



SERIES:	27 Daniel - I Dare You - 2013
MESSAGE:	I Dare You: Be Steadfast!
SPEAKER:	Skip Heitzig
SCRIPTURE:	Daniel 6:10-28

MESSAGE SUMMARY

Calvin Miller once wrote, "Security is never the friend of faith. It is peril that produces steadfastness." Daniel knew this to be true and was willing to sacrifice the security of life and limb because his heart was steadfast and immovable toward his God. Even though he had been faithful to king and country, this aged prophet faced the trial of a lifetime.

DETAILED NOTES

I. Introduction

- A. Christopher Columbus desired to discover a new route to the West Indies and new countries
 1. All the experts of Spain said it was impossible
 2. Because of his steadfast persistence, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain sided with him
- B. Henry Ford believed in the automobile
 1. He pursued his dream
 2. His good friend Thomas Edison said it wasn't a good idea
 3. Ford was steadfast, persistent in his dream
 4. Because of that, we're driving today
- C. The Wright brothers, Wilbur and Orville, believed that man could fly
 1. They were discouraged by friends, journalists, and their own father
 2. They pursued their vision and their dream because they were steadfast
- D. Steadfastness is a level above faithfulness
 1. Daniel was a faithful man
 2. Steadfastness is when you are faithful in extreme times
 - a. Strength
 - b. Intensity
 - c. Clutch the promises of God
 3. William Barclay said, "So often we have a kind of vague wistful longing that the promises of Jesus should be true. The only way to enter into them is to believe in them with the clutching intensity of a drowning man."
 4. Daniel faces his possible death this way; clutching belief
- E. Life isn't fair
 1. Some of us think that if we do good things, good things will happen; if we do bad things, bad things will happen; a kind of cosmic karma
 2. God will eventually bring equality; not immediately, but eventually
 3. Two expectant fathers in a waiting room

4. What happens to Daniel isn't fair
 - a. He's not delivered from the lions' den
 - b. He's delivered through the lions' den
 - c. David wrote "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death" (Psalm 23:4)
 - i. We don't like that
 - ii. We don't want to go through the valley
 - iii. We want to be airlifted from mountain peak to mountain peak
5. If you are a steadfast believer, there are four things you can count on
 - a. Persecution is inevitable
 - b. Trust is essential
 - c. Deliverance is possible
 - d. Influence is unmistakable

II. Persecution is inevitable

- A. Daniel's envious peers come up with a decree intended to exploit Daniel's love for his God
 1. Happened in one day
 2. They brought the decree
 3. Watched Daniel
 4. They had the king sign his death sentence
 5. Daniel was put into the lions' den
- B. We will have persecution because we are believers
 1. You are a part of the kingdom of light; the kingdom of light will clash with the kingdom of darkness
 2. Paul said, "All who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution" (2 Timothy 3:12)
 3. If you are steadfast, then others will know that you are a Christian
 4. Not everyone will like that you are a Christian
 5. Skip has had numerous death threats
 6. There is a misconception that following Christ makes life easier
 7. Jesus told His disciples, "I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves" (Matthew 10:16)
 8. Great to live in the time of the apostles?
 - a. Jesus told them that they can expect persecution from three establishments (see Matthew 10:16-22)
 - i. The religious leaders
 - a) Organized religion has been one of the chief antagonists of the gospel
 - b) It is one of the greatest enemies of our missionaries
 - c) Jesus' enemies were the religious leaders
 - d) Carnal Christians will be your antagonists; your commitment to Christ convicts them
 - ii. Persecuted by secular society
 - a) Governors, kings, gentiles

