

4) Ministry From Spring Harvest - Chapter 6

by George Verwer

The sermon emphasizes the importance of prayer, faithfulness, and striving for excellency in ministry, as exemplified by Daniel's life and experiences.

Duration: 59:25

Scripture: Daniel 3:25, Daniel 5:25, Daniel 7:14, Daniel 7:27, Matthew 6:33, Romans 11:34, Romans 12:1

Topics: "Harvest"

Description

In this video, the speaker reviews the main themes of the previous chapters in the book of Daniel, focusing on sovereignty, discipline, holiness, perseverance, pressure, courage, deliverance, presence, change, wisdom, deception, and judgment. The speaker emphasizes the importance of developing discipline in various aspects of life, such as physical discipline, studying the word, prayer, and time management. He encourages viewers to prioritize the best over the good and to cultivate a Daniel-like discipline in order to become the men and women God wants them to be. The speaker also mentions the use of television for evangelism but cautions against excessive consumption and highlights the need for prayer and repentance in relationships.

Transcript

It's a little hard to believe that we've arrived to Saturday morning, and I just want to especially thank you, as I know that many of you have been praying for me personally, and appreciate your prayers and your kindness. Also, some of the feedback that I've received, people stopping me along the way and sharing a few thoughts. After this meeting, I will be here in the front, giving away my little 1989 calendars, which has the Way of Salvation on the back, in case you're not yet saved, so that if some of you do want to write to me, you will know where to write to, know any Operation Mobilization address.

Generally, the letters will get through to me. And some of you perhaps have written some feedback, something you wanted to say to me or a question, you can give that to me here at the end of the session. I wanted to just say a word about a couple of books.

There are some books in the exhibition about prayer. Not many, but let me just mention three that I picked up. Touch the World Through Prayer, which is part of the theme that we will be dealing with this morning.

Relatively new book, very comprehensive. Recommend you read one chapter a day. Just a little over 30 chapters.

John White's book, *People in Prayer*. And Arthur Matthews, former OMF leader, died in a plane crash and left behind 31 studies in spiritual warfare. And if we are going to do God's will, we need to understand spiritual warfare.

So I hope that you will jot those titles down. Arthur Matthews, *Born for Battle*. John White, *People in Prayer*.

Touch the World Through Prayer by Wesley Duell. And picked those up today. I was reminded yesterday, and I had almost forgotten, that all of this material is not only on audio cassette, but video cassette.

It can be quite intimidating with this camera always focusing on you as you're trying to minister. And I thought I would just share just a tiny bit of what that's like. Just something I wanted to do, you see.

Good. There it is. It was on the timer.

I'll have to try it again. Let's turn now to Daniel chapter 6. I'm back in the NIV, reading again in the NIV. The book of Daniel chapter 6. This is a chapter that I have preached on regularly in many parts of the world over the years.

And what a dynamic and important chapter it is. And I hope that you not only will receive ministry here, but that you will share these things with others also, as it says in 2 Timothy chapter 2. It pleased Darius to appoint 120 satraps to rule throughout the kingdom with three administrators over them, one of whom was Daniel. The satraps were made accountable to them so that the king might suffer, not suffer loss.

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. Talk about God's sovereignty. And 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, neither corrupt nor negligent. 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.

So the administrators and the satraps went as a group to the king and said, O king Darius, live forever. 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 any god or man during the next 30 days except to you, O king, shall be thrown into the lion's den. Now, O king, issue the decree.

Put it in writing so that it cannot be altered in accordance with the laws of the Medes and the Persians, which cannot be annulled. So king Darius put the decree in writing. Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room, and this is really incredible, that's what he did, where the windows opened toward Jerusalem, and three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before.

This was a habit of his life. Then these men went as a group and found Daniel praying and asking God for help. So they went to the king and spoke to him about his royal decree.

Did you not publish a decree that during the next 30 days anyone who prays to any god or man except to you, O king, would be thrown into the lion's den? And the king answered, The decree stands in

accordance with the laws of the Medes and the Persians, which cannot be annulled. 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.

When the king heard this, he was greatly distressed. He felt he had been tricked, actually. He was greatly distressed.

