Success & Security

Daniel 6

Daniel in the world of his day

❓ Verses 2-3 A successful man

❓ Verses 4-5
  ❓ An honest (distinctive) man
  ❓ A godly man

TRUST in God

Advance Excellence // Avoid Evil

Earthly Realism?

☐ "Honesty is the best policy, unless of course you are an exceptionally good liar."

☐ "Show me a successful man, and I'll show you a successful cheat."

☐ "The Christian life doesn't work in the real world."

☐ "Life is like a cup of tea."

G K Chesterton

"The Christian life has not been tried and found wanting. It has been unwanted and left untried."

Daniel and his world

? Verses 2-3 A successful man

? Verses 4-5
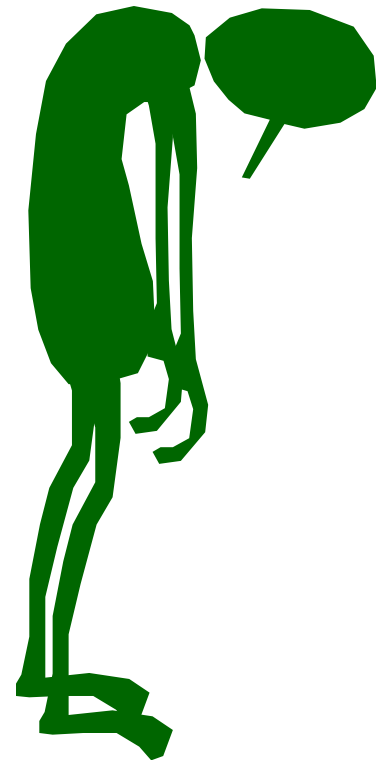   ? An honest (distinctive) man
   ? A godly man

Daniel's Earthly Success:
Distinctive without Defilement

The <u>Realism</u> of Daniel 6

❖**Life in the real world**
  ➢cunning & jealous colleagues (1-5)
  • "as a group" (6,11,15)

Have you ever felt as though everyone was scheming against you, as though everything was working to bring you down?

The R̲e̲a̲l̲i̲s̲m̲ of Daniel 6

❖ **Life in the real world**
  ➤ cunning & jealous colleagues (1-5)
  ➤ careless & bureaucratic management (6-9)

  - he didn't check: "we all agree" (7) !!
  - he didn't think: "he put it in writing" (9)
  - he was sympathetic but unable (unwilling?)
                    to make exceptions (14)

The <u>Realism</u> of Daniel 6

❖ **Life in the real world**
  ➢ cunning & jealous colleagues (1-5)
  ➢ careless & bureaucratic management (6-14)
  ➢ changing & transient fortunes (2,3,16,28)

  - **in the top three (2)**
  - **earmarked for number one (3)**
  - **down in the pit (16)**
  - **back on top (28)**

The <u>Realism</u> of Daniel 6

❖ **Life in the real world**
➢ cunning & jealous colleagues (1-5)
➢ careless & bureaucratic management (6-14)
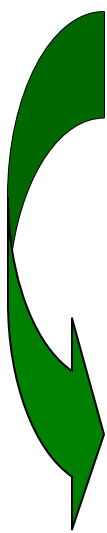➢ changing & transient fortunes (2,3,16,28)

This is life in today's world as we know it!

The Realism of Daniel 6

❖Life in the real world

❖**Integrity in the real world** ⬅

- Is integrity the best policy in the "real" world?

> The Christian life has not been tried and found wanting. It has been unwanted and left untried.
>
> G.K. Chesterton

The Realism of Daniel 6

❖Life in the real world

❖**Integrity in the real world?**

•Is integrity the best policy in the "real" world?

