

The story of Daniel in the Old Testament is particularly relevant and instructive for us as modern-day Christians. The reason why? Because Daniel's story is much like that of all Christians—in reality and in potential. And that's surely no accident.

In this series, we are looking at the highly instructive commonalities of Daniel's life in God to our lives in Christ. This is the fourth in that series—so let's recap the first three.

The first Daniel relevancy was “time and place.” Daniel lived during a very interesting time in the history of His chosen people. His age, his character, his disposition—all these played a part in the narrative of Daniel serving God. Likewise, every serious Christian is, by God's providence, constantly in a time and place where God can and will very effectively use them for purposes of His Kingdom.

The second Daniel relevancy was “competence.” In his own version of a company human resource initiative, Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar was only interested in those who had the cherished competence in helping to advance or manage his kingdom. Likewise, Christians are best positioned to advance the Gospel and touch others for Christ in their work lives when they are highly competent. Here's the phrase I coined long ago: “The pioneering witness for Christ in the workplace is competence.” When a Jesus-follower does this, we can call that a “Daniel 1:4” Christian.

The third Daniel relevancy was “lifetime ambassador.” Daniel served Nebuchadnezzar and successor pagan-kingdoms competently in very unique ways. But Daniel never stopped being a part of God's core economy: his God-honoring diet, his consistent prayer life, his ability to read the handwriting on the wall, his prophetic voice.

Now, on to the fourth relevancy! And that relevancy from Daniel's life is “relentlessly faithful dailiness.”

You may remember the classic children's song “Dare to be a Daniel.” It went something like this: “Dare to be a Daniel, dare to stand alone! Dare to have a purpose firm! Dare to make it known.”

Indeed, Daniel was daring and bold in several extreme situations, like when he was being thrown to the lions in the den and when he was interpreting dreams after his rivals that were power players in the hostile empire could not. But really, what was truly a foundational secret of Daniel's every phase, every dimension, of life that led to Daniel's daring and bold demeanor in the face of deep adversity? It was his relentless faithfulness in the “dailiness” of life.

You see, Daniel's relentless faithfulness in the dailiness of life set him up for success when extreme situations came his way. Daniel's spirit was prepared to meet challenges like the lions' den head-on with humility and peaceful expectation—he was ready spiritually because he had been faithful to God in the dailiness of life. Courage and peace aren't something we can suddenly switch on when the going gets tough—no, it's the direct by-product of a lifestyle born of and nurtured by God-focused choices that are made daily!

Here's a cornerstone example: Daniel prayed when it was clearly risky *and* when it *wasn't* risky, because he was focused on God no matter whether particular difficulties were looming or not. Daniel's investment in prayer for years on end set him up for right responses when the going got tough, like when his prayer life literally brought the pronouncement of the death penalty at the mouth of lions in the den. Daniel's daily sowing, his daily habit of connecting with God forged the “daring Daniel” that we all know.

This is really important. We need to anchor in the steadfast perspective that even the heroes of the faith lived out the “dailiness” of life: Daniel’s stories in the Bible actually were simply the highlight reel of decades of relentlessly faithful dailiness. Our lives as Christians this very day are to be no exception to that. Will today be on your highlight reel at the Judgment Seat of Christ? Perhaps. Perhaps not. But our readiness for those extraordinary days nestled in the future relies on our relentlessly faithful dailiness.

And don’t let the sometimes-mind-numbing dailiness in so much of life discourage you! Why? Because God is using our daily stewardship to bear fruit in ways we can’t even see! 1 Corinthians 15:58 in the ESV says this: “Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.”

Let’s unpack that Bible verse for a minute or two. This verse says that followers of Jesus are to be *steadfast* and *immovable*. That’s the very picture of being *relentless*. Pray that you have the focus and discipline to be relentless.

Next, this verse says that we are to be steadfast and immovable, *always*. That’s the very picture of *dailiness*. Pray that you have the perseverance for dailiness.

Third, this verse says to be *abounding in the work of the Lord*. That’s the very picture of being *faithful*. Every Christian is in “full-time ministry,” as we know, because that’s the serious Christian’s mindset. We are appointed, each and every day, to do the work of the Lord, no matter our vocation or our current role.

Last, this verse says that Christians are to know *that in the Lord your labor is not in vain*. That’s the very picture of *effectiveness*, the effectiveness that is yielded by the Lord’s response to our relentlessly faithful dailiness.

Paul also says this to the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians 3:6,8 in the ESV. “I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth...each will receive his wages according to his labor.” We may plant in our dailiness, and that planting may be hidden for a time under a pile of dirt, but God still gives the growth. And we will receive the wages for our part in the process. Wow!

All of that is the “relentlessly faithful dailiness” that applies to every role we hold as believers. It applies to our praying role, like that of Daniel. And it applies to our role as parents of a teenager and a toddler in the “terrible twos.” It applies to our management of a team at work—year-in and year-out—encompassing it all, from our Monday conference calls to our Wednesday operational decisions to our Friday happy hours. That’s all under the umbrella of life. And that all represents opportunities, the opportunities that God directs in our steps.

You know, when crafting this podcast, I kept flopping back and forth as to whether the word “dailiness” is properly spelled with the letter “i” as the middle letter or with the letter “y” as the middle letter. There’s a peculiar irony in that: it’s not for you and me to question the “y” or to question the “i” in the dailiness of life—that’s because both the “why” of God’s daily plan and the “I” of who really has ownership of our dailiness....well, both that “why” and that “I” are our privilege to work out in partnership with the Lord. That’s our faith, and then God’s answers, in action! How cool is that?

Once again, we find that the consistently remarkable Daniel modeled a dimension of the intimate relationship between God and man, yet another dimension for us to consider and implement as Christians. Relentlessly...faithful...dailiness. Amazing.