He was determined to rescue Daniel. A little bit late. And made every effort until sundown to save him.

Then the men went as a group to the king and said to him, remember, O king, that according to the law of the Medes and the Persians, no decree or edict that the king issues can be changed. So the king gave the order and brought Daniel and threw him into the lion's den. The king said to Daniel, May your God whom you serve continually rescue you.

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 ring of his nobles so that Daniel's situation might not be changed. 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.

Guilty conscience. At the first light of dawn, the king got up and hurried to the lion's den. 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? And Daniel answered, O king, live forever.

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. The king was overjoyed and gave orders to lift Daniel out of the den.

When Daniel was lifted from the den, no wound was found on him because he trusted his God. And the king, at the king's command, the men who had falsely accused Daniel were brought in and thrown into the lion's den along with their wives and children. Before they reached the floor of the den, the lions overpowered them and crushed all their bones.

Then King Darius wrote to all the people, nations and men of every language throughout the land, may you prosper greatly. I issue a decree that in every part of my kingdom, people must fear and reverence the God of Daniel, for He is the living God and He endures forever. His kingdom will not be destroyed.

His dominion will never end. He rescues and He saves. He performs signs and wonders in heavens and in the earth.

He has rescued Daniel from the power of the lions. So Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius. In the reign of Cyrus, the Persian.

Let us pray. Living God, God of Daniel, God of Elijah, God of Abraham, God of Paul and Peter, and every man and woman has ever lived for You through the centuries. We humble ourselves before You this morning and we seek Your face.

We turn from our wicked ways and we would pray that You would heal our lands. That You would revive our churches. That You would revive us.

That You would revive our nation. That we may no longer be afraid of the lion's den. That we may be men and women of prayer.

That we may be Your servants. That we may build Your kingdom. O Lord, in this final time, looking into this book in this particular way, we thank You for what You have done in our hearts.

As laser beams of truth have broken in to the barriers that we have tried to set up and have brought us back to the foot of the cross, where we have experienced greater forgiveness and cleansing and reality because we have met with You this day, O living God. We give You the praise. We give You the glory.

Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen. If any of you have managed to go through all four of these Bible readings, I certainly would love to hear from you.

I'm purposely taking less meetings so that I can pray more for the people who come to the meetings and who will obey the message or respond and experience greater life in Christ. Because often Satan will counterattack. We know he will counterattack what the Holy Spirit is doing in our midst.

And this goes for people that may, even years from now, watch this videocassette series or listen to the tapes driving along in your car somewhere. In each chapter that we've looked at, we have tried to tie the basic thrust of the chapter to four words in each chapter. In way of review, just for a few moments, I'd remind you that in chapter 1, we especially dealt with sovereignty, discipline, holiness and perseverance.

And we find all that flowing right through again in chapter 6. Especially sovereignty and perseverance. And then in chapter 3, we spoke about pressure. We spoke about courage, deliverance and presence.

The divine presence, as we saw it with Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego in the fiery furnace. And then in chapter 5, we spoke of change. We spoke of wisdom, of deception and of judgment.

And again, we find those things carrying right on through this amazing book. And that's why when you get to chapter 6, after this great change, and Daniel is now under Darius, who is probably sort of the secondary king operating under Cyrus, the whole section of Daniel comes to almost a crescendo of challenge, of ministry and of spiritual truth. The four words I've chosen from this chapter are also incredibly important.

The first word is the word excellency. Excellency. It's a word that is being used quite often among managers.

The secular world, of course, uses this word. I was quite impressed at the range of books in the exhibition on Christian leadership. That certainly is an area where in the past decade we've had a flood of books and I must confess, most of them are quite good.

I've read many of them. I was going to write a book on leadership a long time ago. I wrote a manual for our own movement on leadership.

But when I saw the great books coming out on leadership, I decided, as usual, I'd sell other people's books rather than writing one myself. Excellency. God has called us, His people, to excellency.

Whether we are working in a factory, and I once launched a factory type of zero defects program in OM and it was quite interesting to see the improvements that year in a number of areas. Because in the work of God, mistakes cost. In family life, mistakes cost.

In driving, mistakes cost lives. We've lost a number of people that way. This week it was announced that the pearly train crash, where Steve Chilcraft was almost killed and wanted to be here this week, was caused by human error.

The crash into the motorway of that flight on the way to Ireland was caused because probably the pilot turned off the wrong engine. The Bible says in the New Testament that whatsoever we do, we should do it with all of our hearts. Sometimes when people have thought of the ministry of Operation Mobilization, they have thought of it as a great ministry of faith and prayer, and I believe that has been true.

Not in the absence of failure, but in the midst of it. But I am also, from the earliest days, due to the influence of especially a great Whitcliffe Bible missionary named John Beekman, who is now in heaven, who took me aside in my first trip to Mexico when I was only 19 and emphasized the need in my life for common sense. I'll never forget it.

Due to other important influences upon us, realized the importance of doing whatever we do with all of our heart and to do it right. You would not run two ships, a total of 25 ministry years, with very little mishap, and even when that mistake was made in connection with Lagos sinking, the mistake was made mainly by a pilot who came on board from shore to take us through those dangerous waters. He left the ship early, which was not to be.

Our captain to this day feels very bad that he did give the pilot permission to leave early. The pilot left us with a bad route, far too close to those rocks, in very difficult currents. When he was getting off the ship into the wrong pilot boat, there was a delay, and it must have been during that brief delay that we got slightly off course, and before we knew what happened, we were on that rock.

Mistakes are very costly in the work of God. And those of us, whether we're running ships, we have a far greater danger than two ships. We have 400 vehicles on the road.

Coaches, trucks or lorries, small vehicles, with 1,770 full-time workers, you can imagine the possibility for motor accidents. We were praying in the prayer meeting this morning that God would raise up laborers. And we were praying that God would not only raise up those who would go out to the harvest fields, but we were praying that God would raise up those who would be Daniels behind the scenes.

Let's just look again in the authorized version at verse 3. Then this Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes because an excellent spirit was in him. And the king thought to set him over the whole realm. Now Daniel was a human being.

Some people can't relate to Daniel because they feel they make so many mistakes. Then how can they relate to this man with an excellent spirit? Then there is the debate how much of this excellency that he had, this ability he had, was developed and how much of it was a gift from God. You can have a big fight over that.

Obviously it's both. Many of the things that we are fighting about in our churches and that you are liable to get into a fight about when you get back to your church are not either-or situations, but they are both. Praise God for some churches that initially were against any kind of new way of worshiping God, that through prayer and discussion decided to have two kinds of meetings.

And their morning service may be a little bit more of the traditional kind that some people are able to worship God in. We must not deny that. And then in the evening meetings they take out the guitars, they

take out the synthesizers, they put the choruses up on the overhead and they have a more free worship time.

And many a church has ridden through the rapids of controversy and disunity through that kind of wisdom. Not necessarily an easy or total answer. When it comes to wisdom we need that which is a gift of God.

We need that also that comes from our own background. And we need that which we can learn and which I hope you have been learning as we have tried to cover at least 16 major points where we need wisdom and spiritual understanding and have probably touched on another 20 or so. If you want biblical proof for that all you have to do is go back to the first chapter where you see that they were in a three year training program, where you see that they were learning a language.

How many British people? Beside the mission field is not for them because they don't think they can learn a language. Of course you might find it difficult learning French in Lincolnshire or Spanish in Kent. When I was studying Spanish in school my teacher looked at me with a rather depressed look.

Even at college or university when I was taking an advanced course in Spanish it was really almost a joke. I was supposed to read a book. I had trouble reading the cover.

But that first summer at university God led me to Mexico and within one month I was preaching in Spanish. When you get among the people who are speaking the language you will discover, most of you, that you have an ability to learn language. Thousands of people have begun to learn the language that they now speak fluently because they went on an O.M. summer campaign to a country where they couldn't speak the language.

And now O.M. leaders are often known for their fluency in language. When I was with Phil Bushel in Bangladesh some years ago, the missionary stood amazed as Phil translated me from English into fluent Bengali almost better than a Bangladeshi could speak. He graduated from Cambridge University.

Yes, he had something to start with. But he didn't learn Bengali in Cambridge University. I remember a man went on our ship.

