

Devoted Part 3 - "What do you see?" (8-1-21)

Review: Series on Devotion - No matter the difficult circumstances and the hostile culture around us, our character is what determines the course of our life! Devotion is tough - saying no and facing resistance.

1) Devotion shifts our Perspective

The king has a a troubling dream (Daniel 2:1-12)

- King demands his "counselors" - tell me the dream & what it means
- They are nervous & ask for the dream & promise they will give the meaning
- King threatens them with death

Daniel 2:8-9 (ESV)

(8) The king answered and said, "I know with certainty that you are trying to gain time, because you see that the word from me is firm— (9) if you do not make the dream known to me, there is but one sentence for you. You have agreed to speak lying and corrupt words before me till the times change. Therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that you can show me its interpretation."

Note: The king calls them out for all their stalling and says now is the time!

Daniel 2:10-11 (ESV)

(10) The Chaldeans answered the king and said, "There is not a man on earth who can meet the king's demand, for no great and powerful king has asked such a thing of any magician or enchanter or Chaldean. (11) The thing that the king asks is difficult, and no one can show it to the king except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh."

Note: They panic, defensive, & lash out. They feel as if this situation is impossible, and the "gods" are distant!

Daniel faces death

Daniel 2:12-13 (ESV)

(12) Because of this the king was angry and very furious, and commanded that all the wise men of Babylon be destroyed. (13) So the decree went out, and the wise men were about to be killed; and they sought Daniel and his companions, to kill them.

Note: Daniel and his friends are facing death at the king's wrath from a situation they were not involved in!
Unfair, arbitrary, and devastating! - **What's Daniel's response?**

Daniel 2:14-15 (ESV)

(14) Then Daniel replied with prudence and discretion to Arioch, the captain of the king's guard, who had gone out to kill the wise men of Babylon. (15) He declared to Arioch, the king's captain, "Why is the decree of the king so urgent?" Then Arioch made the matter known to Daniel.

Note: Arioch (name means: "like a lion") - comes to kill Daniel

- **Prudence** - The manner in which someone replies (The upright & firmness of a tree) Solid as an Oak!

Devoted to God - we don't have to **panic** under immense pressure & devastating circumstances!

- **Discretion** - Judgement, taste (distinguish between flavors) - **Perception** - what's really going on?
The real issue - the King is in distress and is looking for a solution to troubling dreams!

What's my perspective when trouble comes? Do I see just the impact on me, or a more full perspective?
When our perspective shifts through devotion to the Lord, we can ask - God what are you up to in this?

2) Devotion's go to move is Prayer

Daniel 2:16-18 (ESV)

(16) And Daniel went in and requested the king to appoint him a time, that he might show the interpretation to the king. (17) Then Daniel went to his house and made the matter known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions, (18) and told them to seek mercy from the God of heaven concerning this mystery, so that Daniel and his companions might not be destroyed with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.

Note: The context of Prayer - Community, Boldness, & Humility

a) A devoted community of Prayer (all thru the New Testament)

Acts 1:14 (ESV) - "All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer"

Acts 2:42 (ESV) - "And they devoted themselves to . . . prayer."

Acts 6:4 (ESV) - "But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word."

Romans 12:12 (ESV) - "Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer."

Colossians 4:2 (ESV) - "Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving."

b) Prayer - the intersection of Boldness & Humility

James 4:5-10 (ESV)

(5) Or do you suppose it is to no purpose that the Scripture says, "He yearns jealously over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us"? (6) But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." (7) Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. (8) Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. (9) Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. (10) Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.

Hebrews 4:16 (ESV)

Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

So Daniel and his friends committed themselves to prayer . . .

Daniel 2:19a (ESV)

Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision of the night.

Note: Pray & Rest - Both are acts of Trust which is what Prayer is all about!

3) Devotion - develops Intimacy with God

- **Intimacy** - Proper perspective & prayer lead to hearing God's voice (prophecy)!
- **Prophecy** - Comes through loving intimacy with God!

Daniel & John - a legacy of Revelation, built upon a foundation of loving intimacy . . .

Daniel 9:23 (ESV)

At the beginning of your pleas for mercy a word went out, and I have come to tell it to you, for you are greatly loved. Therefore consider the word and understand the vision.

Daniel 10:11-12 (ESV)

11 And he said to me, "O Daniel, man greatly loved, understand the words that I speak to you, and stand upright, for now I have been sent to you." And when he had spoken this word to me, I stood up trembling.

12 Then he said to me, "Fear not, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand and humbled yourself before your God, your words have been heard, and I have come because of your words.

Daniel 10:19 (ESV)

And he said, "O man greatly loved, fear not, peace be with you; be strong and of good courage." And as he spoke to me, I was strengthened and said, "Let my lord speak, for you have strengthened me."

Consider Daniel's response to this Revelation from God . . .

Daniel 2:19-23 (ESV)

(19) Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision of the night. Then Daniel **blessed** the God of heaven. (20) Daniel answered and said: "Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, to whom belong wisdom and might. (21) He changes times and seasons; he removes kings and sets up kings; he gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding; (22) he reveals deep and hidden things; he knows what is in the darkness, and the light dwells with him. (23) To you, O God of my fathers, I give thanks and praise, for you have given me wisdom and might, and have now made known to me what we asked of you, for you have made known to us the king's matter."

Note: This is the language of love - Daniel declares his gratitude to God, its specific & personal

Before anyone else knows anything, Daniel stops to glorify God!

Olympic Broadcast interviews - trying to fake (or even worse) invaded the privacy of celebration with those who know & love the successful Olympian who has persevered and overcome!

Daniel 2:27-30 (ESV)

(27) Daniel answered the king and said, "No wise men, enchanters, magicians, or astrologers can show to the king the mystery that the king has asked, (28) but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, and he has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days. Your dream and the visions of your head as you lay in bed are these: (29) To you, O king, as you lay in bed came thoughts of what would be after this, and he who reveals mysteries made known to you what is to be. (30) But as for me, this mystery has been revealed to me, not because of any wisdom that I have more than all the living, but in order that the interpretation may be made known to the king, and that you may know the thoughts of your mind.

Conclusion: Devotion - shifts our perspective, as we pray, and develop intimacy with God!