•**How realistic is Daniel's deliverance from the lions?**

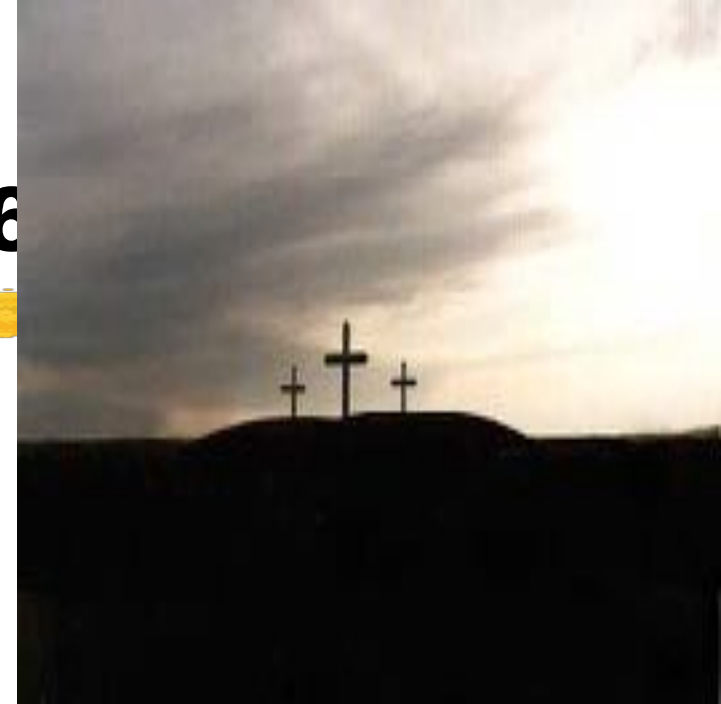# The R<u>ealism</u> of Daniel 6

❖ Life in the real world

❖ Integrity in the real world?

➢ Does Daniel 6 promise e<u>arthly</u> protection to all who do what is right and trust in God?

• **the 2nd half of the book (e.g. 7:7,21; 8:24; 11:33)**

• **the experience of the earliest readers in 2nd century BC Greece**

• **the analogy with Jesus' death & resurrection**

Jesus' death & Daniel 6

- Betrayal by close associate
- Swiftly changing fortunes
  - Palm Sunday to Good Friday
- A ruler unable (unwilling?) to set Jesus free
  - Pilate & the voice of the Jewish leaders
- Not saved from the cross or the lions' den
- The tomb/pit is sealed with a stone
- Resurrection / saved from the lions

The Realism of Daniel 6

❖Life in the real world

❖Integrity in the real world?

➢Does Daniel 6 promise e<u>arthly</u> protection to all who do what is right and trust in God?

NO! It assures us that even death will not harm us or deny us the eternal security of God's protection.
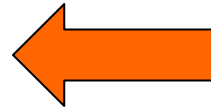
Daniel 6

❖ The Realism of Daniel 6
  ➢ Life in the real world
  ➢ Integrity in the real world

❖ The Message of Daniel 6
  ➢ Success

The Message of Daniel 6

❖ <u>Success?</u>
➢ the nature of Daniel's "success"
  • achieved without corruption or negligence (4)
  • achieved without hiding his faith in God (5,16,20)
  • not welcomed by most colleagues (4)

"The worst part about success is trying to find someone who is really happy for you."

The Message of Daniel 6

❖<u>Success?</u>
  ➢the nature of Daniel's "success"
   • achieved without corruption or negligence (4)
   • achieved without hiding his faith in God (5,16,20)
   • not welcomed by most colleagues (4)
   • not held onto at any cost (10)

God is not against earthly

…but Faithfulness & <u>Success</u> are not synonyms

The Message of Daniel 6

❖Success

❖**Security**
   ➢On whom does true security depend?
   - your human boss?
   - human government or powers?

The Message of Daniel 6

❖ Success

❖ **Security**

➢ Supplication (7,7,11,12,13,13)