He didn't seem to be very gifted. At least that's what we thought with our poor discernment. So we put him most of his time washing dishes.

And we discovered that during his time on the ship he learned in passing two more languages. He already spoke three before he came. Poor chap.

So Daniel had to learn the language. And I could give you three separate messages on Daniel just in regard to cross-cultural communication, cross-cultural sensitivity. We've only touched on that in this little appetizer to the book of Daniel.

Yes, excellency is not just for Daniel. It's for all of us. Though we may be in a great range of situations in our homes, in our offices, in the church, certainly in missionary work, we need a commitment to excellency.

And I want you to go from this tent this morning with a commitment to excellency. Whatever you're doing, do it better. Aim for perfection.

In some areas of life you know very well you'll never get there but you should aim anyway. In other areas of life they've proven in industry that perfection can be maintained. The whole airline industry is built on making perfection the goal.

They're looking for men who will fly the plane one hundred percent perfect. That's the kind of pilot I prefer to fly with. Now, my favorite airline, of course, is British Airways.

And that isn't something I say in order to be culturally sensitive. That's just a fact. And one of the great things about British Airways is that you can talk to the steward, as I usually do, and make a booking to go up and have a chat with the pilot.

And so many times over the Atlantic, down along the coast of Italy, recently over Turkey, I go up to the cockpit and I sit behind the captain and I have a chat. Amazing! You probably didn't even know that about your own airlines. Those men are committed to perfection.

Of course, there is the failure factor. And in your life, as you are committed to excellency, as you are committed to do things right, as you are committed to drive right, as you are committed to increase in your ability to communicate. And the books by William Backus over in the exhibition are some of the greatest books written on communication that I have ever seen.

And one of the reasons we read books is because we want to improve. We want to grow. We are committed to excellency.

Oh, brothers and sisters, it's a message that the church of Jesus Christ greatly needs. And I believe, and I'm an outsider in Spring Harvest, that it's the commitment to excellency of the administrators of Spring Harvest that enables this great event to go on year after year the way it does. And these men and women need to be commended.

So that's my first word. Now, it's important to realize that Daniel is human. That's why you need to read the whole book.

Because you'll discover over in chapter 8, verse 27, something that helps bring things into balance for any of you that are potential extremists. And if any of you feel that you tend to get into extremes, you please write to me. Because that has been one of my greatest problems.

And I can send you free some of my material on balance. Verse 27, chapter 8, And I, Daniel, fainted and was sick certain days. Daniel, fainting, growing weary.

Daniel, getting sick for a number of days. Weren't there any great healers available? Where was his faith? Brothers and sisters, if you and I fail to understand our humanity, the human factor, as we get caught up with all the divine factors, we will become a flunky factor. We will get knocked out or depressed or something worse.

I checked this in other translations and it said, Daniel got sick for a number of days. Afterward, I rose up and did the king's business. And I was astonished at the vision.

But none understood it. I'm glad the Holy Spirit, in giving us this book of inspired writing, put that little balancing verse in there, especially for characters like me. The second word, I'm sure you probably have guessed, is the word prayer.

Prayer. Perhaps we should have preached on this verse back after chapter 1, because, in fact, you will not understand the other chapters unless you realize Daniel was a man of prayer. If there's any area where Daniel could have been considered extreme, it's probably in this area.

Verse 10, Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house, his windows being opened, his chamber toward Jerusalem. He knelt upon his knees three times a day and prayed. He prayed, and he gave thanks before his God as he did previously.

Now from reading the text, and that's why we read it, we understand why he's praying. We understand what is happening. These men were jealous.

These presidents, these princes, were jealous. They couldn't find any fault with Daniel. Verse 4, Neither was there any error or fault found in him.

Believe me, when you are committed to excellency, when you are beginning to do things for God, there will be difficulties. There will be trouble. And when that trouble comes, men and women will try to find fault with you.

If you don't want anybody trying to find fault with you, then let me just tell you something. You're in the wrong planet. Did you get that? If they're against what you're doing, they will try to put the knife in, as we saw in one of those other chapters.

