

The 4th Sunday after Epiphany ~ Sunday, January 29, 2017

“Daniel: Uncompromising Faith ~ A Clash of Kingdoms”

Daniel 2:24-45

Integrity = the Latin *integer* =

Integrity means our life is _____ and not _____;
it means we're _____.

This isn't always easy to do in a world that teaches us to divide our lives into _____:

Living with integrity means I'm the _____ person no matter where I am are or who I'm with. Integrity is different from _____—you can be honest in one area of your life and _____ in another. Integrity is all about _____—it involves every _____ of our lives—all that we are and all the time.

As believers living in a world that's becoming increasingly more hostile to Christianity, we're confronted with a _____:

Will we go with the _____ or stand firm in our beliefs?

Will we _____ out or remain _____?

Will we _____ our faith or _____ it under a basket”

Will we remain firm in our _____ or compromise?

Will we embrace the things of the _____ or the things of _____?

Whatever decision we make, the reality is we'll either give off _____ that others see, admire, and are drawn to, or _____ in with everyone else.

God has set us a standard that is not, nor cannot be, _____ with the world around us.

“Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.”

(James 4:4)

THE EXAMPLE OF DANIEL

Although it does provide an _____ account of the the Babylonian captivity, the Book of Daniel is also a book of _____.

The Book of Daniel is all about the _____ of God, and prophecy is _____ with history to show that God is _____—that He's actively involved in human history.

INTERPRETING NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM

“I have found among the exiles from Judah a man who will make known the interpretation...” (Daniel 2:25)

Arioch made it seem like it was a piece of personal _____ on his part in finding someone who could solve the king's problem. Arioch's behaviour shows us how _____ the human heart can be and how we can seek to _____ ourselves above others.

Have you ever elevated yourself above others or tooted your own horn, so to speak, at the expense of someone else?

Daniel could have claimed the _____ all for himself, he could have reminded the king just how much _____ he was than the other wise men; however, he didn't. He was very careful to _____ any _____ ability in the matter.

Instead of taking any glory for himself, he gave all the glory to _____. In other words, Daniel chose the path of _____.

“Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for ‘God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.’ Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.” (1 Peter 5:5-7)

When we walk _____, trusting God, and recognizing His _____ we will be less _____ and able to act more _____—even in the midst of a crisis. When we seek the _____ place and don't try to _____ ourselves above others, God promises to _____ us up.

If we try to _____ God's glory we're not going to grow in _____ and we're not going to be able to be at peace and remain calm in a crisis. If we seek to raise ourselves up, we will _____.

“Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.” (Proverbs 16:18)

From our Western, North American perspective of history, things are always _____ and getting better. However, the picture presented here is that things are actually getting progressively _____. Yet, we need to understand that this dream was far more than just a symbol of progression or digression, but rather a road map of _____.

THE 4 KINGDOMS

The four different parts of the statue represent four _____ world

- **Gold Head** = _____ **Empire (605 - 539 BC)**

“You, O king, the king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, and the might, and the glory, and into whose hand he has given, wherever they dwell, the children of man, the beasts of the field, and the birds of the heavens, making you rule over them all—you are the head of gold.”
(Daniel 2:37-38)

- **Silver chest and arms** = _____ **Empire (539 - 331 BC)**
- **Bronze middle and thighs** = _____ **empire, established by Alexander the Great (331-146 BC)**
- **Iron & Clay** = _____ **Empire.**

The fact that there are two legs and that the iron is mixed with clay point to the _____ and _____ weaknesses that eventually led to the fall of the Western Roman Empire in 400 AD.

All the kingdoms of this _____ will eventually _____.

As will any kingdom, empire, government, or regime—past, present, or future—that stands _____, or refuses to follow, the _____ of the kingdom of God.

THE ROCK & FIFTH KINGDOM

A kingdom is coming that will be more _____ than any empire man has ever, or will ever, produce.

Verse 44 tells us three things about it:

- **It will be God’s** _____.
- “In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom.”
- **It will be a _____ and _____ kingdom.**
- “that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people.”
- **It will be an _____ kingdom.**
- “It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself endure forever.”

The establishment of God’s kingdom in _____ is running on a _____ track to the rise and fall of the kingdoms of this world.

All the kingdoms of the world will be _____ against this kingdom that God establishes.

Scripture is very clear that the rise and fall of empires and emperors is not ultimately military, financial, or political but _____—the providential outworking of a sovereign God on kingdoms that have _____ from His ways.

In verse 34, Daniel seems to be describing a rather _____ moment in history—during the time of the fourth kingdom—when the kingdom of God will break into human history with great power. This rock will be the great _____—it will flatten all that we can think of.

This rock is _____, who comes suddenly into the affairs of mankind and the gospel of Luke places the birth of Jesus firmly in human _____—in the midst of the _____ Empire.

The rock has come and we are now living in the glorious _____ of the Gospel of Christ—a light that cannot be _____ by the kingdoms or darkness of this world.

In the birth of Jesus, God once again intervenes dramatically in human history to destroy all that human _____ has built through the centuries. The entire structure of civilization collapses and crumbles at the impact of this mighty stone, and the stone in turn grows until it _____ the earth.

“In the last days the mountain of the Lord’s temple will be established as chief among mountains; it will be raised above the hills, and all nations will stream to it.”
(Isaiah 2:2)

The focal point of human history is the _____ of Jesus because His blood was shed on the cross for the whole world. Instead of being a humiliating _____ for the kingdom of God, it was our king’s greatest _____!

“And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.” (Luke 1:31-33)

No matter what happens in the world, God is Sovereign—He is in _____; and He holds the whole world _____ in His hands. Daniel and his friends found strength, _____, and confidence in this truth.