

Just “lion” around!

Lesson for Sunday, April 21, 2024

TEXT: Daniel 6

INTRO:

- Have you ever faced an animal that you feared? Maybe a snake or something crazy that happened on a hunting trip? Allow the class to share...
- Of all the wild animals, there is only one that we refer to as “The King of the Jungle.” It’s the lion. On TV they just look like a big cat. But in reality, they are to be feared.
- The Bible teaches us that God created it all – even the King of the Jungle. But Daniel reminds us that the King of the Jungle is no match for the King of Kings!
- Once again, we will see that Daniel had a fierce loyalty to his God, and it seems like nothing could intimidate him to be silent about his faith.

BIBLE STUDY:

1. The King’s Rule (vs. 1-9)
 - a. Darius the Mede had now come to the throne and established the Medo-Persian empire.
 - i. This kingdom was much different from Nebuchadnezzar’s. The first two verses describe a great division of power in the kingdom.
 - ii. As usual, Daniel had the position of power next to the king. How did this always seem to be the case with Daniel?
 - iii. Discuss “an excellent spirit.” Where does that come from? How do we obtain it? Can we have “an excellent spirit?” Are any of us known for this?
 - b. The presidents and prince’s underneath Daniel looked for a way to hurt him.
 - i. There are always jealous people who will try to hurt you if you follow God. As Christians, we should expect opposition and not be surprised by it.
 - ii. How impressive is it that they could find no fault as they examined Daniel’s life?
 - iii. The only thing they could use against him was his unswerving devotion to God.
 - iv. DISCUSS: If your enemies conspired against you, what angle would they take? Would their only opportunity be to attack your faith?
 - c. These men flattered King Darius and influenced him to sign a decree that the people could only pray to him for 30 days or be cast in the lion’s den for a certain death.
 - i. How can listening to flattery get you into trouble?
 - ii. “A long time ago I discovered that I am not as bad as my enemies say and I am not nearly as good as my friends say that I am.”

- iii. Following their bad advice, the King signed the law. Now not even the King could change it.
- 2. Daniel's Response (vs. 10-17)
 - a. Daniel was consistent. He did exactly the same thing he had always done.
 - b. Discuss:
 - i. What if he would have closed his windows to have prayer – any problem with that?
 - ii. How do we sometimes compromise our beliefs and actions to “save face” with the world?
 - c. Daniel's enemies saw him and “turned him in” to the King. The King was now trapped – he had to put Daniel in the den of lions.
 - d. Notice the king's feelings about the situation. It seems he hadn't thought his decision completely through.
 - e. The King made the comment, “The God you serve will deliver you.” What had he seen in Daniel's life?
- 3. God's Deliverance (vs. 18-28)
 - a. The king had a long, sleepless night worrying about Daniel.
 - i. Who slept better that night, Daniel or King Darius?
 - ii. Do you think he really expected Daniel to answer him when he went to the lion's den?
 - b. Daniel responds, “My God hath sent his angel...” What a beautiful testimony of God's deliverance!
 - i. Consider: Was Daniel ever really in any danger? “There is no safer place to be than in the center of God's will.”
 - ii. From an eternal perspective, who was in more danger that night – the King in the palace or Daniel in the den? How do we maintain an eternal paradigm in the midst of troubling circumstances?
 - c. The tide turns on Daniel's enemies as they were thrown into the den. The miracle of Daniel's protection was confirmed with how quickly they were destroyed (vs. 24).
 - d. The account ends with the King's decree.
 - i. Notice the impact of Daniel's willingness to stand: The King found God, just like Nebuchadnezzar.
 - ii. Could we affect others as Daniel affected these pagan kings? What will it take for us to do so?

CONCLUSION

- Closing thought: Daniel would rather die than skip his time with God.
 - What does it take for us to miss our time with the Lord?
 - What changes do we need to make?