



## “When Your Mind’s Made Up”

Daniel 1 – NASB and NIV Translations  
September 15, 2019  
Sermon Series: Courageous Living  
Rev. Dr. Henry Hansen

### THE BIG IDEA

This message looked at the first chapter of Daniel and the challenges facing Israel. They’re exiled and deported and forced to enter into a new environment – including a new culture, and Daniel and his friends are called into the King’s Courts in Assyria. The King attempts to condition them to Assyrian culture – we see even how Daniel is among one of the few Old Testament books translated in the bible in both Aramaic (Babylonian) and Hebrew (from the Hebrew people) – which illustrates the unique cultural issues apparent. Daniel in this story “made up his mind” (NASB) and “resolved himself” (NIV) to not defile himself. He did not place conditions on his faith amidst danger; rather, he placed God first. He had a faith “in spite of and because of,” a statement made about faith by the theologian and preacher Fred Craddock. We’re meant to make up our mind and have a faith in spite and because of, and to hold the line, which invites us to witness God’s glory in our circumstances.

### GETTING STARTED

1. When’s a time you went into a new environment like a school, town, peer group and so on?
2. When Henry introduced the reference by Tim Keller about having a “bottom line” when it comes to our first, what was meant and how does it tie into the theme of courageous living and a faith in spite of and because of?

### LEARNING & LIVING OUT SCRIPTURE

Together, read **Daniel 1 – NASB**

3. What do you make up the fact that Daniel is written in both Aramaic and Hebrew?
4. What was the King doing in attempting to get Daniel and company to do by educating them in the ways of the Assyrians and by changing their name and having them follow a new diet?
5. What’s the relevance of Daniel’s mind being made up?

What do you make of this statement in verse one – “The Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand.” How’s that relevant to the rest of the story?

6. Is there a bottom-line you're holding onto that keeps you from making a decision for your faith and making up your mind to honor Christ in any particular area of your life?

### **LIVING OUT 'REAL LIFE'**

7. Consider a condition you've placed on your faith or Christian community and give it back to God. Ask him to help you let go of it and look toward how you might make up your mind more boldly for the sake of the Gospel.

### **THE 'EXTRA-MILE'**

8. Invite a friend to church during this series – take that risk for your faith.

**'Under Pressure'**

## THE BIG IDEA

When we find ourselves under pressure from life's demands, there is only one place that we can turn. We must turn our hearts and prayers to the one he sets up kings and deposes them.

## GETTING STARTED

1. Tell us about a good boss that you have had. What makes a "bad boss" bad?
2. What do you do when you have a bad dream?

## LEARNING & LIVING OUT SCRIPTURE

Together, read [Daniel 2:1-23]

3. Why might King Nebuchadnezzar ask his advisors to tell him his own dream?
4. The sermon talked about prayer summarized in 3 words "Help, thanks and Wow". Where do you see these components in this passage? Describe the "wow" of God seen in verses 20-23.
5. Read Matthew 26:36-45. How is God's response to prayer different in this passage than the response in Daniel 2?
6. How would things be different if God had granted Jesus' request in Matthew 26?
7. How is prayer a bold response under pressure?

## LIVING OUT 'REAL LIFE'

8. What is usually your first response to life's pressures? Are you happy with that response? If not, what steps can you take to do things differently?

## THE 'EXTRA-MILE'

9. Read the rest of Daniel 2. Is the interpretation of the dream important to the point of the chapter? Why or why not?

## SHARING & PRAYER REQUESTS

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES *(optional)*

Additional resources can be listed here: including quotes from message, additional reading (books referred to), websites, etc.

**"A Faith that's Fired Up"**

Daniel 3  
September 29, 2019  
Sermon Series: "Courageous Living"  
Rev. Dr. Henry Hansen

## **THE BIG IDEA**

This message highlighted the importance of having a faith whose ultimate concern is promoting the cause of Christ. The characters in this story of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, willfully submit themselves to the flames out of their devotion to Yahweh. They refuse to worship the idol of gold. It nearly costs their lives. We're invited to a faith – to use a term coined by Paul Tillich whose "ultimate concern" is Christ. Tillich said "Faith is a state of being ultimately concerned." What we're ultimately concerned about will tell us about our object of worship. In this message it was asked "What causes your soul to rumble? Your Kids? Your beauty? Your passion or hobby? Your mobility – upward or downward? Your achievement? Your brunch!? Your country? Your and our Poor? Your character Your sense of mission to God and others?" The ultimate concern to Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego was their sense of mission such that the worship of other gods or image made thereof was a total waste of time and utter nonsense. An image of false gods can come to us through other religions or idols such as success, image, status, beauty, wealth, family and comfort. The image question is what ultimately concerns us – i.e., occupies our thoughts, conversations, and life. The devotion of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego is such it becomes the ultimate concern of the king, as our faith can also do in the lives of others through radical expression of it.