- b) A steadfast believer is like a 500-watt light bulb in a pitch black room—though it dispels the darkness, it also irritates people
- c) It irritated the Roman government and they tortured and killed apostles/believers

iii. Persecuted by their families

- a) Jesus said that they would be betrayed by their families (see Mark 13:12)
- b) Even today, in some cultures there are some who will hold a funeral service for their converted family member; that person is dead to them now
- c) Some cultures have "honor killings"
- d) Witnessing to your own family is one of the hardest things to do

b. These are the promises of Jesus

III. Trust is essential

- A. They threw him into the lions' den
- B. The pagan king speaks "Your God will deliver you"
 - 1. He's been on the throne for one-two years
 - 2. He's seen and heard Daniel's steadfastness
- C. How did Daniel react when he's lowered into the pit?
 - 1. Did he say, "God, this isn't fair!"?
 - 2. It's not recorded that he said anything; he's silent
 - 3. Daniel knew the punishment for praying to his God; he did it anyway
 - 4. Like Jesus, "he opened not his mouth" (see Isaiah 53:7, Matthew 27:14, and Mark 15:15)
 - 5. Polycarp, Christian bishop in Smyrna, at 86 years old under threat of burning at the stake said "I have served Jesus Christ for 86 years. Never once has He denied me. He's never done me any wrong. How can I deny Him now?"
- D. This is where steadfastness needs to kick in
 - 1. A good prayer to pray is "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and a steadfast spirit within me" (Psalm 51:10)
 - 2. A good man "will not be afraid of evil tidings; His heart is steadfast, trusting in the Lord" (Psalm 112:7)
- E. What would it take to move you from your faith, to stop trusting Jesus Christ?
 - 1. Death of a child?
 - 2. Lingering disease?
 - 3. Loss of employment?
 - 4. A young lady stopped trusting Jesus when her grandma died
 - 5. Job lost everything and he blessed the Lord (see Job 1:21), he said, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him" (Job 13:15)
- F. Slogan of a church in Kansas City: "Wake up, sing up, pray up, and pay up, but never give up, or let up, or back up, or shut up, until the kingdom of Christ is built up in this world"

- G. The king was disturbed; the Holy Spirit is showing us what was going on in the king's life

IV. God delivers Daniel

- A. The king said, "Servant of the living God"; he got that from Daniel
- B. Daniel had a good night's sleep; the king did not
 - 1. Reminds us of a story about Peter the apostle in the New Testament, who slept soundly in jail before his expected execution (see Acts 12:5-19)
 - 2. Man in a boat in a storm slept
- C. God delivered Daniel—it doesn't always happen
 - 1. Paul Harvey told a true story of a church in Beatrice, Nebraska; 18 choir members spared from death
 - 2. It doesn't always happen
 - a. Isaiah was cut in two
 - b. Peter was crucified upside down
 - c. Paul had his head cut off
 - 3. Daniel would live or die; either way, there's a deliverance
 - 4. Daniel had to wait all night for his deliverance
 - a. Some of you have been waiting on God for a long time
 - b. Your resolve must be: "Our God is able to deliver us!"

V. Influence is unmistakable

- A. Darius makes a decree
- B. Daniel is one man
 - 1. He affects two completely different kingdoms
 - 2. He has influence over many kings
 - a. Magi showed up at the birth of Christ; perhaps Daniel tipped them off
 - b. God puts His right men in the right place
 - c. One or a few steadfast in their God can influence a nation, a family
 - d. Never underestimate the power of a godly life
 - 3. John the Baptist was a fiery guy
 - a. Herod the Great put John the Baptist in prison
 - b. Herod feared John knowing he was a righteous man (see Mark 6:20)
- C. Do you want to be influential for the kingdom of God?
 - 1. "Be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 15:58)
 - 2. Peter Marshal, a previous chaplain to the US Senate, told a story of the keeper of the spring in an Austrian village
 - 3. The steadfast Christian is the "keeper of the spring"
 - 4. One life well-lived can impact family, a neighborhood, a city, a nation
 - 5. Jesus had 12 disciples and within one generation the known world heard the gospel
 - 6. You must know God to begin with to be steadfast

Figures referenced: King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella, Henry Ford, Thomas Edison, Wilbur and Orville Wright, William Barclay, Polycarp, Paul Harvey, Peter Marshal

Cross references: Job 1:21, Job 13:15, Psalm 23:4, Psalm 51:10, Psalm 112:7, Isaiah 53:7, Matthew 10:16-22, Matthew 27:14, Mark 6:20, Mark 13:12, Mark 15:15, Acts 12:5-19, 1 Corinthians 15:58, 2 Timothy 3:12

Topic: steadfastness

Keywords: Daniel, steadfast, steadfastness, persecution, influence, deliverance, God, purpose, faithfulness, faithful, lion, Babylon, trust