

3-8-2009, COTR Texarkana

Title: Daniel and the Favor of God

Purpose: Provoke people to imitate the godly choices of Daniel to find God's favor in uncertain times.

Spiritual Truth: Favor follows godly choices.

Text: Dan 1:9, Prov 12:2

Topic: Favor, Uncertainty, Daniel, Choices

Series Title: Finding Favor in Uncertain Times

Series Purpose: Provoke people to make godly choices to experience God's favor in uncertain times.

## Daniel and the Favor of God

### I. Introduction

#### A. News Headlines:

1. The work week ended on more down news, with the report of 651,000 more American jobs slashed and an unemployment rate climbing to 8.1 percent. That is the highest rate of people out of work in more than 25 years, as the recession continued to put enormous pressures on families and industries.

#### B. Review:

1. If there is a word describing America today it is uncertainty. People are afraid of the future. We're all wondering what we'll do if our economy continues to get worse. We're going to the Bible for answers. We don't have to be afraid.
2. **Series Title: Finding Favor in Uncertain Times**
  - a. I asked the question, "How do we do find God's favor in a world filled with such uncertainty?"
    - i. Make godly choices to get you in position experience God's favor.
3. Proverbs 12:2 (NKJV)  
<sup>2</sup> **A good man obtains favor from the LORD, But a man of wicked intentions He will condemn.**
  - a. A good man makes godly choices based on God's Word. A wicked man does what is right in his own eyes. A good man will be blessed by God and a wicked man will not.
  - b. Go to web page and hear about Esther and Joseph finding favor.

#### C. Today: Daniel and the Favor of God

1. Daniel, like Esther and Joseph, was a slave who experienced remarkable favor in very difficult circumstances.
2. Daniel 1:9 (NIV)  
<sup>9</sup> Now **God had caused the official to show favor and sympathy to Daniel,**
3. Daniel 2:48 (NIV)  
<sup>48</sup> Then **the king placed Daniel in a high position and lavished many gifts on him. He made him ruler over the entire province of Babylon** and placed him in charge of all its wise men.
4. Daniel 5:29 (NIV)  
<sup>29</sup> Then at Belshazzar's command, **Daniel was clothed in purple, a gold chain was placed around his neck, and he was proclaimed the third highest ruler in the kingdom.**

5. Daniel 6:28 (NIV)

<sup>28</sup> So **Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius** and the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

- a. How could a slave find such favor and blessing? Was his favor accidental? Was he lucky or did God honor his godly choices?
- b. Summary:
  - i. Daniel had the “Big C”, character
  - ii. Daniel refused to violate his spiritual convictions
  - iii. Daniel served God continually
  - iv. Daniel was committed to doing what was right

**D. Purpose: Provoke people to imitate the godly choices of Daniel to find God’s favor in uncertain times.**

**E. Spiritual Truth: Favor follows godly choices.**

## **II. Daniel made godly choices and found God’s favor**

### **A. Video: Daniel**

### **B. Daniel had the “Big C”, character**

1. Daniel 6:1-4 (NLT)

<sup>1</sup> Darius the Mede decided to divide the kingdom into 120 provinces, and he appointed a high officer to rule over each province. <sup>2</sup> The king also chose Daniel and two others as administrators to supervise the high officers and protect the king’s interests. <sup>3</sup> **Daniel 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. <sup>4</sup> Then 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.**

- a. Daniel’s promotion was not accidental. His character got him in position for favor and promotion.
- b. Daniel didn’t rely on seniority, affirmative action, quotas or political contacts to get ahead. He was a man of integrity. He kept his word. He could be trusted because he was neither corrupt nor negligent.
- c. If he had access to petty cash he wouldn’t steal. He wouldn’t leave work and leave the doors unlocked because it was someone else’s job. He had character. Character got him in position for promotion and favor.
- d. Application: If you want to have favor you must have character. Lack of character is one reason America is in trouble. It’s a problem with character when executives rape companies so they can get ahead. It’s a character problem when politicians campaign on one thing and do another when they get elected.
- e. Character made Daniel outstanding and exceptional. It worked for him and it will work for us.

### **C. Daniel refused to violate his spiritual convictions**

1. Daniel 6:7-10 (NIV)

<sup>7</sup> The royal administrators, prefects, satraps, advisers and governors have all agreed that the king should issue an edict and enforce the decree that **anyone who prays to any god or man during the next thirty days, except to you, O king, shall be thrown into the lions’ den...** <sup>9</sup> So King Darius put the decree in writing.

<sup>10</sup> Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to

his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. **Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God,** just as he had done before.

- a. Daniel had a conviction about prayer. A conviction is a strong belief you're willing to sacrifice for. He prayed even when it got him in trouble.
  - i. Story about soldiers coming into a church service and saying "deny your faith or die." After the crowd left the soldiers inquired about Christ having made sure those playing church were gone.
  - ii. Why did they stay? Conviction was more important than death.
- b. Is your religion a matter of convenience or conviction you're willing to sacrifice for?
  - i. President Obama is proposing to eliminate the charitable tax deduction for giving. Would you still give? Do you pray over your food when your unchurched friends are with you?
- c. Daniel found favor because of his godly choice to stand for God when there was a price to pay. It worked for him. It will work for us.

#### **D. Daniel served God continually**

##### 1. Daniel 6:16-20 (NIV)

<sup>16</sup>So the king gave the order, and they brought Daniel and threw him into the lions' den. The king said to Daniel, "May **your God, whom you serve continually**, rescue you!" ...<sup>19</sup> At the first light of dawn, the king got up and hurried to the lions' den. <sup>20</sup>When he came near the den, he called to Daniel in an anguished voice, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has **your God, whom you serve continually**, been able to rescue you from the lions?"

- a. Daniel had a reputation for serving God 24/7. Daniel was the same Sunday as he was on Monday morning or Saturday night. He wasn't perfect but he tried to live for God every day.
- b. One of the problems in modern Christianity is people think coming to church when it's convenient and giving a couple of dollars makes you a Christian. Not Daniel. His life revolved around serving God. This was the #1 reason God favored him. He was committed. God was 1<sup>st</sup> in his life.
- c. The application for us is huge. God honors people who are faithful to Him. He wants people to follow Him with all their heart.
- d. Daniel found favor because he chose to serve God continually. It worked for him. It will work for us.

#### **E. Daniel was committed to doing what was right**

##### 1. Daniel 6:22 (NIV)

<sup>22</sup>My God sent his angel, and he shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because **I was found innocent in his sight. Nor have I ever done any wrong before you, O king.**"

- a. Daniel lived by what some today consider an archaic concept, doing right instead of doing wrong.
  - i. Daniel didn't steal, lie or act irresponsibly. He served his boss without complaining. He told the truth and was not negligent in his responsibilities. In short he obeyed what God said
- b. One of the most confusing topics in America today is the difference between right and wrong. We've somehow come to believe we can decide for ourselves what is right and what is wrong. If it's to our advantage we lie. If a child is inconvenient we abort it. If we don't like our spouse we divorce
- c. God has an entirely different idea. He promises to bless people who do right

- i. Deuteronomy 12:28 (NCV)  
<sup>28</sup> **Be careful to obey all the rules I am giving you so that things will always go well for you and your children, and you will be doing what the LORD your God says is good and right.**
- d. If favor follows godly choices then there is no greater commitment we can have than to do what God says in His Word.
- e. Proverbs 14:9 (The Message)  
<sup>9</sup> **The stupid ridicule right and wrong, but a moral life is a favored life.**
- f. John 5:29 (The Message)  
<sup>29</sup> **Those who have lived the right way will walk out into a resurrection Life; those who have lived the wrong way, into a resurrection Judgment.**

### III. Conclusion

**A. How could a slave find such favor and blessing from God and man?** Was his favor accidental? Was he lucky or did God honor his godly choices?

1. **Spiritual Truth: Favor follows godly choices.**

**B. Summary:**

1. Daniel had the “Big C”, character
2. Daniel refused to violate his spiritual convictions
3. Daniel served God continually
4. Daniel was committed to doing what was right

### IV. Response

**A. Prayer**

1. Courage to have character.
2. Live by our convictions.
3. Serve God 24/7.
4. Commit to doing right.

**B. Souls**

**C. Join COTR**