

St. Paul's Dorking Small Groups July 29th 2007

Dare to be Daniel – A King's Dream

Daniel Chapter 2



Word: Key points from Sunday's sermon

This is the second in our Summer Series on the book of Daniel. Set in the context of the Babylonian Empire of the 6th Century BC and in a 'place' where God's people are suffering under the persecution and oppression of a pagan king, the book of Daniel draws God's people to ask some hard questions: does defeat mean God is finished? have pagan 'gods' won the day? where is God amidst all this suffering? how come evil seems to triumph over good? where does our future lie? With surrounding wealth and opulence questions about lifestyles, boundaries between right and wrong behaviour, and remaining faithful to God were also high on the agenda.

As well as raising such questions you will be pleased to know that the book of Daniel also seeks to answer them! In the apocalyptic tradition Daniel is concerned with an unveiling and uncovering and revelation of God's ways and his kingdom.

Two questions from this passage are pertinent for us today: 1. Where is God in all of this mess, this impossible situation? 2. What can I do ? I feel so helpless?

Firstly to Nebuchadnezzar's nightmare! Read 2:1-6. In his frustration Nebuchadnezzar set his advisers an impossible task! In the midst of this nightmare scenario stands Daniel his name means 'God is the defender of my right!' Let's compare the two men for a moment. Nebuchadnezzar a man of the world who seemingly has everything, yet a man who cannot sleep at night, a man who knows no peace, a man who searches for meaning yet can find none , a man who has everything the world offers and yet a man who has nothing! Then there is Daniel, a man of prayer, a man of praise, a man of humility and faith, a man who has a quiet confidence in God, a man who has nothing the world offers and yet has everything. In God's topsyturvy world the king who has everything and yet has nothing bows before the slave who has nothing and yet has everything (v46).

It is in this context we find answers to our two questions.

1. Where is God in all of this mess, this impossible situation? Read v 10 -11

In the frustration of the advisers response to the King's impossible demand lies the answer. In Christ God lives among men. In Christ God lived, breathed, loved and died. In Christ God weeps with those who weep and mourns with those who mourn. Through his Son God is always in the midst of the biggest mess and most impossible situation.

2 . What can I do ? I feel so helpless?

God calls us to walk in our world as Christ would, to be and do as he did, to be Christlike. John Stott in his last address before retiring earlier this week said " I want to share with you where my mind has come to rest, as I approach the end of my pilgrimage on earth, and it is: God wants his people to become like Christ."



Witness: questions to discuss

1. What big questions about faith do you particularly wrestle with?
2. Where and how have you seen God at work in hopeless and impossible situations?
3. What does it mean for you to become like Christ?
 - Spend time praying for messy, impossible and hopeless situations where you feel particularly hopeless.
 - Spend time praying for one another that you would be more like Christ.