

A fiery furnace faith and a lion's lair love for the Lord Jesus Christ.

Homily for November 25, 2021

THE WORLD NEEDS MEN.AND WOMEN

Who cannot be bought;
 whose word is their bond;
 who put character above wealth;
 who possess opinions and a will;
 who are larger than their vocation;
 who do not hesitate to take chances;
 who will not lose their individuality
 in a crowd;
 who will be as honest in small things
 as in great things;
 who will make no compromise with wrong;
 whose ambitions are not confined to
 their own selfish desires;
 who will not say they do it "because
 everybody else does it";
 who are true to their friends through
 good report and evil report,
 in adversity as well as in prosperity;
 who do not believe that shrewdness,
 cunning, and hard-headedness, are
 the best qualities for winning success;
 who are not ashamed or afraid to stand for
 the truth when it is unpopular;
 who can say "no" with emphasis, although
 the rest of the world says "yes."¹

Daniel was a man like this. Of course, when we think of Daniel, we think of the lions' den. In fact, it seems like when we read about Daniel and his friends, they are going from the frying pan into the lions' den. Somebody is always trying to either heat them up or to eat them up. It's sad to say, but many Christians never have to worry about either the fiery furnace or the lions' den. Not because fiery furnaces and lions' dens are not around, but because of what you have to do to get in to either one.

You see, the way to be thrown into the fiery furnace is to stand up while the whole world is bowing down. The way to be thrown into the lions' den is to bow down while the whole world is standing up.

But most Christians today "go along to get along." But not Daniel. Daniel knew how to sleep with the lions without being eaten. We need more men and women today with a fiery furnace

¹ Charles R. Swindoll, *Living Above the Level of Mediocrity*, pp. 107-108.

faith and a lion's lair love for the Lord Jesus Christ. I want you to see in this chapter the character of the first "lion tamer" in history.

In the portion of the chapter we did not read today, the sacred author describes Daniel's character this way:

He was faithful, and no negligence or corruption could be found in him.

Daniel was a man who was steadfast and consistent in his faith regardless of the political and social climate of the society in which he lived. When we pick up the chapter in today's reading from chapter 6 we know Daniel has heard that for 30 days a law is enforced declaring that no one can pray to any god except the king. Regardless, we read Daniel opens his window and kneels in the direction of Jerusalem and prays.

Notice that the character of Daniel threatens those who want his death, and while King Darius was imprudent to pass the interdict he knows the integrity of Daniel's character when he states:

"May your God, whom you faithfully serve deliver you".

Then after the night has passed Darius runs to the Den and inquires:

"O Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God whom you faithfully serve been able to deliver you from the lions?"²

To this question Daniel replies:

O king, live forever! ²² My God sent his angel and shut the lions' mouths so that they would not hurt me, because I was found blameless before him; and also before you, O king, I have done no wrong³

There is an old saying that states:

***When wealth is lost, nothing is lost;
When health is lost, something is lost;
When character is lost, everything is lost.***

Daniel's mind was made up. He might lose his job, he might lose his family, he might even lose his life; but he would not compromise his conviction and lose his character.

May Daniel inspire you and me this day to cultivate a fiery furnace faith and a lion's lair love for the Lord Jesus Christ.

² [*The Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version*](#). (1989). (Da 6:20). Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers.

³ [*The Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version*](#). (1989). (Da 6:21–22). Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers.