

Weekly Newsletter: 13th February 2024

Reflection: Follow Daniel's God

By Jude M

But Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself with the king's food, or with the wine that he drank. Therefore he asked the chief of the eunuchs to allow him not to defile himself. (Daniel 1:8)

Daniel's choice to refuse King Nebuchadnezzar's food and eat only vegetables is a well-known story. It is popular in Sunday school, and now it's gaining notoriety as adults participate in "Daniel Fasts". Last term, I was asked to talk to Year 7 students about integrity, and I decided to speak from Daniel 1. As I prepared to share with them, I saw something new that was a blessing to me. But first, let's set the scene.

In Daniel 1:1-7 we learn how Daniel ended up in King Nebuchadnezzar's palace—the story is pretty grim. He came from the tribe of Judah, where he had enjoyed high status as a member of the royal family or nobility. Then, everything changed. Judah was unfaithful to God, and so God allowed King Nebuchadnezzar to besiege Jerusalem. God's temple was destroyed, and sacred items were taken to the temple of an idol. Daniel, along with Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were selected to go to Nebuchadnezzar's palace—separated from their community. This must have involved significant suffering; I can't fully imagine what Daniel saw and experienced. All of this was happening when Daniel was a young man, some scholars suggest he was around 17 years old.

So I asked myself, what could make a young man choose the difficult path of standing up for his beliefs at a time like this? His choice to ask for a different diet was difficult not only because he was forsaking delicious food but also because it carried the significant risk that he would be punished for his request. He could have been consumed by bitterness or anger towards God—why should he suffer for God when God had allowed him to experience so much pain? He could have been consumed by fear—having seen what the Babylonians had already done, he could have been in little doubt about what punishments could face him. He could easily have justified ignoring his conscience—he wouldn't normally do this, but these were not normal times.

Living in cultures that do not respect God, we, too, have choices to make. Are we going to compromise and remain silent in the face of opposition—abandoning the word of God or silencing our God-given conscience? What about the children and youth in our church—how can they stand for Truth when surrounded by a hostile culture?

These were the questions I was asking as I reflected on how Daniel, at such a young age, was able to stand for truth and exercise wisdom in the process. As I did further study, I came across something that excited me: the meaning of the names of Daniel and his friends. I think these names hold the secret to their choices.

- Mishael means “Who is what God is?” (God is unique, no one can compare),
- Daniel means “God is my judge,”
- Azariah means “God has helped,” and
- Hananiah means “Yah has been gracious.”

I think it is no coincidence that the four friends had names that point to the gospel. Despite all the pain, defeat, and suffering, Daniel and his friends recognised that *no one could compare to God*—He is holy. God was greater than the Babylonians and King Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel and his friends realised that God, not humans, was their final *judge*. Their healthy fear of God exceeded their fear of people—allowing them to stand for what was right despite the risk. Daniel and his friends also knew that God had and would *help* them. They knew God was not far off but the rescuer of His people. They knew that God was *gracious*—He would not abandon them despite the unfaithfulness of their tribe, Judah. It was this God they were willing to live for and rely on in the midst of opposition.

Sometimes, we hear people encourage others to “be like Daniel.” In some ways, this is fine—as much as Daniel reflects Christ, we can imitate Daniel. However, as I spoke to middle schoolers, I was excited to challenge them to follow Daniel’s God—to know this amazing God and look to Him for the strength they need to live with integrity in a culture full of opposition. It is the gospel that saves and strengthens us—our *holy* God, who has the authority to *judge* us, has chosen instead to *help* us and show His *grace*—this is our source of hope and strength!

How is this amazing gospel helping you to face your challenges and to stand for Truth?

Prayer Meeting – Wednesday @ 7pm on Zoom

At our prayer meeting this week, Ernie Shippin will speak to us about the Scottish Government's proposed new law on 'conversion therapy'. The Scottish Government have produced a public consultation which is available [here](#) and runs until 2 April. It can be difficult to know how to respond and the Christian Institute have produced a [short overview of the proposals](#) and [a guide for using the online response form](#) to help us. Please come along to hear more, prayer together and think through how we respond with wisdom.

Warm Space Needs You!