And that's why you have to develop not only that commitment to excellency, you have to develop the kind of spiritual toughness, the spiritual stubbornness, you see in Daniel throughout the book. And so they looked more carefully. And though they couldn't find any fault, and in some cases that will not be true when people look at us, they tried to do something that was sneaky and underhanded.

Because, in fact, Daniel had arisen to this place of power and leadership. God had done that in his sovereignty. And he had a special linking, obviously, with Darius.

Darius wasn't a complete jerk. He was impulsive. But he knew a good man when he saw one.

And Daniel had 60 years, 50 or 60 years proving himself. He was moving somewhere between 70 and 80 years of age at this time. Now this is my opportunity to give a little word for the retired people.

And I have for many years offered 25 free books to anybody who can send me one New Testament Scripture that clearly teaches the biblical basis for retirement. Nobody has got a book yet. You're welcome to try.

In some ways, one of the greatest untapped resources in the Church of Jesus Christ today are the so-called retired people. More and more of them have been coming into Operation Mobilization and they have been doing a great job for God. In fact, one of the reasons I'm here is because Dennis and Carol Clifford, two so-called retired people from the education system, carry a major load of the team that I'm the leader of there in Forrest Hill and Bromley, Kent.

The people who run our hospitality center in Bromley are so-called retired people. Some of our people at the Quinta, our British base, are so-called retired people. The man who was captain of Duluth for many, many years was a retired person.

Captain Carl Isaacson. What about him? What about some of you so-called retired people? You've left Lloyd's Bank. I know one bank that's even financing someone to be on OM.

Incredible! Early! You know, they want to get you out early. They make these special deals. Go work with a charity organization and we'll take care of the... You know, the bank's got more money and they know what to do with it.

We'll take care of the financing. That's exciting! The 20th century is exciting! And I hope you're excited about what God wants to do in your life. In the 50s.

In the 60s. In the 70s. In the 80s.

Oswald Sanders, that great former leader of OMF from New Zealand, is still moving, preaching and teaching and he's well into his 80s. Now you may have to slow down. I've already slowed down.

Years ago. Can't keep the same pace. It's making my wife nervous.

She said to me, you know, I want to just tell you, as my wife got into these other Scriptures outside of Ephesians 5, she said to me, I want to tell you, just watching you is making me feel tired. Has your wife ever said that? That's nothing compared to the poor, introvert husband who has an over-energized wife. And just looking at her makes him feel tired.

He wants to sit down, you know, and just rest in front of the telly and watch a little football and, you know, she's wanting to go out and preach in the open air because her jeans, you know, are overdosed. Don't think that your marriage is going to collapse because you're so different from one another. Unity in the midst of diversity, but it demands a high degree of maturity.

Remember that. And a lot of dialogue. The worst thing in marriage is when you just clam up.

Keep it in. Don't say anything. It may look unspiritual.

You really are itching. You've been itching for weeks to punch your husband right in the nose, but ooh, what if there's a video camera in the window or something? Talk it out. Pray it out.

Confrontation is a basic part of marriage and can bring a lot of revitalization together with prayer and repentance. Daniel was a man of prayer. Daniel, at the same time, was a human being.

And you and I need to dare to be a Daniel. And we need to make prayer the absolute priority of our life. There's a very interesting verse about Daniel's prayer life in chapter 9, verse 3. Chapter 9, verse 3. And I set my face unto the Lord God to seek by prayer and supplication with fasting and sackcloth and ashes.

And I prayed unto the Lord my God and made my confession and said, O Lord, the great and awesome God, keeping Thy covenant and mercy to them that love Him and to them that keep His commandments. We have sinned and have committed iniquity and have done wickedly and have rebelled even by departing from Thy precepts and from Thy ordinances. Neither have we hearkened unto Thy servants, the prophets, who spoke in Thy name to our king, our princes, our fathers, and to all the people of the land.

O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto Thee, but unto us confusion of face. As at this day to the men of Judah and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and unto all Israel that are near and that are far off through all the countries to which Thou hast driven them because of their trespass, that they have trespassed against

Thee. You can read the rest of that great prayer of confession when in your reading.

And I hope you will continue to read, Daniel, you get to chapter 9. Oh, what a beautiful, important picture. Daniel praying. Daniel confessing.

