

Computer Generated Transcript - We're going to continue on in a series that we started last week and this is something I like to do every now and then we call ordinary people with an extraordinary God there are so many just common Bible stories if you're brand new to church I'm going to be referring to these as common Bible stories and I understand that for some of you there is no common Bible story because you're so new to your faith none of it's common and that's great We're so glad that you're here but for some of us we kind of grew up on these stories we've heard them thousands of times maybe least hundreds of times and so we're just going to be going over some of those I love to chance to do this a lot of times as you go through and what we found as as we work with students first is youth pastors and then now as adults as a lot of us our understanding of these bible stories stops at what I call the Veggie Tales level you know like we went to kids ministry we went to Sunday school we did all of these kind of things and we learned about the stories in the Bible and there's nothing wrong with teaching a kid at a child's level right I'm not trying to make that sound like a bad thing that's a fantastic thing you know a six year old can't handle or maybe even comprehend all of the details of all of these stories right but the problem with that is a lot of times for us as we've continued to grow as we continue to get older we haven't dug into these stories on our own and so our understanding is still the same understanding as we were when we were like eight years old and that's that's not a good thing you know as as we age we should we should be able to take on the adult concepts of the Bible and we should be able to look at some of these a little bit more deeper lessons that come from these same stories that we've heard since we were kids and so I said this last week there's two main goals I have every time I preach this series right there's there's two main goals that I want to have and the first of this is really simple these are just ordinary people that serve an extraordinary God there's nothing extraordinary about any of the people in the Bible except for the fact that God did amazing. The amazing things through them right we put them in stained glass windows and we call them Saint whoever you know what I mean and so we become people that we really struggle to relate to you know they become people that we really have a hard time connecting with because we don't really think of them as people we think of them as the Bible heroes right and really they were just everyday people they were just like you and me they had struggles they had they had problems many of them failed miserably many times even some of them after God used them I mean you see these amazing things but God did an extraordinary thing through them right it's not the person that's so amazing in this story it's got I use the example of David last week a lot of us hear the story of David and Goliath we want to be David running out on the field slinging that stone and killing the giant and I just really don't believe David killed that giant Now before you like crucify me as a heretic. What I'm saying is David was in over his head and he knew it David David even looks at the giant and says I don't come to you in my own strength I don't come to you with weapons of war I come to you in the name of God who will not be mocked and who this day will deliver his people David knew that God was fighting alongside of him and through him it wasn't David that killed that that giant God worked a miracle to deliver his people all right yes God used David and that is amazing but David wasn't special Dave was David was just a dude he was at this was a measurement out of fact David was like thirteen when this happened he was a junior higher right he went to junior high camp number two and he didn't shower the whole week either you know like that's that's one of these just a kid how many of you had a kid that you sent to camp as a kid or junior high or and they came back and all of the clothes were still folded the way that you left them right like you. Had a kid do that as a as a as a as a junior high pastor I saw that all the time the kid has like one favorite church girls are different at this age they usually care they're usually clean but the boys for the most part like they have that one favorite shirt and they just wore it every day like that's the shirt that they were known for and they're like I don't need a shower I swam in the lake today you know and Anyway OK That was David say though when he when he storms that field and God uses him right they're just normal people and we need to get that in our brain. The same way that God uses David the same way that God spoke to these people he wants to speak to you today he wants to work through you today the same with God If God is the same yesterday today and forever that means God hasn't changed and he still wants to use people to accomplish His will

all right and I want you to grab that through this series and the second thing is you need to study your own Bible you to read it you need to get into it if you don't have a Bible that you can understand come and talk to me and I will give you one OK I want to encourage you to get into it and to to read it and to dive in a good study bible I want to show you two I didn't do this last week and I meant to a good study bible is is just a basic tool that a Christian should have there's a lot of good ones I'm not trying to make exclusive claims here but here are two of my favorites of recent K. this one I've used for years it's called n l t study Bible the New Living Translation is a good translation that's thought for thought and it's a great study Bible that's approachable that's understandable gives you a lot of history and you can really pull a lot of things we actually have a new version of this now called Illustrated Study Bible which is great too there's pictures of places all over in Israel and some of those Illustrated things this is my new favorite one right now the cultural background study bible this really helps you dive into not just what's happening but what the what it meant in the culture at that time what it meant to the people who actually heard it and. You can kind of dive into some of those things and see and these are great study bibles and I want to encourage you if you don't have a study Bible if you're not reading it get one and get into it because the Bible is such an amazing thing and there's so much to be gleaned and I talked about this last week a little bit and I'll say it just quickly going today there's nothing else in life I should say nothing but for most of us there are very few other things in life where we think like once a day would be enough if how many of you would be like yeah all I need to do is eat one meal on Sunday afternoon and then I'm good for the week. I never need to eat again for the rest of the week I got my one meal or or you're like you know you decide that you know for your job like I'm just really going to work hard for an hour and a half on Monday and my boss will be cool you know what the other thirty eight and a half hours I'm supposed to work as long as I work really hard for that hour and a half on Monday were good OK or school right I'm going to show up for one class on Monday now that I don't really care right other than that I'm going to be good as long as I go to that one class my future is sets right we don't think about really anything else that way but we treat our faith that way a lot of times as long as I go to church on Sunday morning and I listen to a pastor tell me what I'm supposed to think about the Bible that I'm set. And I want you to hear for me that's not enough I believe that if you come here you will hear good quality teaching about what the Bible says no matter who's standing up in front of you. But I believe it's not enough it's not enough to really grow we need to get into the Word of God and read it for ourselves I know you're busy we're all busy. There are some things that we can put to the side and some things we can't and our faith should not be one of the things that we just slide on the sly the side and get to if we have time all right and I want to encourage you to dive into the Bible so today we're going to talk about another very common story as we dive in as we talk about these things last. If we talk about Cain and Abel this week we're going to talk about Daniel in the Lion's Den All right we're going to talk about that famous story so if you've already can see Larry you know the cucumber standing up in front of of the asparagus I don't remember what his name is you know and standing up for is God and you can you can think of those kind of things and and again there's nothing wrong with children's ministry teaching kids as kids but we're not kids in this place if you're a kid in this place you're going to hear it at an adult level All right we're going to talk about this it's found in the Book of Daniel it's found in the Book of Daniel Chapter six I'm going to read out of the New Living Translation If you've got an electronic version and you like to flip through that it's the L.T. that's the one I want to read if you like the same words that the pastor is going to read if you've got your own favorite translation that's great but basically we're just going to read through this whole chapter today and we're going to just let it kind of talk and see what it has to say Daniel just a little bit of background Daniel is actually he's a slave he's a really high end slave he's a slave when Daniel was a boy a foreign country came in and conquered his nation right and if you're familiar with the story at all Daniel is from. From Well he's not from the Nation of Israel he's from the Southern Kingdom and that's a whole nother thing we can talk about later if you want but this king comes in and destroys a city and takes him over any looks at his advisor the King looks at his advisor and says I want you to go find people from well the new homes you know from from royal bloodlines I want

you to find people who are good looking who are good at a lot of stuff and are quick to learn OK those were three criteria I want you to go find guys like this and I want you to bring them into our country so we can utilize their best. To conquer the nation they take the best and the brightest and like we're going to use them to further our kingdom All right pretty smart plan if you're trying to run an empire you know to grab the best and the brightest and plug a man trying to indoctrinate them you can see if you read through the first couple of chapters of Daniel they try. I'm brainwashing they haven't changed their names you know I mean they're going through everything they can do to take these young men and make them not where they're from but bring them into their own and it just didn't work with these with these four young men and we'll talk about the other three next week. But we're going to be talking about Daniel today and so Daniel comes in and Daniel interprets dreams and Daniel is he is smart and he is good at what he does and so Daniel is given a big position of authority all right and not everybody likes that. Right ever had that experience where you're just really good at what you do you might not be the one who's been there the longest you not might not be the most seasoned person but you're really good at what you do and then other people just aren't happy for you right it still happens now most of them don't have the same kind of authority that these guys did but then you know goes to another country he's taken away from his family as a child he's he's indoctrinated in this other way of thinking and eventually he's elevated and that's kind of where we begin to pick up our story this morning and it's at that point but it's important to remember Daniel is not here by choice. Daniel his nation was conquered he was taken against his will and brought to a place that he didn't want to be and instead of. Gripping about it instead of letting that moment define who he is for the rest of his life he just allows God to let him work and we see this amazing thing begin to happen and so Daniel Chapter six I'm going to work read verse one is where I want to start we're going to go through most of this chapter as as we go through today and I want I want to hit I'm going to highlight a couple of different things but so Daniel Chapter six verse one if you're not familiar with your bible Daniel is toward the end of the Old Testament you can open up right to the middle and that will take you to Psalms and proverbs and then you'll start turn to the right and you'll hit the major prophets as you turn toward the back Daniel's the last one of those before you get to a bunch of really small books of the Bible that have funny names OK but Daniel Chapter six verse one says there is the mead decided to divide the kingdom into one hundred twenty provinces and he appointed a high officer to rule over each province the king also chose Daniel and two others as administrators to supervise the high officers and protect the King's interest. You'd hear that. This foreigner. Is so high up that he's administrating the administrators. OK that's that's the quality young man that Daniel has proven himself to be he's an outsider and he's he's in charge of those who are in charge OK. Verse three Daniel soon proved himself more capable than all the other administrators and high officers because of Daniel's great ability the king made plans to place him over the entire empire. He's going to be number two of the largest empire of its day. OK this is the Persian Empire for all of you history buffs OK this is this is where he's at Daniel is in a place as a foreigner where he's going to be made number two in the largest him Pyar in the world verse four. Then the other administrators and high officers began searching for some fault in the way Daniel was handling government affairs I don't like it. I don't like that Daniel's being placed above them but they couldn't find anything to criticize or condemn he was faithful always responsible and completely trustworthy so they concluded our only chance of finding grand grounds for accusing Daniel will be in connection with the rules of his religion once you stop it I want you to think about this for a second OK I'm not before I'm going to I'm going to preface with what I'm about to say I am not making a comment on today's political system in America when I say what I'm about to say so don't read into what I'm about to say to either support or not support whoever you support or don't support. It's not where I'm going right now but Daniel is in charge of government. And the largest impiety are of its day Daniel has resources available at his fingertips like most of us will never experience. And these other high ranking people do not like that Daniel is being elevated above them as an outsider as a foreigner so they begin to nit pick everything he's doing and they're looking for ways to trip him up and they can't find anything you want to talk about integrity. There's

a good example you want to talk about somebody who doesn't let the whims of of what's coming his way dictate who he is as a person you don't need to look any further than Daniel. This man is the model of integrity and when they look to try and find something they can't find it I'm going to be honest if you look to try and find some time that I screwed up in the last month and a half you're not going to look that hard you're going to find more than one occasion where I did something dumb. OK I lost my temper or I wasn't where I was supposed to be or whatever you'd find plenty of failings in Jason Kirsch men and you don't have to look for my whole life you can just pick the last month and you can find plenty to choose from and I'm probably not alone in this place. If they started digging for dirt on any one of us they probably wouldn't have to look too hard and you know how this kind of stuff goes they don't have to find well man he had an affair a man he stole you can't find that in the last month on me. But you can find little things you can twist and make big just like we do all the time today when we're trying to prove our point take some little compromise. And blow it up into a big deal that's how the stuff works. And they can't find. Anything so like oh well he. Has a different religion than us. Will get him there. This is a laughable statement because if you are paying attention to Persian empire at all Daniel would have not been unique in having a different religion than the people who are around him right this is a place that has conquered lots of places there are hundreds of religions in this empire it is not unique to Daniel but it's something they know they can use right all right we can't find anything that matters as far as his personal integrity goes so let's trip him up based on his beliefs will get him there and they devise a plot that would only work if the emperor is like the most arrogant man in the history of the world. And he happened to be that man. And so keep reading look at this plan write verse six so the administrators and high officers go to the king and said Long live King various let's start with buttering up this king. We were all in agreement we had ministry others officials high officers advisors and governors that the king should make a law that will be strictly enforced give orders that for the next thirty days any person who prays to anyone divine or human except to you Your Majesty will be thrown into the den of lions and now your majesty you know your Majesty issue and signed this law so it cannot be changed in official law of the Medes and Persians that cannot be river revoked so King there is sign the law. I've told you before if you're some of you are new you might not know I have an active imagination. I say this a lot I feel like if you don't have an imagination it's not that I'm weird it's that yours is broke OK So like you my need to work on that a little bit. But these men come to their king and their buttering them up left and right right I mean they're there complimenting him they're there oh you're so great you're so wonderful everybody loves you why don't you make a rule that people can only pray to you we're going to go from you're an awesome King to now your God They knew it wouldn't take long to trip up Daniel in this either do you notice that they didn't say forever give us a month. We got this we know in a month. Daniel Daniel will not stop praying for a month that's something to be said right there too then you won't give this up for a month we'll we don't need a year he was a month in the King. And all of his amazing awesomeness is like. I like this idea yes I do yeah I mean I am a great king you should pray to me I'm worth it and so he signs it. And it goes into effect All right. Verse in but when Daniel learned that the law had been sign he went home and knelt down as usual in his up stairs room with its windows open toward Jerusalem he prayed three times a day just as he had always done giving thanks to his God then the officials went together to Daniel's house and found him praying and asking for God's help so Daniel's response to hearing that a law has been passed that will land you in a lion's den. To all me being able to pray to his king is to go and in a very elevated public place pray to someone else. They don't have to wait a month it took a couple hours I don't understand this if I'm flat honest I don't get it I don't know why Daniel just couldn't close the window right or maybe pray in his downstairs room in the closet. I don't understand I really I have no answers for you why he chose to just go right back up to his up stairs room in the window none other than that's where he felt like he connected with God. It doesn't make sense logically right I mean I don't think God would have been ticked that Daniel had he just prayed on his couch instead of in the window. But Daniel just wasn't changes routine based on a law like this and so he goes to this window and he prays to God and they're waiting they're waiting for him they know it's a matter

of time and again. The thing that I think a lot of times we miss on this we can see Daniel's faith right we see him as a man of God and we're like wow God This is amazing thing but I think the thing that a lot of times we miss is how Daniel was known for his faith. They know they're going to get him these are people with important jobs right these are the governors and the rulers of the areas and they're taking time out of their busy schedules to get Daniel. They don't have a lot of time they're busy but they know what is going to take a lot of time. Because of who Daniel is. And what Daniel is known for its a cool compliment let that be said of me. That I'm so well known for being a man of faith. If you want to give me you can get me I won't take long. If you're trying to trip me up and catch me in the act of a faith of my prayer time with God or doing something God would have me do I hope it doesn't take long to see something like that and here we see Daniel. Praying in his window verse twelve so they went straight to the king and reminded him about his law. KING Just in case you forgot you sign this law into effect that no matter who it is if they pray to anyone else they're going to the Lion's Den. Right remember that did you not sign a law that over the next thirty days any person who prays anyone divine or human except you Your Majesty will be thrown into the den of lions yes the King replied Right the decision still stands it's an official law of the Medes and Persians that cannot be wrote revoked can't you just see his pride and not like you yeah I did. What a great law that was then they told the king that man Daniel. Can usually tell how