

Fearing the Lord in Impossible Situations

Impossible situations. We all face them at some point in our lives. Eventually, we all face threats to our well-being that go beyond our own wisdom and power to address. When we find ourselves in such situations, what do we do? In this study we are going to see how Daniel faced an impossible situation. Daniel is one of a few people in the Old Testament who is singled out for his wisdom. The book of Daniel emphasizes that Daniel and his three friends were young men who feared the Lord. In other words, they related to God as he really is. Consequently, in a seemingly impossible situation, they experienced God in amazing ways.

Opening Discussion: What is the most challenging situation you are facing right now?

Read Daniel 2

1. What do you know about the background of this passage? How would you summarize chapter 1? How does the summary statement in 1:20 describe Daniel and his friends?
2. What does king Nebuchadnezzar ask of his wise men? And how did they respond to the task the king set before them (2:10-11)?
3. As one of the wise men in Babylon, what is the impossible situation in which Daniel finds himself (2:12-13)?
4. How does Daniel respond (2:14-18)? And what does his response indicate about what Daniel believed about God?
5. In a night vision, God reveals to Daniel the dream (2:19). In response, Daniel offers a prayer of praise. What does Daniel express concerning what he believes about God (2:20-23)?

Steve said:

Bring to mind a situation you're facing that is beyond your wisdom and power to address. Answer this question honestly: Are you seeking wisdom expectantly, believing that he has the wisdom you need and that he loves giving you that wisdom? Or are you hoping that things work out? Or are you trying to figure things out independent of God? Daniel and his friends remind us that we should seek wisdom expectantly. We do that through Scripture, through prayer, and through conversations with spiritual-minded people who know God.

6. As you think about times when you've faced impossible situations, have you sought wisdom expectantly or have you been more inclined to try to figure things out on your own?

7. Ultimately, Daniel reveals the dream and its interpretation to the king in 2:31-45. Re-read what happens before (2:25-30) and after this (2:46-49). How is God's reputation enhanced by Daniel walking in wisdom?

Steve said:

Just like wisdom wasn't optional for Daniel's God-given assignment, becoming wise isn't optional for us. If you are a follower of Jesus, you are part of the body of Christ. Jesus says, "If you want to know what I'm like, look at my body, the church! See how they speak and how they act." Since we are called to represent God accurately, we need to be vigilant about becoming wise. We need to "weave the parachute before we jump out of the plane"; when we're in a free-fall, it's a little too late, right? Because Daniel was already wise, when he was placed in an impossible situation, he responded with prudence and discretion. Because Job was already wise, when his world exploded he fell to the ground and worshiped God. And in both cases, the reputation of God grew - both on earth and in heaven.

8. As you go through a typical day, how conscience are you of your calling to represent God accurately through how you speak and act?

9. What might it look like to "weave the parachute" now in terms of becoming wise?

10. What's the main lesson that you are taking away from this example of Daniel?