

**Living Under the Authority of Christ, Our King,  
While Living in Earthly Kingdoms (Daniel 1-6)  
April 22 – May 20 2012, Week Five  
“Praying with Confidence in God’s Providence” Daniel 6  
May 20 2012, Study Notes**

**Focus for Week Five**

As we conclude this series from Daniel, we consider Daniel 6 with the focus on prayer. As one in Christ lives under the authority of Christ, one grows in confidence in God’s unfailing love; said differently, one grows in confidence in God’s providence. Such confidence comes by God’s grace as one, like Daniel, comes to God in prayer in normal times and challenging times. Living in this way, one can face all the many challenges in this life, even the possibility of death for one’s faith, knowing that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**Summary of Time of Reflection and Message**

1. **Time of Reflection:** There is one aspect of humility that God forms in his children, at least some of them: a growing confidence in God’s unfailing love that shapes their prayers.
  - a. Humans were created to experience God’s unfailing, complete love.
  - b. The great lie that Satan planted and continues to plant into the minds and hearts of humans is that God’s love is not enough; God’s love doesn’t completely satisfy.
  - c. God repeatedly tells his children about his love; Jesus demonstrated the love of God through his sacrificial love on the cross; the Holy Spirit’s work includes pouring God’s love into the human heart.
  - d. Romans 8:18-39 expresses the completeness of this unfailing love of God.
  
2. **Message:** In Daniel 6, we see two aspects of this confidence in God’s providence that God formed in Daniel.
  - a. **God forms in his children confidence in his unfailing love.**
    - 1) Daniel has demonstrated this throughout his captivity (Daniel 1-6)
    - 2) There was NO attempt to get Daniel to stop praying to his God (6:5)
    - 3) Darius expresses this hope to Daniel (6:16)
    - 4) Daniel testifies to this (6:21)
    - 5) The king witnesses this (6:26-27)
  
  - b. **God actively grows this confidence over time; it is not static quality.**
    - 1) He moved Daniel to pray in times of danger (see Daniel 2)
    - 2) He nurtured Daniel in the regular practice of prayer (6:10-11)
    - 3) He deepened Daniel to express this confidence without a posture of defiance to the king (6:19-22)

- c. **Application:** This work of God's grace involves being humbled to see areas where we are NOT confident in God's unfailing love and then coming to God in prayer and asking him to increase our confidence. It also involves giving thanks to God for who he is and what he has done even when we don't see how he is going to work in a given situation.

### **For Further Study**

1. Read Daniel 6 in light of Daniel 1-5.
2. Through what you read of David's journey with God over Daniel 1-6, what are some of the ways that you see God formed Daniel to have confidence in his unfailing love?
3. What are déjà-vu moments that you see in Daniel 6 as you think back on Daniel 1-5?
4. Read Romans 8:18-39 in light of Daniel 1-6. How does Romans 8 expand your capacity to see further ways God formed in Daniel confidence in his unfailing love?
5. Throughout Church history, various people have tried to define God's providence. What can you gain from one definition below that was developed for discipling Christians at the time of the Reformation in Europe in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century?

- **Q. What do you believe when you say, "I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth"?**

A. That the eternal Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who out of nothing created heaven and earth and everything in them, who still upholds and rules them by his eternal counsel and providence, is my God and Father because of Christ his Son.

I trust him so much that I do not doubt he will provide whatever I need for body and soul, and he will turn to my good whatever adversity he sends me in this sad world.

He is able to do this because he is almighty God; he desires to do this because he is a faithful Father.

- **Q. What do you understand by the providence of God?**

A. Providence is the almighty and ever present power of God by which he upholds, as with his hand, heaven and earth and all creatures, and so rules them that leaf and blade, rain and drought, fruitful and lean years, food and drink, health and sickness, prosperity and poverty - all things, in fact, come to us not by chance but from his fatherly hand.

6. From your reflections, what have you learned about the authority of Christ, our king, while living in earthly kingdoms?

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## The Scriptures

### Daniel 6 (NIV 2011)

<sup>1</sup>It pleased Darius to appoint 120 satraps to rule throughout the kingdom, <sup>2</sup>with three administrators over them, one of whom was Daniel. The satraps were made accountable to them so that the king might not suffer loss. <sup>3</sup>Now Daniel so distinguished himself among the administrators and the satraps by his exceptional qualities that the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom. <sup>4</sup>At this, the administrators and the satraps tried to find grounds for charges against Daniel in his conduct of government affairs, but they were unable to do so. They could find no corruption in him, because he was trustworthy and neither corrupt nor negligent.

<sup>5</sup>Finally these men said, “We will never find any basis for charges against this man Daniel unless it has something to do with the law of his God.”

<sup>6</sup>So these administrators and satraps went as a group to the king and said: “May King Darius live forever! <sup>7</sup>The royal administrators, prefects, satraps, advisers and governors have all agreed that the king should issue an edict and enforce the decree that anyone who prays to any god or human being during the next thirty days, except to you, Your Majesty, shall be thrown into the lions’ den. <sup>8</sup>Now, Your Majesty, issue the decree and put it in writing so that it cannot be altered—in accordance with the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed.”

<sup>9</sup>So King Darius put the decree in writing.

<sup>10</sup>Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before.

<sup>11</sup>Then these men went as a group and found Daniel praying and asking God for help. <sup>12</sup>So they went to the king and spoke to him about his royal decree: “Did you not publish a decree that during the next thirty days anyone who prays to any god or human being except to you, Your Majesty, would be thrown into the lions’ den?”

The king answered, “The decree stands—in accordance with the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed.”

<sup>13</sup>Then they said to the king, “Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, Your Majesty, or to the decree you put in writing. He still prays three times a day.”

<sup>14</sup>When the king heard this, he was greatly distressed; he was determined to rescue Daniel and made every effort until sundown to save him.

<sup>15</sup>Then the men went as a group to King Darius and said to him, “Remember, Your Majesty, that according to the law of the Medes and Persians no decree or edict that the king issues can be changed.”

<sup>16</sup> So the king gave the order, and they brought Daniel and threw him into the lions' den. The king said to Daniel, "May your God, whom you serve continually, rescue you!"

<sup>17</sup> A stone was brought and placed over the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the rings of his nobles, so that Daniel's situation might not be changed. <sup>18</sup> Then the king returned to his palace and spent the night without eating and without any entertainment being brought to him. And he could not sleep.

<sup>19</sup> At the first light of dawn, the king got up and hurried to the lions' den. <sup>20</sup> When he came near the den, he called to Daniel in an anguished voice, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to rescue you from the lions?"

<sup>21</sup> Daniel answered, "May the king live forever! <sup>22</sup> My God sent his angel, and he shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in his sight. Nor have I ever done any wrong before you, Your Majesty."

<sup>23</sup> The king was overjoyed and gave orders to lift Daniel out of the den. And when Daniel was lifted from the den, no wound was found on him, because he had trusted in his God.

<sup>24</sup> At the king's command, the men who had falsely accused Daniel were brought in and thrown into the lions' den, along with their wives and children. And before they reached the floor of the den, the lions overpowered them and crushed all their bones.

<sup>25</sup> Then King Darius wrote to all the nations and peoples of every language in all the earth:

May you prosper greatly! <sup>26</sup> I issue a decree that in every part of my kingdom people must fear and reverence the God of Daniel. For he is the living God and he endures forever; his kingdom will not be destroyed, his dominion will never end. <sup>7</sup> He rescues and he saves; he performs signs and wonders in the heavens and on the earth. He has rescued Daniel from the power of the lions.

<sup>28</sup> So Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian.