful.

Daniel got both of these right and he paid for it.

The Christian life is a life of prayer.

The Christian life is a revolutionary life, a transformative life.

Are weapons are not violence or manipulation, but forgiveness, friendship and faith.

### Prayer as Witness



Daniel's prayer bore witness to God's power.

It also moved Darius to proclaim that Yahweh was the true God.

Darius was humbled before God.

This came not by force or argument but by Daniel's witness as a man of faith and prayer.

Prayer bears witness to three things:

Solidarity with all God's people - Whether in Africa or Asia, or Iraq or Syria, or Europe or North America.

God's people pray that the Kingdom come.

I am asked, how do we pray?

ACTS - Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication

Learn from the prayers of the Bible.

Psalms, The Lord's Prayer, The Magnificat, Paul's prayers. Scripture is our prayer book.

See how God's people pray.

Historic prayers & litanies.

Anglican Prayer Book, Catholic Mass, Written Prayers of ancient and modern Saints.

### Public

Do you pray at home privately?

Do you pray at home publicly?

Do you pray at school or at work?

Prayer is not a private act.

It is not meant to be.

Even Jesus asked his disciples to stay up with him to pray in his time of deepest anguish.

We pray together.

We pray for our non-believing friends.

We ask if we can pray for them.

What do we pray?

We affirm that God see them.

We ask God's help and protection on them.

We pray as we believe.

We do this because we believe, perhaps that is the problem.

### **A Time of Prayer**

1. Affirm your Allegiance - "I will follow You"

2. Prepare your Resistance - "Your Kingdom come."

3. Bear witness - Prayer for those in need both globally and personally.