somebody really thinks of someone by the way they address them right that guy Daniel not hey your buddy Daniel. That man Daniel one of the captives from Judah playing the race card is ignoring you and your law he still prays to his God three times a day. Right we're doing everything in our power that guy Daniel he's not even one of us he's a captive. He's somebody we conquered he's now one of us he's still praying to his God what are you going to do about it hearing this verse fourteen the king was deeply troubled. He tried to think of a way to save Daniel he spent the rest of the day looking for a way to get Daniel out of his predicament and I tell you that's a lot of respect right there from the king of empire that man Daniel. Who was a captive from another country was worth a day of the Emperor's time trying to figure out how to get. Him out of this because Daniel's faith. In Daniel's integrity. Had proved his worth. To the Emperor. Because of who Daniel was. He spends an entire day trying to figure out how we can save him. But in the evening verse fifteen the men went together to the king and said Your Majesty you know that according the law of the Medes and Persians no law that the king science can be changed taking just in case you forgot what you just bragged about. You can't change this it's black and white. He prayed to somebody else he belongs in a lion's den. OK so at last verse sixteen the king gave orders to Daniel to be arrested and thrown into the den of lions the king said to him may your god whom you serve so faithfully rescue you Daniel's faith was known by the Emperor. In the Middle Persian empire that's pretty cool that's a pretty amazing thing. This guy seen things happen already right this guy this guy has seen Daniel come from nothing and elevate himself not himself to be worthy of being elevated by someone else this guy is seen Joe Hova in action not because of his own faith but in the life of Daniel and three other Hebrew boys with really weird names he seen in May the God that you serve so faithfully May the God that you're so faithful to that you wouldn't give up thirty days of prayer. May that God save you that's pretty remarkable Daniel's face. Has a pretty huge impact a stone was brought for seventeen and placed over the mouth of the den the king sealed the stone with his own royal seal and the seals of his nobles so that no one could rescue Daniel those are wax things that they would press in there to make sure no one's tampering with it OK you can't move the stone without breaking the wax seal that way they know nobody has moved that stone there that's actually an amazing detail to have included in the Bible because without those seals Daniel might not have stayed in there all night long right somebody's not a come and move the stone Daniel gets out of the lion's den and then he goes back in just long enough to be discovered in the morning if those SEALS aren't there right that's what these people could have claimed but instead all of their seals are around the stone. The Kings himself and all these other rulers their seals are all around this stone there is no way for Daniel to get out of this place until they break those seals and move that stone verse eighteen. Then the king returned to his palace and spent the night fasting. He refused his usual intertainment and couldn't sleep at all that night very

early the next morning the King got up and hurried out to the Lion's Den when he got there he called out in anguish Daniel servant of the Living God was your god whom you serve so faithfully able to rescue you from the lie and you want to talk about your faith impacting someone else. Whom. I mean I feel like I could say nothing else this morning and if you just let that resonate in your heart we have a win this morning this is the Emperor of an empire. Who stays up all night fasting. For someone else for a foreigner that. Daniel that captive. From Israel because of the king to have a restless night fast all night and now we've gone from just your god. To servant of the Living God. Right he is seeing who God is. Through Daniel. He is seeing a working picture of who God really is because he's watching Daniel live out his faith. That's an amazing testimony I hope people see that accurate a picture of God when they see me. They don't always but I do as well as I can with God inside of me. But the Emperor of the Persian Empire sees that a living God is being served by Daniel and he goes to him and he's like a servant of all in a God not a dead God not a man made god not an idol. Servant of the Living God. Does your god again whom you serve so faithfully did he save you from the Lions again before we move on I want you to understand this I know most of us probably get this. But these pits of lions were kept on purpose right and it was kind of like the Colosseum in that they were kept hungry and they were abused often so that they are mean and they're always ready to eat like as if lions aren't aggressive enough we're going to keep them half starved and we're going to hit them with stuff so they don't like people. And this is one of the ways that the court would like entertain themselves throw criminals throw people into the lion's den and watch them get torn apart. I know that's gross. But it's reality and the Persians didn't invent it and they weren't the last ones to do it but when Daniel gets thrown into a den of lions he's not getting thrown in into the home of pets. Right these aren't like Beanie Babies that he can rest against you know with a little tie symbol on their ear these are hungry. Beaten animals that have been trained to not like people even more than a lion probably already isn't scared of people that often and these Sorona know this den of lions. Did your god whom you serve so faithfully save you this is a futile question without God there is no saving the king would even be asking that question if the seals had been broken. His seal is still around that which is why he's talking to somebody that he thinks is in the cave. Then go then slip out and slip back in. He spends the night in a den of hungry lions most of you around here probably at least are vaguely familiar with the time that most predators hunt night. Right it's not like oh while they're probably sleeping animals hunt at night that's when they do it. This is not like oh yeah well Daniel was there during the safe part of the day because your god whom you serve so faithfully was able to rescue and what's Daniel's answer this is impressive to me the first thing he says as he comes out of there is one OK Live Forever most of us aren't so patient with people this is a pretty serious wrong. Right the king nobody else could throw Daniel in that Lion's Den The king did he respected Daniel but he still put him in there and Daniel comes out not like a stupid KING You're not my king okaying. May you live forever. He's on or in him. My God sent His angels to shut the Lions mouse so that they would not hurt me for I have been found innocent and his side and I have not wronged you Your Majesty. The king was overjoyed and ordered that Daniel be lifted from the den not a scratch was found on him for he had trusted and well stop right there for a second. Because I know that stories like this can be difficult to process when we're in the middle of our own pain. And some of us feel like we're in a lion's den or maybe we have before things aren't going well and you're doing your best to remain faithful to God and it does not seem as though God is sending his angels to shut the miles of alliance for you. So how does that square. Is Daniel more important than you. How does how does that work how does this all come together and honestly if we're honest with our faith a lot of us would have to say we don't really know. I don't know why God since angels down to shut the lot of the miles of these lions and then other places in the Bible I read stories of Peter and Paul give their life for Christ. Stephen. I don't have those answers I don't I don't understand why some Sometimes God miraculously different delivers and other times he doesn't. Want to talk about this next week specifically I would encourage you to come back but what I do know is God is the living God who cares desperately about your situation and he will always be there with you in the midst of the struggle. That doesn't mean that God is always going to send an angel to

close them out the lion's mouth and I don't understand that. I don't we're going to talk about this too I'm Some of you know me again not all of you do but I don't you know I'm I'm working on the series that we're going to start when we get into school in September right now we're going to walk through James and James is all about mature face. And mature faith. Looks at trials. And says not just I'm going to make it through but I'm going to rejoice in who my God is in the midst of the trial. And that comes into play with what we're talking about next week that's what mature faith looks like the trials don't shake everything to the ground in the middle of the trials we still say I trust and who God is I don't have great answers for why God saves Daniel here and he doesn't save Paul later other than there was still things that Daniel needed to do. I don't understand he writes After this he writes the back half of his his book here which is one of the most confusing portions of Scripture that there is. But it's all about prophecy it's all about what God's going to do it's all about all of these different things. But for whatever reason Daniel's time wasn't done. That doesn't mean that God loves Daniel more than you it doesn't mean that God was more able then than he is now. Do we go to God and trust in who God is. To do what God knows is best for us. And for a lot of us one of the reasons that these are so hard is because we have. A misunderstanding of what's really better. Like we think time on earth is better and it's easy for us to sit in church and be like I know that's not true. But in the midst of pain and in the midst of loss it big can become really difficult to say yeah I do trust that heaven is going to be better what comes next is better than what is now but that's where these people were. And I'm really trying not to say are key verse for next week right now so you have to come back next week or if you're not going to be here it's Online dot com It'll be up by Tuesday you can go listen then but God closed the miles of the line. Verse twenty four here's how you know that Daniel's faith had impacted the king but had not transformed him yet OK I want you to be aware as we read this some people who are look at this and they be like oh look what God condones this is not God saying what's about to happen is OK this is just Daniel filling in what the king does after this OK so this isn't God being like yeah here we go this is king various Now OK So then the king gave orders to arrest the men who would