To demand supplication to oneself only is the height of human arrogance & folly

God alone is in control of our

**Pray first to the One
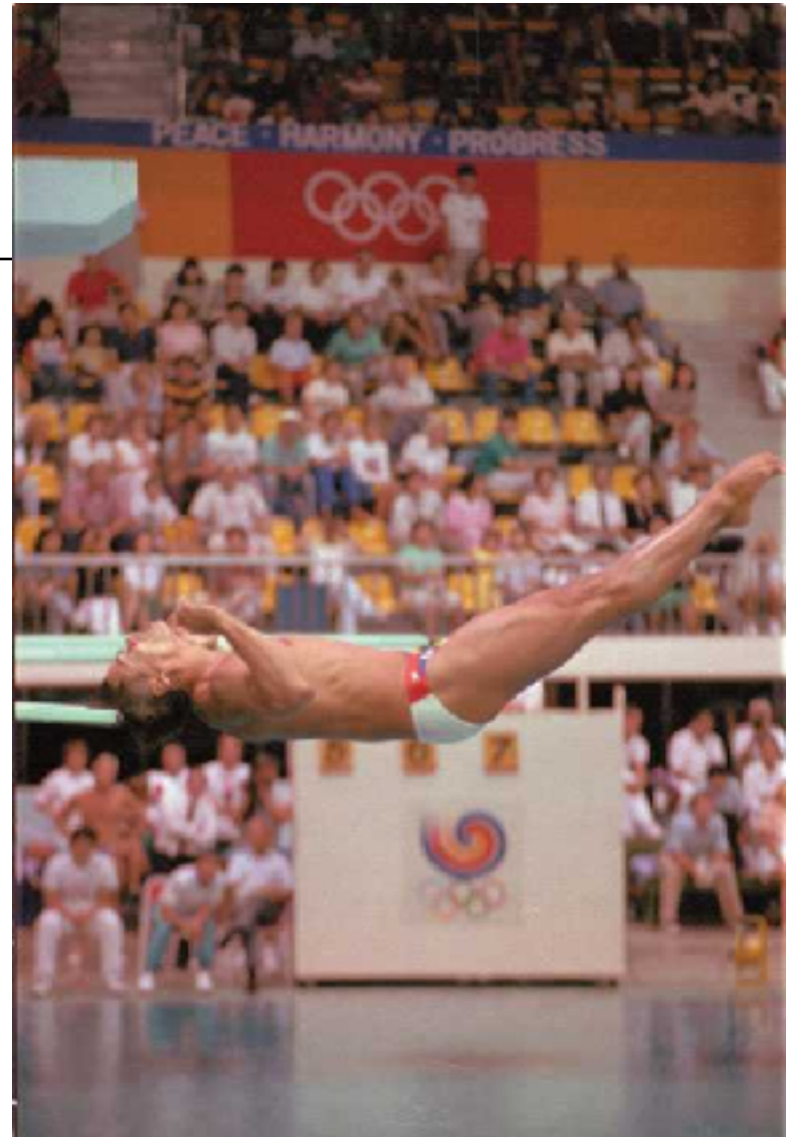on whom your real security depends**

The Invitation of Daniel 6

? Earthly Success without Stain
? Aim to be Distinctive without being Defiled

? Eternal Security in God, not in any earthly success

Greg Louganis
Olympic gold medalist
1984 and 1988

"I walk up to the board. I take a deep breath, and then I say to myself: Even if I make a complete mess of this dive, Mum will still love me!"

Daniel 6

The question is *not,*
"Do Christians live in the real world?"
The real question is,
"In what manner will we live?"

Faithful to the End

Questions or Comments?

A Modern Issue to Ponder

❖Religious Freedom in a Pluralistic society
  ➢A theme in both Daniel 3 & 6
    ➢Daniel 3: Religious coercion; forced to worship another god
    ➢Daniel 6: Religious prohibition; forced to offer no prayers to one's own god
    ➢We need Religious Dialogue without Disrespect

A Modern Issue to Ponder

❖Religious Freedom in a Pluralistic society
- protecting religious freedom is a mark of sensitivity and respect
- protecting religious freedom should not mean prohibiting religious dialogue
- religious dialogue may invite, but should never impose, conversion

A Modern Issue to Ponder

❖Religious Freedom in a Pluralistic society

❖Religious Practice in a Pluralistic society

➢displays courage in challenging what is wrong (Dan 6:10)

➢does not "harm" society (Dan 6:22) but keeps it more humane and humble (Dan 3-6)

➢dares to believe that faithfulness to the eternal God is smarter than fearing earthly human powers (Dan 3 & 6 cf. Matt 10:28)

Question for Group Sharing

➢ "If you were put on trial for being a faithful Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict you?"

- What might be examples of Christian faithfulness that are obvious but not obnoxious to your colleagues?

➢ Is there anything we can do to help each other stand up respectfully for what is right, even if there is the risk of serious reprisals?

Questions or Comments?