



November 14, 2024

Messy People – Daniel: Thriving in Messy Circumstances

Social Time

Thanks to those who brought Treats!

Prayer Requests and Update Prayer List

Opening Prayer

Hymns

ELW 818 – *O, Master, Let Me Walk with You*

ELW 744 – *Lord, Be Glorified*

ELW 860 – *I'm So Glad, Jesus Lifted Me*

Bible Study Business

Preparing for Discussion

Look through your book and notice any scriptures that stick out for you. Make note of them here:

Also notice any stories that struck you, quotes that prompted you to think, questions this raised, or insights you gained over this past week that you might like to share. Make a note here:

Discussion

1. What stories or scriptures in this week's readings really stood out for you?
2. Daniel faced a challenge by being told to eat non-kosher food. As Christians living in our culture today, what challenges do we face as individuals and as a church regarding standing up for values prevalent in our society?
3. Daniel 3 describes the statue that King Nebuchadnezzar built which all people were expected to bow down to. His three friends, Shadrack, Meshack and Abednego refused to bow down and were punished by being thrown into the fiery furnace. In vs 16-18, they said, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God whom we serve is able to save us. He will rescue us from your power, Your Majesty. **But even if he doesn't**, we want to make it clear to you, Your Majesty, that we will never serve your gods or worship the gold statue you have set up." (cont.)

- Have you faced a time when you looked to God for help and then realized, **but even if he doesn't** intervene and save you, it would ultimately be okay because you were in God's hands? What was that like for you?
4. In the end, God protected them and they survived. On p. 186 our author writes "When culture conflicts with character, we have the opportunity to live with integrity."
- How is integrity tested in our day?

Read Daniel chapter 6

5. When Daniel faced possible death for praying to God, he continued his prayer routine and didn't make any effort to hide it.
- When have you faced consequences for practicing your faith?
 - How have you responded?
6. What was the result when Daniel maintained his regular prayer habit?
7. How can one person's faith and courage impact those around them?
8. The character traits we focused on this week are:
Discipline, Humility, Integrity, Wisdom, and Courage
- Which of the character traits did Daniel display and how?
 - How do you see these character traits on display or missing in our world today?
 - Which of these character traits do you find most relevant to challenges you face?
Why?

Key Take Away

Sometimes life is messy, and at times the messes feel completely overwhelming, God does not promise to spare us difficulties, but he does promise to be with us through them. And that is enough!

Birthdays

Closing Prayer

Dear God, thank you for this journey through messiness. Thank you for showing us over and over how you love and restore messy people and relationships. Give us insight as we reflect on the story of Daniel and each of those messy people we have studied. Guide us to apply your word and teachings to our lives.

Lord's Prayer

Upcoming Schedule

Date	Topic	Prior to the Session Read and Reflect on:
11/21	<i>Honoring Our Neighbor's Faith</i> – Introduction	pages 4-6
11/28	Thanksgiving Break	
12/5	ELCA & Missouri Synod Lutheran Church	pages 58-61 & 82-85
12/12	Roman Catholic Church	pages 109-113
12/19	Eastern Orthodox Church & Christmas Celebration	pages 42-46
12/26 & 1/2	Christmas and New Year's Beak	

Daniel 6:1-28

¹Darius the Mede decided to divide the kingdom into 120 provinces, and he appointed a high officer to rule over each province. ²The king also chose Daniel and two others as administrators to supervise the high officers and protect the king's interests. ³Daniel soon proved himself more capable than all the other administrators and high officers. Because of Daniel's great ability, the king made plans to place him over the entire empire.

⁴Then the other administrators and high officers began searching for some fault in the way Daniel was handling government affairs, but they couldn't find anything to criticize or condemn. He was faithful, always responsible, and completely trustworthy. ⁵So they concluded, "Our only chance of finding grounds for accusing Daniel will be in connection with the rules of his religion."

⁶So the administrators and high officers went to the king and said, "Long live King Darius! ⁷We are all in agreement—we administrators, officials, high officers, advisers, and governors—that the king should make a law that will be strictly enforced. Give orders that for the next thirty days any person who prays to anyone, divine or human—except to you, Your Majesty—will be thrown into the den of lions. ⁸And now, Your Majesty, issue and sign this law so it cannot be changed, an official law of the Medes and Persians that cannot be revoked." ⁹So King Darius signed the law.

¹⁰But when Daniel learned that the law had been signed, he went home and knelt down as usual in his upstairs room, with its windows open toward Jerusalem. He prayed three times a day, just as he had always done, giving thanks to his God. ¹¹Then the officials went together to Daniel's house and found him praying and asking for God's help. ¹²So they went straight to the king and reminded him about his law. "Did you not sign a law that for the next thirty days any person who prays to anyone, divine or human—except to you, Your Majesty—will be thrown into the den of lions?" "Yes," the king replied, "that decision stands; it is an official law of the Medes and Persians that cannot be revoked."

¹³Then they told the king, "That man Daniel, one of the captives from Judah, is ignoring you and your law. He still prays to his God three times a day."

¹⁴Hearing this, the king was deeply troubled, and he tried to think of a way to save Daniel. He spent the rest of the day looking for a way to get Daniel out of this predicament.

¹⁵In the evening the men went together to the king and said, "Your Majesty, you know that according to the law of the Medes and the Persians, no law that the king signs can be changed."

¹⁶So at last the king gave orders for Daniel to be arrested and thrown into the den of lions. The king said to him, "May your God, whom you serve so faithfully, rescue you."

¹⁷A stone was brought and placed over the mouth of the den. The king sealed the stone with his own royal seal and the seals of his nobles, so that no one could rescue Daniel. ¹⁸Then the king returned to his palace and spent the night fasting. He refused his usual entertainment and couldn't sleep at all that night.

¹⁹Very early the next morning, the king got up and hurried out to the lions' den. ²⁰When he got there, he called out in anguish, "Daniel, servant of the living God! Was your God, whom you serve so faithfully, able to rescue you from the lions?"

²¹Daniel answered, "Long live the king! ²²My God sent his angel to shut the lions' mouths so that they would not hurt me, for I have been found innocent in his sight. And I have not wronged you, Your Majesty."

²³The king was overjoyed and ordered that Daniel be lifted from the den. Not a scratch was found on him, for he had trusted in his God.

²⁴Then the king gave orders to arrest the men who had maliciously accused Daniel. He had them thrown into the lions' den, along with their wives and children. The lions leaped on them and tore them apart before they even hit the floor of the den.

²⁵Then King Darius sent this message to the people of every race and nation and language throughout the world: "Peace and prosperity to you! ²⁶I decree that everyone throughout my kingdom should tremble with fear before the God of Daniel. For he is the living God, and he will endure forever. His kingdom will never be destroyed, and his rule will never end. He rescues and saves his people; he performs miraculous signs and wonders in the heavens and on earth. He has rescued Daniel from the power of the lions."

²⁸So Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian.