**Series: Stand Up for Jesus #2**

(Spiritual Confidence In A Chaotic World)

Daniel 2:1-49; Hebrews 4:13-16; Mark 10:23-31; Ps. 119:9-16 October 21, 2018

**Summary: Daniel's response to a kingdom wide crisis teaches Christians how to respond to today's decaying moral culture.**

 If College students in America today represent the future of our nation, we are in great trouble! Perhaps you have seen one of those “man on the street” interviews on a college campus where students are unable to provide even the most basic details of American History, the political process or current national leaders. It is simultaneously humorous and depressing to hear twenty-somethings unable to state the year of America's independence or one of the Founding Fathers. America’s future looks bleak when college students have such a poor educational background. The economic, political and moral crisis of our day is only bound to get worse.

 America is reaping the full blossom of the destruction of morals that began in the 1960's. In 1963 the Supreme Court forbade prayer in government schools, in 1973 the full blown destruction of the unborn.

 We have turned away from God. A small minority of secularists in Academics, Entertainment and Politics have worked with great success to eliminate all public reference to God and portray Christians as ignorant, unscientific and intolerable.

 It is the atheists who are intolerant and aggressively indoctrinating people. Not the Christians. Not the Church.

 All of this effort to de-Christianize America has left us with an increasingly pagan culture, and increasingly wicked leaders.

 The consequences are already being felt.

 We have

* lost our founding Christian identity
* lost our values
* re-defined the family
* re-ignited racial tension
* burdened future generations with staggering debt
* invoked class warfare
* established a welfare state
* experienced family breakdown
* we have replaced education with social indoctrination.

 AND the CONSEQUENCES are being felt by everyone - Christian and non-Christian alike. God warns us of the consequences of living in a nation that turns from God.

 Proverbs 29:2 *"When the righteous increase, the people rejoice, but when the wicked rule, the people groan."*

 Ecclesiastes 10:5 *"There is an evil that I have seen under the sun, as it were an error proceeding from the ruler:"*

 What can I do when the consequences of evil threaten me and my family?

 There is an example! DANIEL

 In Daniel chapter 2, wicked King Nebuchadnezzer of Babylon issued an **Executive Order** to kill all of the wise men in Babylon.

 The Hebrew and Babylonian Wise Men would all suffer!

Daniel 2:8–13 (ESV)

 *8Then the king answered, “I am certain that you are trying to gain time, because you realize that this is what I have firmly decided: 9If you do not tell me the dream, there is only one penalty for you. You have conspired to tell me misleading and wicked things, hoping the situation will change. So then, tell me the dream, and I will know that you can interpret it for me.”*

 *10The astrologers answered the king, “There is no one on earth who can do what the king asks! No king, however great and mighty, has ever asked such a thing of any magician or enchanter or astrologer. 11What the king asks is too difficult. No one can reveal it to the king except the gods, and they do not live among humans.”*

 *12This made the king so angry and furious that he ordered the execution of all the wise men of Babylon. 13So the decree was issued to put the wise men to death, and men were sent to look for Daniel and his friends to put them to death*.

 Daniel’s response provides an example for us to follow.

 GOD HAS AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FOR A CHAOTIC WORLD!

 Daniel asks for an appointment with the King.

 Daniel 2:16 “*At this, Daniel went in to the king and asked for time, so that he might interpret the dream for him.”*

 Daniel did not yet know the dream!

 Perhaps Daniel remembered JOSEPH, interpreting Pharoah’s dream!

 But this was even more difficult, because the dream was not revealed!

 Daniel’s immediate response seeking an appointment with the King is a reminder to us that GOD SPEAKS through US!

 Daniel knew that God would have a message for King Nebuchadnezzar.

God uses his people to deliver his message. Amos 3:7 (ESV) 7 “For the Lord God does nothing without revealing his secret to his servants the prophets.”

In the Church age, every believer speaks as a prophet for God, revealing God’s message to the world. Colossians 1:25-27, ESV “I became a minister according to othe stewardship from God that was given to me for you, to make the Word of God fully known, 26 the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints. 27 To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are rthe riches of the glory of pthis mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

2 Corinthians 4:7 "But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us."

 God’s Message was for Nebuchadnezzar AND the entire world.

Daniel 2:4 "Then the Chaldeans said to the king in Aramaic, “O king, live forever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will show the interpretation.”"

 Daniel 2:4-7: 28 was written in Aramaic, the trade language of the world at that time. Daniel’s message concerning Babylon and the nations of the world was for everyone to hear. God was using Daniel and Nebuchadnezzar to announce the future path of human government and world history.

 **But HOW did Daniel go about delivering this message?** Daniel’s actions provide some excellent guidelines for Christians today, delivering God’s message in a secular world growing more and more adverse to Christianity.

 **We can do this when we are confident of our identity in Christ.**

**FIRST, Confident Messengers are Wise and Tactful**

 Daniel 2:14 *"When Arioch, the commander of the king’s guard, had gone out to put to death the wise men of Babylon, Daniel spoke to him with wisdom and tact."*

 Wisdom is the trait of judging wisely and objectively

 Tact is knowing how to act in a particular situation

 Daniel knew and understood his audience

 We must make the gospel understandable to this generation.

Illus: Imagine a missionary interview in which following dialogue takes place:

Missionary Committee: Are you going to learn the customs of the people?

Missionary Candidate: NO

Missionary Committee: Are you going to eat what they eat?

Missionary Candidate: NO

Missionary Committee: Are you going to take time to understand their customs:

Missionary Candidate: NO Just give me some money and I will go and be a missionary

 That missionary would not be very successful, and would not likely find any church willing to partner with him or her. But that is the same response that many Christians have when it comes to evangelism in our own communities! Our culture is a mission field! The people in post-Christian America think, act and live very differently than Christians who have been in the church for decades. We must learn how they think and connect with them in a meaningful way if we desire to reach them with the gospel.

 We must engage our culture with tact and wisdom.

 We must find points of interest.

 How do we get wisdom? James Proverbs

 Jesus gave us this principle when he said, in Matthew 10:16 "*“Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves."*

 Paul adds to Christ’s admonition. 2 Corinthians 1:12 "For our boast is this, the testimony of our conscience, that we behaved in the world with simplicity and godly sincerity, not by earthly wisdom but by the grace of God, and supremely so toward you."

**2nd, Confident Messengers Trust God when the situation seems hopeless.**

 In Chapter 1, Daniel and his friends are given three blessings by God

* HEALTH Daniel 1:15 *"At the end of the ten days they looked healthier and better nourished than any of the young men who ate the royal food.”*
* WISDOM &INFLUENCE. Daniel 1:20 " In every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king questioned them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in his whole kingdom.”

 NOW, ALL THREE are in jepordy He might lose his head and his influence.

 Some of us might be wondering, God - What are you doing?

 But Daniel TRUSTED GOD!!

 He asks to see the King even before he knows the dream!

 If Daniel could trust God, not having seen Jesus yet, how much more can we trust God having the opportunity to know Jesus who carried our sins to the cross and has given us the sure promise of an eternity with Him!

**3rd, Confident Messengers win their battles in prayer.** Daniel 2:17–18 "Then Daniel went to his house and made the matter known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions, " "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."

 How much more for us today, we have the sweet invitation of Jesus to come in prayer, *“boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most.”* Hebrews 4:16

**4TH: Confident Messengers know that We’re Just the Messengers! It is GOD’S MESSAGE!**

Daniel 2:20–23 "Daniel answered and said: “Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, to whom belong wisdom and might. " "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; " "he reveals deep and hidden things; he knows what is in the darkness, and the light dwells with him. " "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.”"

Daniel 2:27–28 "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, " "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:"

Our World is LOST and needs rescued! We have the message to deliver them!