“When It Costs Me Everything”

Series Title: Under Pressure
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hashtags:
#guidinglight #pastorjim
#givingthanks #hearinggod
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{All scriptures are “NIV84” unless stated}

New Series:

Under Pressure

Today we’re finishing up our series.

We’ve spent this month talking about ‘pressure.’

going through life as a believer means we deal with pressure sometimes.

and that pressure can be unbearable sometimes…

So how do we process it?

we’ve been looking at situations others have gone through this month…

Message Title:

“When It Costs Me Everything”

This series has dealt with a snapshot of others lives.

We talked about Moses in week one.

What do I do when the responsibility is too much?

We talked about David last week.

What do I do when everything falls apart.

Today we're going to deal with a familiar story…

but one that we we have to take our time with.

…and we're going to ask the question.

What Do I Do When Staying Faithful To The Lord Puts Everything At Risk?

In the book of Daniel

We see that the Israelites in Judah were taken from Jerusalem into exile in Babylon.

In that group are Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.

The Lord was with all of them.

By chapter 6, Babylon had fallen, and he was serving under a new ruler, Darius the Mede.

No matter what happened…the Lord was with Daniel…

and even in foreign land…he prospered.

Shortly before the start of our story…

Darius is working to establish a new government for the area.

Daniel 6:1-3

> **It pleased Darius to appoint 120 satraps to rule throughout the kingdom, 2 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. 3 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.**

So even Darius saw the potential in Daniel.

he was going to be set over the whole kingdom.

And there were other leaders who didn't like that.

they find out Daniel would be promoted over them…

they might have to report to him.

and how he's going to be over the whole Kingdom.

Jealousy is a real thing.

There are people who might not like you either.

not because of what you've done to them…

but because they're jealous of what others might see in you.

You might have favor they don't.

they might have to WORK hard for their recognition…

while it might be just something about you that puts you in the right rooms.

something that catches the attention of those who can promote you.

They might have to work for years to earn a position…

and the favor on you can promote you sooner.

And they don't like that…

God's Favor On You Will Continue To Elevate You!

It's happening for Daniel..

The others didn't like that.

Daniel 6:4

4 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.

They wanted to make him look bad.

so they tried to find something on Daniel.

But he was a man of integrity.

he wasn't corrupt…

he wasn't negligent.

and they could find NOTHING.

Daniel 6:5

5 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.*"

When They Can't Attack You Directly, They'll Try And Attack Your Faithfulness To God!

Daniel 6:6-9

> **6 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.**

The king saw value in their idea and signed it.

They were now putting Daniel in a place of having to choose between the law.

and his God.

Because prayer for Daniel…

now could cost him his life.

It's One Thing To Say You'll Do What The Lord Says. But What About When It Could Cost You Something?

What if it costs you a relationship?

What if it costs you status with your friends?

What if it costs you or your family an opportunity?

And I don't mean people KNOWING you're a Christian…

but changing HOW you serve God…

Tell you when you should or shouldn't do something.

but these rulers could have influenced Daniel to "change" how he served God.

What Happens When Doing The Wrong Thing Would Make Life Easier - And The Right Thing Makes Life Harder?

There are times when we're given a choice of keeping our commitment to the Lord…

or compromising for something else.

So what does Daniel do?

Daniel 6:10

> **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.***

Daniel was someone who was a prayer warrior.

He would pray 3 times a day.

He would be in the window praying out towards Jerusalem.

What does this show us?

When It Costs Me Everything:

1. Decide Who You Will Serve *BEFORE* You Count The Costs!

Daniel learned the decree was published.

he KNEW the consequence…

and the made the choice to do it anyway.

If Daniel is willing to put his life on the line.

he wouldn't have sold out for a small offer either.

What about us?

What Type of Bargains Do We Make Under Pressure?

"I'll be honest, as long as it doesn't cost me the opportunity I wanted."

"I'll stand by my convictions, unless it's going to cost me my relationship."

"Ill do what the Lord says, until the right temptation comes."

"I'll ask for forgiveness later…these types of opportunities don't come often."

We might make bargains for:

favor

money

acceptance

"feeling good"

our own personal desires

and these bargains cause us to compromise

If I Only Obey God When It Benefits Me, What Happens When That Obedience Costs Me?

This is why you make the decision BEFORE the choices come…

Daniel knows he can avoid death by making a compromise…

It wouldn't have to be a hard compromise…

It's only 30 days…he could pray with the windows closed for 30 days and move on.

He could NOT pray 3 times a day for that time and ask for forgiveness later.

But he doesn't…he does exactly what he did before.

He doesn't compromise what he gives to the Lord.

There is a situation in **Acts** where the apostles are arrested for doing the works of the Lord.

an angel comes and rescues them during the night…

but told them to go stand in the temple courts and tell the good news.

The apostles are found in the temple courts doing what they were told by the officers.

They told them, "We told you NOT to teach in HIS name!"

Acts 5:29

29 Peter and the other apostles replied: "We must obey God rather than men!

So Daniel chose to obey God over men…

which leads to point 2

When It Costs Me Everything:

2. Keep Doing What Keeps You Close To The Lord!

We saw earlier that Daniel would continue to pray JUST LIKE he had done before.

The decree doesn't change his prayer life.

He is only acting on the relationship most important to him.

the one that was already established…

the one with the Lord.

He wasn't trying to make a statement…it was about keeping commitment.

He didn't act up to the officials…

he didn't go in front of them with his "disobedience…"

he only did ***what he had done before.***

Daniel wasn't going to let it get between him and his time with the Lord.

Don't Let Outside Pressure Change Your Commitment!

Moses didn't do it when the whole community was crying and complaining…

he went to the Lord.

David didn't do it when he seemed to had lost everything and his men wanted to kill him.

he went to the Lord.

Instead of letting outside situations get to you…keep your commitment the main thing!

What Are The First Things We Compromise On When Pressed?

- **Our Prayer Life?**
- **Our Reading The Word?**
- **Our Giving?**
- **Our Church Attendance?**
- **Our Time In Worship?**
- **Our Showing Love?**

Some of these things we might have stopped doing long ago.

When It Costs Me Everything:

3. Trust God When You've Done The Right Thing!

So Daniel continues to pray 3 times a day like before.

the men went and found Daniel praying.

They go to the King and remind him of the decree…promising death for those who broke it.

They tell him Daniel had broken the rule…and it could not be overturned.

the King was greatly distressed as he liked Daniel and tried to save him.

but the way the decree was written…there was no way to do it.

Daniel 6:16-20

> **16 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. 18 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. 19 At the first light of dawn, the king got up and hurried to the lions' den. 20 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?"**

What we're seeing here is that Daniel had to go through a trial.

But what did he do wrong???

Doing The Right Thing Doesn't Always Prevent The Trial!

Sometimes the trial comes BECAUSE you're doing the right thing!

This is why we can't compromise.

the apostles said it…

I'd rather obey God than man.

but what about when that obedience brings a trial?

that's when you have to trust the Lord.

So Darius calls to Daniel hoping he's alive.

Verse 21-23

> **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.**

At what point did Daniel "trust" in his God?

was it when the lion's den happened?

or was it when his commitment was originally tested?

Daniel Knew Who He Would Serve Before He Knew How He Would Be Saved!

{closing}

Today we're finishing our convo on Under Pressure.

We First Learned From Moses That We Can Go To The Lord When The Burden Feels Too Heavy.

We Learned From David That There Is A Strength We Can Find From The Lord When All Seems Lost.

Today We Learned From Daniel That When Faithfulness Can Cost Everything, He Is Still Worthy Of Our Commitment And Obedience!

Think about your life right now…

Just a few questions:

What areas are you being asked to compromise right now?

Are you compromising because you're afraid of what obedience will cost?

What are you negotiating that the Lord has made clear?

Because with everything else, here's the line for our series:

No Matter How Difficult It Gets, He Will Be There With You. He Is Still Worthy Of Your Trust!