

Living Courageously and Confidently in Impossible Situations
Message 2 of 6 in the series: "Daniel: Living with Courage and Confidence"

A. In 603 B.C., Daniel and his friends found themselves in an unfair and impossible situation created by King Nebuchadnezzar.

"One night during the second year of his reign, Nebuchadnezzar had such disturbing dreams that he couldn't sleep. He called in his magicians, enchanters, sorcerers, and astrologers, and he demanded that they tell him what he had dreamed... Then the astrologers answered the king in Aramaic, 'Long live the king! Tell us the dream, and we will tell you what it means.'

But the king said to the astrologers, 'I am serious about this. If you don't tell me what my dream was and what it means, you will be torn limb from limb, and your houses will be turned into heaps of rubble! But if you tell me what I dreamed and what the dream means, I will give you many wonderful gifts and honors. Just tell me the dream and what it means.'

...The astrologers replied to the king, 'No one on earth can tell the king his dream! And no king, however great and powerful, has ever asked such a thing of any magician, enchanter, or astrologer! The king's demand is impossible. No one except the gods can tell you your dream, and they do not live here among people.'

The king was furious when he heard this, and he ordered that all the wise men of Babylon be executed. And because of the king's decree, men were sent to find and kill Daniel and his friends." Daniel 2:1-13 (NLT)

Note: Having a relationship with God does not prevent us from facing unfair and impossible situations. "...In this world you will have trouble..." John 16:33b (NIV)

IMPORTANT: No matter the severity of the situation, God is in control of the situation and using it to work out His will for your life. "Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing." James 1:2-4 (NLT)

B. When Daniel and his friends learned about this impossible situation, they humbly and expectantly turned to God.

"When Arioch, the commander of the king's guard, came to kill them, Daniel handled the situation with wisdom and discretion... Then Daniel went home and told his friends Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah what had happened. He urged them to ask the God of heaven to show them his mercy by telling them the secret, so they would not be executed along with the other wise men of Babylon." Daniel 2:14-18 (NLT)

Note: When we have a problem, the first thing we need to do is get on our knees and pray. "So let us come 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 (NLT)

IMPORTANT: Daniel didn't try to deal with this situation by himself. He got his friends together to pray with him. "Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep his promise. Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near." Hebrews 10:23-25 (NLT)

C. God's revelation of Himself and Nebuchadnezzar's dream became the source of their courage and confidence...no matter the outcome.

"That night the secret was revealed to Daniel in a vision. Then Daniel praised the God of heaven. He said, 'Praise the name of God forever and ever, for **he has all wisdom and power. He controls the course of world events**; he removes kings and sets up other kings. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the scholars. He reveals deep and mysterious things and knows what lies hidden in darkness, though he is surrounded by light. I thank and praise you, God of my ancestors, for **you have given me wisdom and strength**. You have told me what we asked of you and revealed to us what the king demanded."

Daniel 2:19-23 (NLT)

Note: God did more than reveal a dream; God revealed Himself as the One who has all wisdom and power, the source of our courage and confidence. “Jesus looked at them intently and said, ‘Humanly speaking, it is impossible. But not with God. **Everything is possible with God.**” Mark 10:27 (NLT)

IMPORTANT: We can be confident and courageous because God has revealed Himself and His will to us through the Bible. “But it was to us that God revealed these things by his Spirit. For his Spirit searches out everything and shows us God’s deep secrets. No one can know a person’s thoughts except that person’s own spirit, and no one can know God’s thoughts except God’s own Spirit. And we have received God’s Spirit (not the world’s spirit), so we can know the wonderful things God has freely given us.”
1 Corinthians 2:10-12(NLT)

“For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, **spoke from God** as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.” 2 Peter 1:21 (NIV)

D. God turned this unfair and impossible situation on its head for Daniel and his friends.

“Then Daniel went in to see Arioch, whom the king had ordered to execute the wise men of Babylon. Daniel said to him, ‘Don’t kill the wise men. Take me to the king, and I will tell him the meaning of his dream.’ ...Then King Nebuchadnezzar threw himself down before Daniel and worshiped him, and he commanded his people to offer sacrifices and burn sweet incense before him. The king said to Daniel, ‘Truly, your God is the greatest of gods, the Lord over kings, a revealer of mysteries, for you have been able to reveal this secret.’

Then the king appointed Daniel to a high position and gave him many valuable gifts. He made Daniel ruler over the whole province of Babylon, as well as chief over all his wise men. At Daniel’s request, the king appointed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to be in charge of all the affairs of the province of Babylon, while Daniel remained in the king’s court.” Daniel 2:24 & 46-49 (NLT)

Note: Not only did God spare their lives, but He did immeasurably more than what they could have asked or imagined through this impossible situation. “Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us...” Ephesians 3:20 (NIV)

- God is glorified and worshipped, and Nebuchadnezzar is humbled.
- Godless people are saved.
- Daniel and his friends are rewarded and elevated.

VERY IMPORTANT! We can be confident and courageous knowing that God is bigger than the feelings within us, the circumstances around us, or the consequences before us. “And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.” Romans 8:28 (NLT)

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Connect Group Discussion Questions:

1. Why do we wrongly assume that being in a relationship with God (especially when we are being obedient) will prevent us from experiencing difficulties? Why does God allow us to encounter situations beyond our wisdom and abilities?
2. The Babylonian wise men claimed God does not live among people in Daniel 2:11. One of God’s names that He revealed to us is Emmanuel, God with us. How does knowing that God is with you give you confidence and courage in impossible situations? Why do you have confidence that He will never leave you?
3. Prayer sustained Daniel and his friends while they were exiled in Babylon. Why do you think prayer is the first step when it comes to facing life’s problems? In what ways has prayer sustained you when you were in a difficult time? Who are your friends that you would ask to pray with you?
4. Read Daniel 2:26-27. Daniel was quick to give credit to God for doing what only He could do. What are some things God has done in your life that you can credit Him for?

5. Read the following passages: Psalm 4:3 & 8, Psalm 23:4 & 6, Psalm 27:5 & 13-14, and Psalm 37:15-18. How do the following passages increase your confidence in God's care for you? What other passages give you courage and confidence in God?
6. Why do you think Daniel asked for the other Babylonian wise men to be spared? Why should we show kindness to those far from God?
7. Why is it important to know that God is bigger than the feelings within us, the circumstances around us, or the consequences before us?