## **GETTING STARTED**

1. What does it mean to have "A Faith that's Fired Up?"

## **LEARNING & LIVING OUT SCRIPTURE**

Together, read **Daniel 3**

2. Consider the repetitive nature of Daniel 3 and what you think that's communicating as a literary vice? What do you think it says about the nature of the King and the spectacle created that works powerfully against Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego ?
3. Verse 19 says the "attitude of the king changed" toward them. The more literal translation is "the image of his face changed." What do you make about the outward expression of the king and its relevance to this story?
4. What do you make of the fact that all three men were faithful in their obedience to God?
5. How do you account for the promotion at the end of the story of them?
6. What's your interpretation of the fourth man in the fire? Compare that with Matthew 28: 20. What are the similarities of God's promise to be with people in either Scripture? Consider God as comforter, mission-called, and refiner's fire himself.

7. The most frequent command in the Old Testament is to worship the Lord God and serve him only. What do you make of that in terms of it's being applicable in this passage? How about your own life?

## **LIVING OUT "REAL LIFE"**

8. What are you ultimately concerned about? Consider the list of things above and talk openly.

## **THE "EXTRA-MILE"**

9. Do some things this week that change the image of the face of the king. Act upon your faith in such ways that it has noticeable outward expression in people around you. Proclaim your faith boldly so that it has a tangible effect and clearly communicates your worship of Christ loudly. This outward expression may be agitation, frustration, joy, elation, concern or curiosity. Aim for a variety of responses and take a step that demonstrates your worship of God through radical expression.

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

*Read some books by Henri Nouwen if you haven't already*

# “AN IMAX CASE OF PRIDE”

Daniel 4: 24-37

October 6, 2019

Sermon Series: “Courageous Living”

Rev. Dr. Henry Hansen

## THE BIG IDEA

This message focused on the King and his tendency to inflate his sense of importance. He took great pride in his reign over his kingdom, which was the greatest empire in ancient history. He learned humility through humiliation. The alternative path to pride is humility which we discover in Philippians 2. We can learn humility by the path of Christ, which is the corresponding virtue of pride.

## GETTING STARTED

1. Whose a figure you knew of growing up that had an extraordinary sense of pride that inflated the self and demeaned others? Consider a friend, coach, someone you didn't get along with, or leader.

## LEARNING & LIVING OUT SCRIPTURE

Together, read **Daniel 4: 24-37**

2. What's the role of Daniel in this story?
3. Why did God cast judgment on the King?
4. Explain in this story how the king modeled unhealthy pride. Consider statements he makes about himself.
5. What did the king learn through humiliation? Consider the consequences of his behavior.
6. Must humility be preceded by humiliation or can it be taken on as a virtue.
7. Read Philippians 2: 5-11. What do we learn about Jesus and how he modeled humility (the corresponding virtue to pride). Give several examples.

## LIVING OUT “REAL LIFE”

8. Describe what pride is about and why it was the chief of the 7 Deadly Sins.
9. Consider the statement Henry summarized by Nicky Gumbel – “Don't let criticism to get to your heart. Nor allow success to get to your head.”

Is there one or the other you struggle with and why?

## THE “EXTRA-MILE”

10. Practice vulnerability toward others this way as demonstrating healthy pride. Do it with someone you've been less vulnerable with.

## **SHARING & PRAYER REQUESTS**

*Pray the Serenity Prayer together as a group. Pray beyond the first verse which is familiar. Pray it all aloud and pray and meditate on it during the week.*

God grant me the serenity  
to accept the things I cannot change;  
courage to change the things I can;  
and wisdom to know the difference.

Living one day at a time;  
enjoying one moment at a time;  
accepting hardships as the pathway to peace;  
taking, as He did, this sinful world  
as it is, not as I would have it;  
trusting that He will make all things right  
if I surrender to His Will;  
that I may be reasonably happy in this life  
and supremely happy with Him  
forever in the next.  
Amen.

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES (optional)**

Additional resources can be listed here: including quotes from message, additional reading (books referred to), websites, etc.

# “Reading Between the Lines of the Writing On the Wall”

Daniel 5

October 13, 2019

Sermon Series: “Courageous Living”

Shannon Coon

## THE BIG IDEA

This story from Daniel happens 20 years after the reign of King Nebuchadnezzar. We see another king (actually King Nabonidas’s son Belshazzar) who appears to be very similar to his forefather Nebuchadnezzar. But he proves even worse when he desecrates the holy vessels his forefather had looted from the Jerusalem temple. He was spitting in God’s face. Amid his revelry, a mysterious, disembodied hand appeared and wrote on the palace wall. None of the king’s astrologers, diviners, or wise men could interpret the meaning of the writing. So Daniel was summoned and he told Belshazzar the “doom” that was ahead. This was an important moment for the Israelites to see that God works even in exile, even when they believe they are so distant from God. God is sovereign over all. And, God writes over what appears to be “doom” on the surface. As we will see next week, the bad news for the Babylonians becomes hopeful news for the Israelites. As modern readers of this story, we are confronted with our own “exiles” in life. They are the places where maybe we feel distant from God, where maybe we don’t see God’s hand at work, or where we might be keeping God at arm’s length. What might it look like if we read between the lines and instead of seeing the “doom” in front of us, we could look for where God is writing God’s story on ours?

## GETTING STARTED

1. When has something in your life turned out to be different than what it appeared on the surface? Perhaps something that was a tragedy or bad news ended up being “good” or, perhaps something that you were expecting to go well , but really had a negative reality underneath it? Or...perhaps you met someone who you judged immediately, but found out that under the surface they were quite amazing?
2. As we use our biblical imagination with this story, we see that God is the main character. How do we let God be the main character in our lives, in our “exile” places where God is writing a different story, a different reality than what we see on the surface? Remember that Paul says in Romans 8:39 that **nothing** “...can separate us from the love of God that is in Jesus Christ our Lord.” God is always at work, writing his story, his reality on ours. Where is that going on for us right now?

## LEARNING & LIVING OUT SCRIPTURE

Together, read all of Daniel 5.

3. In verses 1-4, there are some details left out (who exactly is this king Belshazzar, why was he giving a banquet, what was so horrible about what he was doing, etc.). Why do you suppose certain things were left out?
4. A good portion of the text describes the attempts to decipher the writing on the wall and the final decision to bring Daniel onto the scene (verses 5-12). Why do you suppose so much detail was given to this part of the story?
5. Daniel takes the opportunity to rebuke Belshazzar before he gets to the interpretation. How would you paraphrase what Belshazzar was being rebuked for? And why do you suppose Daniel rejected the king’s generous “reward” for the interpretation?

6. The words on the wall were units of money (like we would say “quarter,” “dollar,” etc.). And, there was a three-fold interpretation of the words. Could these words not also be applied to each one of us? 1) Our days are also “numbered,” just as Belshazzar’s were; 2) We are also found wanting because of our sinfulness which we carry with us through our lives; 3) The earthly things that we have are also transient for us – they come and go, nothing is ever “permanent.” What do we have, as modern readers that Belshazzar did NOT have? (Where does our hope lie? Look for some New Testament scriptures that assure us of this).

## **LIVING OUT ‘REAL LIFE’**

Spend time this week with God and identify an area of “exile” for you. Is it an actual place? (Perhaps you lost your home in the Camp Fire and you feel like you were “exiled”) Or maybe it is an area of your life or generally you just cannot feel God’s presence? Or maybe you have been keeping God at arm’s length with how you spend your money, your time, and your relationships?

After identifying your “exile,” can you ask God to help you see how God may be writing between the lines or over it or RE-writing it for you? For instance, there is an invisible reality, the Kingdom of God that is always at work. So sometimes the external circumstance doesn’t change regardless of your relentless prayers, but you may be sensing that God is either drawing you closer to God through the circumstance, or may be inviting you to change your viewpoint, change your judgment, and change something INSIDE of you. Perhaps if you open your heart you will see what God’s writing is on the exile of your life?

## **THE ‘EXTRA-MILE’**

Look for the song “Blessings” by Laura Story on Google or Spotify and give it a listen. Here are the lyrics:

We pray for blessings  
We pray for peace  
Comfort for family, protection while we sleep  
We pray for healing, for prosperity  
We pray for Your mighty hand to ease our suffering  
All the while, You hear each spoken need  
Yet love is way too much to give us lesser things

'Cause what if your blessings come through raindrops  
What if Your healing comes through tears  
What if a thousand sleepless nights are what it takes to know You're near  
What if trials of this life are Your mercies in disguise

We pray for wisdom  
Your voice to hear  
We cry in anger when we cannot feel You near  
We doubt your goodness, we doubt your love  
As if every promise from Your Word is not enough  
All the while, You hear each desperate plea  
And long that we'd have faith to believe

When friends betray us  
When darkness seems to win  
We know that pain reminds this heart  
That this is not our home

What if my greatest disappointments  
Or the aching of this life

Is the revealing of a greater thirst this world can't satisfy  
What if trials of this life  
The rain, the storms, the hardest nights  
Are your mercies in disguise  
Source: [LyricFind](#)

Songwriters: Laura Story  
Blessings lyrics © Capitol Christian Music Group

## **SHARING & PRAYER REQUESTS**

# “Into the Wild”

Daniel 6

October 20, 2019

Sermon Series: “Courageous Living”

Rev. Dr. Henry Hansen

## THE BIG IDEA

Sunday’s message focused on the faith of Daniel in the Lion’s Den. Though he was cast in after the satraps and administrators hatched a plot against him, he survived and persevered. His prayer, devotion and humility before God was imitable and evident that he let God be the untamed lion to tame all other lions. He didn’t stress. Rather, through prayer, he focused on what he had by expressing thanks. He trusted that our God roars and fights our battles. And like the stone rolled over the lion’s pit in this story, Jesus too faced enemies who rolled a stone over the empty tomb. Jesus reigned victorious. He conquered sin and death. He’s the lamb that was slain; he’s also the Lion of Judah. We’re called to listen to him roar and watch his way.

## GETTING STARTED

1. When have you ever been in the wild or in nature and had an experience that was unsettling? Describe this experience.

## LEARNING & LIVING OUT SCRIPTURE

Together, read **Daniel 6**.

2. Who do you think is more dangerous in this story – the satraps and administrators conniving against Daniel or the lions? Explain how and why both are dangerous. Why were these men scheming against Daniel?
3. Talk about the rhythm and intervals of Daniel’s prayer life (verse 10). Though not commanded by God in Scripture, ancient (and now many modern) Jews practiced prayer three times a day. Why is that important?
4. What do you think of Daniel’s prayer on his knees? Why would that matter? What other element(s) of prayer are here that you think are vital.
5. Consider the parallels between symbols used in this story (hint – the stone over the mouth of the den) and that of Jesus and the Gospel.
6. See Amos 5: 18-20. What is the lion being described as in this story / prophecy?

## LIVING OUT “REAL LIFE”

7. What are 3-5 important takeaways for your life from this story – Example – prayer, humility, faith, sin (envy) and its power, the Gospel, and so on?

Name how this story spurs us on toward courageous living.

## THE “EXTRA-MILE”

8. Identify assumptions in your life you’ve had that have been broken by how God has worked in your life. Think about the ways Daniel’s faith was stretched. Are there any assumptions you’ve made about God’s power, ways, or desires that might need correction? Address them.

Consider your posture in prayer and think about taking on different physical forms of prayer such as kneeling and see how it impacts your faith.

Finally, if God roars justice, mercy and love for this world (see Amos 5 and 6), how might you partner with him to make the world more like Jesus.

## **SHARING & PRAYER REQUESTS**

### **References made during message –**

“We can focus on how stressed we are or how blessed we are.”