And everything we have said here this week will be of little value if we don't know how to repent, if we don't know how to deal with sin, if we don't know how to bounce back when we do fail. And I wish there were more time to speak of that. But it's clearly found, yes, right here in the book of Daniel.

Originally I didn't think it was here. A message of forgiveness, which has been the lifeline of my whole walk with God. 1 John 2, verse 1. First part of the verse, sin not.

Second part of the verse, if you sin, you have an advocate with the Father. Jesus Christ the righteous, and I know in the depth of my being that some of you are not functioning spiritually because you're living in vain regret. Tozer in his brilliant book, *Spiritual Depression, Cause and Cure*, talks about vain regret.

The most subtle form of self-love. And you can hear message after message and exhortation after exhortation, but if you don't come free from vain regret, if you don't let that sin of the past go down under the blood, and forget it as much as you can, and when it pops back, push it down under there again, then you will be constantly crippled in your desire to be a Daniel in the 20th century. Confession is the therapy that every believer needs.

And we find Daniel fasting. We find Daniel confessing. We find Daniel identifying himself with the sins of the nation that led to the captivity in the first place, to the judgment of God in the first place.

And then we find him moving forward, moving forward, having dreams, having visions, which affected nations, and affected history. Yes, prayer is the word that leaps from the pages of the book of Daniel like a laser beam of Holy Ghost love and light. Risking his life for his prayer life.

Risking his life for God because he refused to compromise. It isn't just a matter of praying. It isn't just a ritual of praying.

The habit of praying. And by the way, Billy Graham said that Christian life is habits. And if we don't develop godly habits, if we don't change our other habits, we'll never walk for God.

Habits. That's why Spring Harvest, the ministry, the messages, can only be part of the picture in these months that come. The bigger part is when you get home and you try to make changes in your habits in regard to physical discipline, in regard to the Word, in regard to prayer, in regard to how you use your time.

Can you imagine Daniel sitting for hours in front of a television set? Of course we can't. They didn't have TV back then. I'm not anti-television.

I'm actually pro-television in the use of evangelism. One of our ministries is videocassette evangelism throughout the world. But if you and I, and I have to speak to myself all the time about this because I have such a wide range of interest in life, too many interests, and many of the things are good, and the good becomes the enemy of the best.

But if you and I don't develop more Daniel-like discipline in turning off the TV and getting into the Word and getting into prayer, we will never be the men, the women God wants us to be. It's as simple as that. I pray we may never be the same after being in this chapter of Daniel.

The third word, with ten minutes to the finishing mark, is the word servant. Now this is perhaps not jumping out of this chapter as strong as the word prayer, but it's there. And it's through the whole book.

I think it was Charles Swindoll who wrote a book, *Improving Your Serve*. It's not a book on tennis. People often ask me, when do you get any recreation? I just want to tell you so that you can all realize how balanced I am that during my time at Spring Harvest I had 25 minutes of tennis.

And it was great. I played with my friend Chris. Every year I have a new young student traveling with me, supposedly learning.

Usually I'm the one that's learning. And we had a wonderful time on the tennis court. And of course, I won.

Not because I'm any good. Not because Chris is out of practice. Plus he had the poor racket.

Yes, we need to improve our serve. God is calling, I believe, many of you to leadership. And if you are going to be a leader, if you are going to be a leader following even in the steps of Daniel, contextualized into your own situation, then you must major on being a servant.

Notice verse 20. When he came to the den, he cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel. And the king spoke and said to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God.

We could also speak for an hour about that word, living God. Often I open my prayers, O living God. It's my favorite term about God.

We find it in chapter 26. For he is the living God. And when we go from this tent, we will go with that greater assurance that our God is the living God.

We see Daniel in the lion's den. Even the king could not revoke his own word. It was the law of the Medes and the Persians.

And all the mistakes that are made along life's road in a moment of impulsiveness. The greatest mistakes I have made in my life have been in moments of impatience, irritability and impulsiveness. With my big mouth.

My mother warned me. She wasn't even a believer. She looked at me as a little boy across the table and she said, Son, you've got a big mouth.