maliciously accuse Daniel. He had them thrown into the Lion's Den along with their wives and children not God various Bibles tell a story just because it's in the Bible doesn't mean God likes it OK good there we understand that the Lions leaped on them and tore them apart before they even hit the floor of the dead because they're hungry and they're mean. Then King Dariya sent this message of the people of every race and nation and language throughout the world. Peace and prosperity to you verse twenty six I decree that everyone throughout my kingdom should tremble with fear before the thought of Daniel. For he is the living God and He will endure forever His kingdom will never be destroyed that's interesting isn't it since they destroyed the nation of His Kingdom and yet he still realizes more of who God is and some people his rule will never end he rescues and saves people he performs miraculous signs and wonders and heaven on earth he has rescued Daniel from the power of the Lions So Daniel prospered during the reign of various And the reign of Cyrus the Persian It's amazing what the faith of one person can do. When that person sells out completely to God it's amazing the scope of influence that our faith can have when we hang on to Jesus and allow him to be seen through our lives. It's amazing it's our call. This is what we're called to there's nothing special about Daniel Daniel's just kid he's the person out of place he's not worry supposed to be don't want to I guarantee you when get well if Daniel was old enough we don't know exactly how old he was when he was taken right but if Daniel was a kid and he's right now on the chalkboard and they say What do you want to be when you grow up I guarantee you he didn't write well I hope another kingdom comes and takes over ours so I can you know get put in charge of that kingdom you know then you'll probably want to do the same thing that everybody around him wanted to do right he wanted to be a fireman a policeman or an astronaut probably not an astronaut it is such an important thing. To not allow Daniel could have been better. Daniel was taken. In our eyes God didn't come through for him then. Right the way that we see time God didn't come through for Daniel when his nation was conquered or when he was taken slave. Right we would be like oh man God Where were you and all that but Daniel knew WHO IS GOD was and so we just kept serving God in the middle of those questions. In the middle of those struggles he keeps on serving God. And

he's given this place of authority and he's put in this position of power and he's betrayed in such a shameless way and then God comes through in the way we like him to come through. In the way that we understand but really the driving part of this story to me obviously we see who God is and we see that he's amazing. But we also see what the faith of one person can do. This is the known world right at this time this is the majority of known people in the world would have heard this decree about who the God of heaven is because the faith of one man was so evident that it wouldn't waver no matter what happened and I would ask you. Not if your faith is going to be spoken to everyone in the world but I would ask you a couple of really simple questions that can be difficult to answer number one is what are you known for Daniel was known as a smart good looking kid who had a lot of skills and a lot of ways but what Daniel is really known for his faith and the way that you can tell is question number two when people describe you what are they saying. I'm not talking about the person who can't stand your guts right the people who didn't like Daniel described him as that man Daniel who is a foreigner that we conquered. As but the people that look to you. How they describe you. We don't know if Daniel and the king were good friends we know there's a lot of respect that flows both ways there. We don't know if they were great friends but the thing that stands out to the king in this story is Daniel's faith when he thinks of what makes Daniel Daniel the thing that stands out to him is Daniel's faith in a lot of us don't even give other people a chance to know us by that because we don't ever talk about it because we don't want to make people uncomfortable. Because we're nervous. About how they'll perceive us after they know I'm not trying to tell you you need to be one of those annoying Christians who tries to cram your face down everyone else's throat. It's not what I'm saying. But we should be comfortable talking about what we believe. There's a difference between like Facebook evangelism. And real relationships where we exchange who we are with right. I haven't pressure on a lot of things I hope that doesn't really matter to God you know. Because that kind of evangelism to me I'm not saying it is totally unfruitful but I don't like and share a lot of things that say if I don't like and share I'm ashamed of Jesus think it's crazy. It's my own personal belief if you like it that's cool for you but what I know I'm really matters to people. Is when they're somebody that they know somebody that they respect who they sit down with and they're not afraid to share who they are and what they believe even when things don't necessarily make sense and our faith goes I've shared this before I think one of the biggest mistakes that we make when we try and tell people about Jesus is we spend all of our time talking about somebody else's faith. Right we share