We need more volunteers for our Warm Space teams. Warm Space takes place in the church building from 12 noon until 3pm each Monday and we need people to chat to members of the public, serve tea and coffee and invite people in who are passing by. For more information, contact Bill (williamwright@hotmail.co.uk)

Congregational Lunch

Our next lunch together as a church family will be on **Sunday 10th March** after the morning service. We're looking forward to enjoying a meal and fellowship together so please save the date!

Men's Discipleship at HEC

Have you thought much about the Holy Spirit, the kingdom of God, or the last things? In the next session of men's discipleship we will finish going through the Gospel Coalition Statement of Faith, which is the statement of faith used by HEC. As usual, there will be two options for men to choose from, one in-person and one on Zoom. Here the details:

- **Tuesdays at 6:30am** on Zoom. Start date Feb. 20th (message Joe if you would like the Zoom link)
- **Thursdays at 11am** in church. Start date Feb. 22nd
- Both groups will meet for 6 consecutive weeks and end before Easter

Women's Discipleship at HEC

It is a joy to get together as women to study God's word, pray and share fellowship. There are two events coming up, please save the dates and come along if you can -

- **Bible studies (on Zoom) on Tuesday evenings from 7-8pm starting tonight.** We'll be looking at the next section in Navigating Gospel Truth by Rebecca McLaughlin. There's no prereading or homework to do, just come along with your Bible. We'll run for six weeks until 19 March. Contact Liz@holy-roodevangelical.org if you would like to receive the Zoom codes and don't already.
- Our next **Ladies Breakfast** will be on Saturday 2 March at 9.30am. Our speaker will be Amy Wicks from St Silas Church in Glasgow. More details will be sent out nearer the time.

Events in HEC

There are a couple of events to highlight that we are hosting at HEC. It would be great to support them-

- **CARE's Protect Life Tour: Thursday, 7th March** at 7.30pm. The new assisted suicide legislation will soon be debated at Holyrood. At this event we will consider a theological and medical response and provide tips on political engagement. Everyone is warmly invited to attend.
- **Biblical Fatherhood: Saturday, 23rd March** from 9.30am to 3.30pm. A day to be equipped, challenged and encouraged in the God given calling of fatherhood. Joe is speaking at this event along with Andy Murray, Kevin Wong and Adri Van Den Broek. For tickets and more information go [here](#).

Cornhill Scotland - His Word in Our Hands



His Word in My Hands is a day to help people to read, understand and teach the Bible. It is open to anyone and will be of benefit to you whether you are a small group leader, Sunday School teacher, student, lay preacher or just someone who wants to know their bible better.

This year we will be focussing on the Epistles – under the heading “They’ve got Mail” – and asking what their letters, mean to us...

We will be holding the day in a two different venues:

- **Saturday 2nd March: The Tron Church, Glasgow**
- **Saturday 27th April: Selkirk Baptist Church, The Borders**

Cost – £10 per person. Students and unwaged are free. For more details and to register go [here](#).

Accommodation in Edinburgh

A Christian medical student from Hong Kong is looking for accommodation in Edinburgh while she does her elective at Edinburgh Royal Infirmary from 1st April – 10th May. Please contact Liz@holyroodevangelical.org if you can help.

Open Doors - World Watch List 2024



Open Doors have created a number of resources for adults, youth and children to help us explore and pray for the countries where Christians count the highest cost in following Jesus. They are free and more details can be found [here](#).

Origin – Resurrection 2024

Resurrection brings together Christians from all over the central belt to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus in an evening of music and worship on Easter Sunday. It is led by the Origin Scotland band, choir and orchestra, and held annually in the Usher Hall. Free tickets (suggested donation on booking) available [here](#).

Event: **RESURRECTION 2024**

Venues: **Usher Hall, Lothian Road, Edinburgh**

Date: **Sunday 31 March 2024 at 7.30pm**

Admission: Pay what you want- suggested donation when you book.

Church Calendar

- Tuesday:
 - Pickleball and Table Tennis at 7pm in the church
 - Women's Bible Study at 7pm on Zoom
- Wednesday: Prayer meeting at 7pm on Zoom
- Sunday:
 - Worship Service at 10.30am (and live streamed). Joe Barnard preaching.
 - Equip at 6pm (and live streamed)
- Monday:
 - Baby and Toddler Group from 10am – 11.30am
 - Warm Space from 12noon - 3pm



www.holyroodevangelical.org

Incorporated as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation, Scottish Charity Number SCO44820