I don't know if any of you can relate to my problem. I know so many English people are so quiet. But if you do have a big mouth, when you write me a letter, put on there a little word.

Pray for my mouth. The psalmist said, I put a watchman. I put a watchman on the door of my mouth.

I do that but my mouth is so big I swallow him and still make a mistake. So, Darius, in that moment of impetuosity, in that moment of pressure, being pressured by the enemies of Daniel, signs the decree. It could not be revoked.

Daniel is thrown into the lion's den. Have you had that experience yet? You know, you can have that experience without real lions. And as we go from Spring Harvest, some of our church situations, some of our hometown situations, some of our work situations are just like a lion's den.

Don't put yourself down. Too many of God's people are putting themselves down. Maybe they think it's spiritual.

Oh, I'm not a Daniel. I'm no good. My life's riddled with failures.

I believe and I say this, I sense with God's guidance that many of you, sitting right here this morning, are actually being used of God more than you are willing to admit. You write that down. You are being used.

That's right, this young lady here, you, you. I wish I could go out and hug every one of you and just somehow let you know this is for real. We are not up here having some kind of academic jamboree.

This burns in our hearts. Do you get that? And we want you to go from here ready for the lion's den. We want you to go from here ready for persecution, ready for injustice, ready to be backstabbed, ready for difficulty and trial and heartache.

Read it in James chapter 1. Read it in 1 Peter chapter 1. Read it in Hebrews 11. Read it in 100 other Scriptures that I'd be happy to share with you. Five minutes to touchdown.

Servant. We are called to be servants, but not servants of man. Firstly, servants of the living God.

And as we serve the living God, He will give us grace to serve one another. And that will be part of God's great spiritual revolution. I call it, in my latest book, a revolution of love.

And I believe it in the depth of my soul. So God in His mercy, God in His providence, delivered Daniel. God does not always deliver in this way.

He didn't deliver Stephen in this way. In a number of cases, He didn't deliver the Apostle Paul in this way. And many of the early Apostles were all martyred.

And many of God's greatest people were martyred. And if you want to study that, you look at Corinthians 4, Corinthians 6, you look at Hebrews chapter 11. But our final word, and I don't need to speak long on it, because so many people are ministering on it, so many books are written about it.

It is the word Kingdom. Kingdom. Again, notice verse 26.

For He is the living God, and steadfast forever. And underline this, His Kingdom. His Kingdom, that which shall not be destroyed.

And His dominion shall be even unto the end. Notice chapter 7, verse 27. For an even stronger statement.

And the Kingdom and dominion and the greatness of the Kingdom, the greatness of the Kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High. Hallelujah! What a verse! Tucked away here in the middle of chapter 7. Whose Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom. And His dominion shall serve and obey Him.

Brothers and sisters, we have become God's people in God's Kingdom. We go from here. Not firstly as British.

Not firstly as French. Not firstly as Americans. We go as God's people.

Our kingdoms are not of this world. We can influence the kingdoms of this world. And one of the kingdoms on my heart is the Kingdom of Nepal.

An amazing little book about Nepal. Don't Let the Goats Eat the Lakhwat Trees. If you want to look for some wild, easy reading.

And I've just come from Nepal. And we had two men in prison in Nepal for five months. And God's people pray.

And they were just before the judge. And the judge wanted to send them to prison for a number of years. But God intervened.

And they were acquitted. And they're free. And that has been a great encouragement to the Nepali church.

As many Nepalis are faced with prison and faced with court cases. As the Queen of Nepal is very anti-Christian. But through prayer, through understanding dominion, through understanding the Kingdom, we can have a major influence in the kingdoms of this world.

But our Kingdom is the everlasting Kingdom. It begins when we are saved by the grace of God through what Jesus Christ has done on the cross. And it continues here in this world until God chooses to take us.

And then with Him for eternity. A mystery of mysteries. And you'll never be a real disciple of Jesus Christ until you understand the importance of mystery in the Christian life.

The things we don't understand that perplex us. And even when we search the Scriptures, we still don't fully understand them. Who has been God's counselor? It says in that 11th chapter of Romans, before we get into that dynamic Mount Everest of Romans chapter 12.