about what this pastor said or this evangelist said or the amazing thing that we saw you know across the street from that person that we were specked and somebody asked us what we believe in the ask about our faith and we spend all of our time talking about somebody else's faith they don't know who that person is or that person is or that person is what they want to know is how does your faith work in your life because they know you and what we need to do in those moments. Be honest about who it is people are watching you and then once you tell them haven't you noticed that people just watch you like oh I didn't know Christians did that mean are you supposed to say those words right there really good knowing the verses that get you in trouble. This is part of it right the response that isn't such a horrible human being the response of that is I'm a human being. And I make mistakes but God is who he is I could tell you story after story. In our family of watching this happen when tragedy strikes. People still stand firm in their faith what a difference it made what a difference my dad's faith made. When my parents went through what they went through. If you don't know me well my parents went through a horrible ugly divorce my dad's faith while he struggled his faith in God did not waver. And I believe a huge part of the reason that I'm standing here today is because I saw my dad walk through something that was horrible and not lose faith and we can provide that for other people. We can provide that picture of a living God working no matter the circumstances and that's our call that's David David didn't know if he was going to be delivered Do you see David look at the King and be like Hey No sweat I'll see in the Morning we're not given any indication whatsoever ever that David or I say David that Daniel knew that he was coming out of that lines in the next morning and yet he didn't curse God as he when he didn't curse the King as he went in he just went in if this is where my faith has led me so be it in the God who is the same yesterday

today and forever that Daniel and that he will meet with you. Where you are doesn't mean all the bad stuff goes away every time but he will meet with you in the midst of that lion's den he will be there with you no matter the servant. Here's how we're going to end the day it's a simple simple message first of all if you don't know who Jesus is if you don't know this God we're talking about this morning we're going to give you a chance to respond Jesus came to this earth two thousand years ago he lived he taught and he died for you. He was the final sacrifice that needed to be made so that our sins can be forgiven and it is not difficult to choose Jesus it can be difficult to live for him no doubt about it but it is really easy to choose Him The Bible says we acknowledge we're sinners we believe Jesus is who we said he is we confess our sins to Him We are saved if you've never done that this morning I want to give you a chance. The second thing I want to say is just this well let's make it three second thing I want to say is this. For some of you in this place. You know that the faith that defines you is not the faith that should define you and I know that's difficult but if people look at you they're not necessarily seeing an accurate picture of who God is and it's not a one one off I'm not talking about you made a mistake once I'm talking about this is your lifestyle I want to encourage you that God is here you can repent and start over. That's the beauty of who Jesus is you haven't screwed up so bad he can't love you. You have been screwed up so bad he can't use you you haven't screwed up so bad I mean if you the Bible is full of people who screwed up but if the life to your living is not painting an accurate picture of Jesus I want to show you this morning to repent. Start making some changes and the third one is simply this. Some of you feel like you're in the Lion's Den right now. Life is out of your control things everything seems dark. And then I want you to hear from me this morning. God is with you he has not abandoned you I can't promise what God is going to do in your situation because I'm not God I wish I could tell God what to do. Sometimes but that would work out good for anybody long term. But you need to know that Jesus is here and he is with you and he sees your circumstances and he sees your pain he has not abandoned you. You are his child and he is with you. I'm going to pray this morning if you haven't chosen Jesus we're going to give you a chance to pray. But if you fit in those second two categories you know you haven't been doing what you need to be doing or you feel like you are in the Lions and then I'm going to ask our leadership team and our spouses to come back to the front here man if you can turn on some music you don't have to come up and pray to repent you can do that in your seat and you can go you don't have to come up and pray because you feel like the world is standing on and said yeah actually come up come on leadership team spouses really want you up here to sit down in the front row you don't have to come and stand in front of somebody if you want somebody to pray with you I'm coming pray Jason I'm not going to move much I'd rather have you down here than up with that camera you can just let it roll I want to encourage you in this place this morning but there are people who care about you. And they want to pray alongside of you come and pray.