**1. Motivate**

What change or innovation in your lifetime have you gladly embraced?

* computers
* graphing calculators
* spreadsheets

A video introduction to the lesson is available. View at <https://watch.liberty.edu/media/t/1_988d1lt2> . If you have no wi-fi where you teach, best to download to your computer from <https://tinyurl.com/yrb4aztr>

* cell phones
* satellite radio
* internet
* adaptive cruise control
* online shopping
* streaming video
* word processors

**2. Transition**

Some things we readily embrace, some we will never adopt.

* There are some absolutes and standards to which we must hold firm.
* Do the *right* thing in God’s Strength

**3. Bible Study**

3.1 Resolve to Obey and Honor God

Listen for Daniel’s resolve.

Daniel 6:6-10 (NIV) So the administrators and the satraps went as a group to the king and said: "O King Darius, live forever! 7 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 man during the next thirty days, except to you, O king, shall be thrown into the lions' den. 8 Now, O king, issue the decree and put it in writing so that it cannot be altered--in accordance with the laws of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed." 9 So King Darius put the decree in writing. 10 Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the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."

Note the organizational chart and Daniel’s place in the hierarchy.

Why do you think the other administrators and satraps opposed him?

* jealousy
* politics like always
* he was a foreigner
* they just wanted to get themselves ahead

When the leaders went to the king, what did they propose?

* advised the king he should issue a special law
* for next 30 days, no one should pray or make petitions to anyone other than the king
* punishment would be death by the lions
* this would be a special decree, unchangeable

Why do you think Darius signed the decree?

* ego – made him like a deity
* sounded good that everyone should look to him
* would be an “Honor Darius” month

How did Daniel respond to it?

* carried on with his personal practice of prayer
* prayed three times a day as always
* gave thanks to God, worshiped Jehovah God

How have cultural changes presented new challenges to practicing our faith?

* Gender and LGBTQ issues
* may be challenged to use preferred pronouns
* political polarization – which often results in religion vs anti-religion polarization
* social media – new ways to waste time, tendencies to confront, express hate
* entertainment more and more contains profanity, sexual content
* increased substance abuse and addictions
* dealing with friends or relatives who are addicted in various ways
* groups of society are marginalized in various ways

Consider that Daniel is the *only* person (aside from Jesus) about whom the scripture has *nothing* bad to say … no “warts.” This apparent faultless behavior *is obtainable* by believers today!

* God’s Holy Spirit lives within us

As we submit to Him as “boss” or ruler in our lives

* He guides our decisions
* He empowers us for right choices and holy living

3.2 Honoring God May Incur Opposition

Listen for what the conspirators did.

Daniel 6:11 – 13 (NIV) Then these men went as a group and found Daniel praying and asking God for help. 12 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 man except to you, O king, would be thrown into the lions' den?" The king answered, "The decree stands--in accordance with the laws of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed." 13 Then they said to the king, "Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, O king, or to the decree you put in writing. He still prays three times a day."

On what grounds did the officials build their case against Daniel?

* his faith practices
* he was praying to Jehovah God, breaking the 30 day law to pray only to the king
* he broke the law, he would have to pay the consequences

Why was the king distressed upon receiving the charges?

* hadn’t thought that this would affect Daniel
* Daniel was someone he liked and trusted
* as is often the case, rulers don’t fully think about far reaching implications of a law

Why did Daniels enemies hold the upper hand in this situation?

* it was a law the king, himself, had endorsed
* it was a special irrevocable law
* they had him on an obvious and basic technicality

In what ways have you seen individuals experience opposition to their faith?

* in recent years merchants who refuse to serve customers on the basis of their Christian faith have been abused by the legal system
* a man who would not bake a cake for a same sex wedding
* florist who would not provide flowers for a same sex wedding
* churches who were harassed by the government for having services during COVID
* Christian schools cut off from federal funding to students because they disallow same-sex dating or won’t go along with some other woke policy

Here is a case of reasonable civil disobedience … what are some ways in which Daniel could have changed his prayer habits to avoid trouble?

* close the windows as he prayed
* do it at night in the dark
* pray in a different room, not observable from the outside
* quit praying altogether (it was only a month, God would understand)

What do you think God’s perspective might have been in this situation?

* certainly forgiving if Daniel made a different choice … but …
* God desired Daniel’s daily communication
* allowed this as a test for Daniel … allow Daniel to discover God’s power and authority over that of politicians
* God could see the end results … the God of Daniel would be glorified … the gods of jealousy and intrigue of the administrators would be destroyed

⇨ God’s perspective for our situations is the same for us today as it was for Daniel

* When we make the right choices, God is glorified!

3.3 Our Commitment Is a Witness

Listen for how King Darius

Daniel 6:16-17; 21 - 23 (NIV) 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!" 17 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. … 21 Daniel answered, "O king, live forever! 22 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, O king." 23 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.

What was evident to the king about the quality of Daniels’s relationship to God?

* he knew Daniel worshiped Jehovah God
* he may have held the belief that there were many deities and Daniel’s God was worth appealing to
* he realized Daniel’s faithfulness to God
* he may have attributed Daniel’s honesty and integrity to his worship of Jehovah

How did this instance become an opportunity for Daniel to witness to the goodness of God?

* Daniel was faithful to God, trusted God
* when God protected Daniel, God gained a great deal of credibility
* it demonstrated God’s power, authority, and love for Daniel
* that same power and authority and love is at work in our lives and our situations and our culture

How can our lives *express confidence* that God is greater than those who oppose us?

* make right choices, even when our culture opposes
* trust that God will provide our need, even when we reject that lucrative, but shady, business deal
* be willing to not go along with the crowd, even when made fun of
* be willing to voice unpopular, but godly, attitudes towards current issues

How does the *way we respond* to difficulties become an *opportunity to testify* to God’s faithfulness?

* increases our faithfulness for the next situation
* we can point to God’s power and authority at work
* we can demonstrate how much we believe God by opposing the world’s view
* encourage others who may be wavering over their decision to trust and obey God

Use the last page as a handout so your learners can take home the application points of this week’s lesson.

Application

Express gratitude to God.

* When you first rise in the morning this week, think of one thing, person, or situation you are thankful for.
* Spend time during the day expressing your appreciation to God.
* Choose something different tomorrow.

Pray faithfully.

* If you have not already done so, set aside a space in your house to be your prayer “closet.”
* Each day this week, spend time there, reading God’s Word and praying.

Examine your life.

* Are there standards the world has set that are contrary to God’s Word, but you have embraced these anyway?
* Consider what changes you can or should make to help you be faithful to what is God’s will.
* What is one change will you make first?



Word Search

A close up of a word

Description automatically generatedA cartoon of a person with glasses

Description automatically generated

It’s the law of the Medes and Persians. You find the words, or you owe me a book report. Humph! Remember … the words go left, right, up, down, and even backwards! I’ll give you a couple of words. I see SIN and ROT … oops, they’re not in the list. Well, you can do better. Humph, you *WILL* do better! If you wimp out, help is available at <https://tinyurl.com/yrb4aztr>