

# PEARCE CHURCH

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Dear Pearce Family,

*Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul. Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day He visits us. – 1 Peter 2:11-12*

Daniel was such a man. He is in literal exile, yet he was faithful to God in the midst of the pagan world that engulfed him, and God provided for him. Daniel distinguished himself by his exceptional wisdom to such a degree, that King Darius was planning to make him his Prime Minister, giving him authority over the whole kingdom. Daniel did not climb to the top of the corporate ladder through greed, cunning, or backstabbing those who got in his way. Daniel 6:4 says he was trustworthy and neither corrupt nor negligent.

Jealous rivals in the courts wanted to stop Daniel's rise to prominence. Their attempt to overthrow Daniel by digging up dirt on him was unsuccessful. They "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" (6:4). So his opponents connived to get King Darius to forbid prayer to anyone besides the king. Disobedience meant death in a den of lions.

They were right about Daniel. He would not stop praying to God. And he did end up in a lion's den. But even there, God sent His angels to shut the mouths of the lions and kept him safe. The end result was that King Darius glorified God and commanded that the whole kingdom should do so: "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" (Daniel 6:26).

What do pagans see in our lives? Are we known for our faithfulness to God through our prayer, integrity, diligence, and service? Such lives of character are a witness that point people to God so that they also may experience His salvation, and "glorify God on the day He visits us" (1 Peter 2:12). This is our calling with the help of the Holy Spirit.

With Faith,

*Pastor Todd*