



Sleeping with Lions (Fearlessly)

Like Daniel, we have been placed in a world of worry and fear.

- † People today are afraid to pray in schools and public places.
- † Pastors are afraid to open their churches and speak the truth.
- † We need the courage to live for Christ in a broken world!
- † Daniel was a living example of what Proverbs 28:1 says: "The wicked flee when no one pursues, but the righteous are bold as a lion".
- † We must think right about what's wrong in our world, as determined by God!

1. Fear Always Has Its Friends

- † Whether it is financial problems, random acts of crime, crazies roaming the streets, or the threat of COVID, many of us are scared like never before.
- † There isn't a follower of Christ who doesn't at times struggle to reconcile what he knows about God and the challenges he faces.
- † Often, when our faith and our culture collide, fear seizes us.
- † While fear is designed by God and it has its benefit for us, it can often lead us astray.
- † Fear can cause us to shrink, when our courage should swell.
- † A bunch of career politicians were afraid of losing control to an outsider, Daniel.
- † Jealousy & Anger are two friends of fear.
- † These politicians were losing control, and fear motivated them to conspire against him.
- † Evil can never manufacture enough glue to keep itself together.
- † Evil plans will always dissolve.

2. The Fundamentals of Courage

- † For most of us, courage has to be developed over time.
- † Courage is more than feeling good about ourselves.
- † Daniel 6:3 - "Then this Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm."

- † Daniel had an excellent Spirit, the Spirit of God, living inside Him.
- † He is a trophy of war, and was made a slave, but Daniel had integrity!
- † Daniel 6:4 - “they could find no ground for complaints or any fault, because he was faithful, and no error was found in him”.
- † Daniel was pure and honest.
- † Daniel 6:5 - “Then these men said, ‘We won’t find anything against Daniel, unless we find it in connection with the law of his God’”.
- † Daniel was constant and consistent in His habit of prayer.
- † Prayer is a sign of trust – a sign of trust in God who does have the events of my life in His control.
- † Daniel 6:10 - “When Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he went to his house where he had windows in his upper chamber open toward Jerusalem. He got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he had done previously”.
- † Daniel prays at the same place, at the hour, in the same position, and in the same spirit as he had done before.
- † Our convictions shouldn’t be based on what the world says, but on what GOD says!
- † You need to develop and live life with biblical convictions.

You have three choices for your standards of right and wrong.

1. **Internal Choice** - “I am going to believe based on what “I choose to be truth.”
2. **External Choice** – “I will believe based on what everybody else is doing”.
3. **Eternal Choice** – “God is Truth. God is absolute. God is unchanging.”

Note what Daniel didn’t do.

- † Daniel didn’t pray with his windows shut or adjust his prayers so he wouldn’t offend the heathens!
- † Daniel was a lion of a man for Daniel was a man of conviction!
- † Do right and leave the consequences up to God!
- † We need to be Christ-honoring, Bible-saturated people who lead the charge!
- † We have sanitized a culture where no one has convictions!
- † We are strangled by consensus when we don’t have the courage to stand alone in our convictions.
- † He didn’t look for compromise but he went straight-forward in his path of prayer.

3. The Focus of Faith

- † The king was full of fear, and had a sleepless night before he got up and rushed to see if Daniel had been torn apart by lions.
- † We All Struggle with Fear! All of us become fearful, discouraged, and frustrated.
- † But to quote John Wayne, “Courage is being scared to death, but saddling up anyway.”
- † There was something different about Daniel – he had faith!
- † Courage is always produced by faith.

- † Faith is God-confidence!
- † “He got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God...” (Daniel 6:10c).
- † He had faith in God because he personally knew God was alive.
- † Daniel’s faith was from above!
- † He had faith in God for good reason.
- † God never has lost; He remains undefeated.
- † We need to have our faith focused like a laser.

Here are three components you’re going to need to increase your faith.

A. A Personal Experience with God

- † You need to recognize there is a relationship between the strength of your faith & personal experience with God.

B. A Knowledge of a Big God

- † There is a relationship between the strength of your faith and the size of your God.
- † If you have little faith, then your view of God is too small.
- † Faith says, “God will come through.”
- † Fear grows when you think people are big and God is small.
- † Faith grows when God is big and people are small.

C. A Vision Directed Toward God

- † You need to shift your eyes from what threatens to destroy you to the One who promises to deliver you. (Don’t focus on the lions, focus on the Lord!)
- † The power that faith draws its strength from is Christ!
- † Faith is sight even when the lights are off!
- † Daniel didn’t focus on the Lions, he focused on the LION of Judah! What God did!
- † And here’s the real irony, when we compare the two men’s perspectives that night: one man was at peace while the other was in conflict.
- † We are told that the King “cried out in anguish” to Daniel. (Daniel 6:20b).
- † All the while it was discovered that “no kind of harm was found on” Daniel inside the lion’s den!
- † When you are working against God, you will not sleep even on a “My Pillow”.
- † But when you are in the will of God, you can sleep on a bed of lions.
- † Daniel only had the presence of God.
- † Never fear, no matter what circumstances or valley you are going through, because God’s presence is enough!
- † God’s grace and presence and strength will always be sufficient for you!