Brothers and sisters, let us go from this place more aware than ever of our inheritance in Jesus Christ. More aware than ever of what we can do through prayer. More aware than ever that God wants to use us, ordinary people, to build the kingdom.

And also to influence the kingdoms of this world. As we do that, there will always be the element of mystery. Things that happen in the world that seem so bizarre.

That seem to be the opposite of what we have prayed for. We shall not be discouraged. Even if ultimately one day we find ourselves in the lion's den, we will not be discouraged.

Because we know our God. We know our God and we are known of God. And that will keep us in any situation that can ever come into our life.

Let us pray. Let us have every head bowed. Every eye closed.

I believe the Spirit of God has moved on many hearts to make a deeper commitment to Jesus Christ and the kingdom during these four sessions together. And I want to give you a moment to give an outward expression of an inward transaction. And if you have made a deeper commitment to Christ during these days and in these sessions as you have looked at Daniel, and as you have looked at God in a fresh way, if you will dare to be a Daniel in the day and age in which we live, the day of pressure, the day of change, if you will dare, if you will dare, be it in Britain or Bombay, to be a Daniel, to go God's way against the tide, to go to the lion's den if necessary, to go to the fiery furnace if necessary, if God has spoken to you and you

want to make a deeper commitment to Christ and His kingdom, then I want you just to quietly, very quickly, as an outward expression of an inward transaction, just stand to your feet in this tent, that I may pray a prayer of consecration and commitment for you before the living God.

Just a moment. If God has spoken to you, and you really mean it, then I want you just to quietly stand where you are, right now. I know some have already come forward in these days.

Some of you raised your hand last night. But there are others that have not yet made any outward commitment of recommitment to the kingdom, to Christ, to being God's man, to being God's woman, in a new, renewed, disciplined way. Counting the cost of what this really involves.

And so I give you this opportunity, right now, as I have to so many across the world, and the letters that come back later indicate that God meets people when they take this one step of faith. God takes ten. He's already taken ten.

So I would give you this opportunity to be God's man, to be God's woman, wherever it leads, whatever the cost. And to stand up as an outward expression of an inward transaction. As you stand in confession, in repentance, committed to excellency, committed to prayer, as a servant to build the kingdom.

Glory, hallelujah. Anyone else? Blessed be God. I wish I could go and pray with each one of you for an hour, but the Holy Spirit will give greater communion than that.

Blessed be the living God who answers prayer. Let us pray this prayer of commitment. If God is speaking, if you really believe, then take this step of faith.

Living God, you see each person standing before you right now. You know their hearts. You know their needs.

Fill us all afresh with your Holy Spirit. For without Him, we cannot do this great work. And yet we realize, O God, as we stand before You, that we must do our part.

We must change the habits of our life. We must develop Daniel-like discipline. We must develop wisdom and discernment through study, through Your Word, through prayer, through greater intensity in developing biblical, spiritual warfare strategy.

And so, O God, we stand before You in fear and trembling, aware of our weaknesses, aware of our failures, and yet we are right now more aware that You are a living God. A living God who can deliver from the lion's den, who can deliver from the fiery furnace, and who can go on delivering us from our own dilemmas and problems and sins in the midst of spiritual warfare. We present our bodies as a living sacrifice to You.

For we know this is our reasonable service. And we know, O God, as we do this, You will transform our minds that we may never be the same. For we pray in the name of Jesus Christ.

Amen. I would like everyone to stand, and if our musicians could lead us in just singing that closing chorus that I often sing when I am in a meeting like this. He is Lord.

He is Lord. He is risen from the dead. He is Lord.

As a prayer of commitment to our Lord Jesus Christ. Let us sing that as a prayer together to our great living God. Sorry I put them on the spot, but I think we know this chorus.

He is the Lord. Don't just sing it. Believe it.

He is the Lord. The Lord over everything, time, talent, money, your future. He is risen from the dead.

He shall come every time. Christ is born. Once again, this time, He is my Lord.

Make it more personal. He is my Lord. He is risen.

Jesus Christ. He is Lord. He is Lord.

He is coming in the clouds. He is coming in the clouds. Every Jesus Christ.

Thank you, John. Please sit down.

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