CS Lewis once wrote “You will never tame the lions in your life unless you let God be the untamed lion.” CS Lewis

# “Scooby Doo Meets Daniel”

Daniel 7

October 20, 2019

Sermon Series: “Courageous Living”

Rev. Dr. Henry Hansen

## THE BIG IDEA

Sunday’s message looked at a part of the bible known as apocalyptic literature. The word apocalyptic means “unveiling or revealing.” While we sometimes associate that term as meaning something to do with film or literature or with the end times, it’s meant to describe the revelation of God and unfolding events in the bible. As we look toward books like Revelation or Daniel 7-12, we should carefully consider their meaning in context, then of what it tells us about our God. God is our judge. He is judge over the world and comes in justice, truth and grace. He governs all things. And in this message we looked at three callings we may have of this Scripture – to lean in toward God, to look toward Christ, and to long for worship of Him. We are ultimately freed by these three invitations as we see Christ as the one who makes all things right.

## GETTING STARTED

1. What’s your favorite film or literature that describes apocalyptic events – at least in terms of many people’s understanding of the term “apocalyptic?”
2. What did Henry describe at the beginning in terms of the “enchantment and “disenchantment of the world?” You’ll recall the illustration he used from psychologist Richard Beck’s book *Reviving Old Scratch*, about the Warner Brother’s television show *Scooby Doo*.

## LEARNING & LIVING OUT SCRIPTURE

Together, read **Daniel 7**.

3. Think about the timing of this being written (most likely the 2<sup>nd</sup> century). What were the four beasts and horns as Henry described?

Why then is it dangerous to interpret Daniel and the book of Revelation thinking these readings are somehow making a statement about literal present institutions or governments? Consider the hazard of interpreting the imagery and symbolism (and in the case of Revelation – numbers)) as something more than they’re intended to be?

Consider also that while these images in our day are harsh, these were not as much so to people of that day.

Do you see any beauty and power in these words as they’re written from either a literary point of view or drawing meaning from them?

4. Describe the meaning of the terms Ancient of Days and Son of Man in this Scripture? What does this passage reveal or unveil about who God is?

## LIVING OUT “REAL LIFE”

5. The message highlighted that we’re called to “lean in” and make ourselves available to God by looking into his world and kingdom unfolding. Daniel practices this and demonstrated it through this Scripture,

and then to “look toward Christ” as our final authority and judge. Finally, to “long for worship,” of God as Daniel expressed being shaken in the final verse. He saw the vivid images and it caused him to give pause to the greatness and power of God.

Which of these three are most poignant for you to practice today? What relates to your life?

## **THE “EXTRA-MILE”**

8. Practice something centered on the three points in the message – leaning, looking or longing. What does that look like? One example beneath “leaning” is to actively listen to Christ. There were others shared too.

## **SHARING & PRAYER REQUESTS**

**Pray for our the residents of Sonoma County and beyond that are effected by the fires.**

## **References made during message –**

*“If we knew what God knows, we would ask exactly for what he gives. Tim Keller*

# “The Courage to Ask for Help”

Daniel 10: 1-19

November 3, 2019

Sermon Series: “Courageous Living”

Rev. Dr. Henry Hansen

## THE BIG IDEA

Sunday’s message looked at a challenging circumstances Daniel faced while he was still in Babylon and the Jewish people returned Jerusalem to rebuild the Temple (see summary paragraph under “Learning & Living out Scripture.” The central points are that God –

- Takes our battles seriously.
- Has an open door policy in listening to us and hearing our prayers and concerns.
- When he speaks, He speaks words of empowerment because His Spirit and presence are powerful. This was followed by three testimonies – first by Ryan and Kristen Keller, then Randy and Sue Benson, and Matt Plotkin.

## GETTING STARTED

1. When’s a time growing up or in adulthood when you experienced something sudden and “natural” that affected your life for a short amount of time – such as a power outage?
2. What’s behind the message title “The Courage to ask for Help?” When Henry referenced the Waffle House as in index used by FEMA to gauge the need for disaster relief, how was the related to receiving help from God?

## LEARNING & LIVING OUT SCRIPTURE

Together, read **Daniel 10: 1-19**

Daniel has just received a revelation about a “great war”, and his people, the Jews, are going through a tragic time. Two years before this, some of the Jewish exiles returned to Jerusalem, and they are not doing well in their return. The city was in ruins. Work on restoring the temple stopped, and the surrounding nations were trying to get rid of them. Their hopes were shattered as they sought to rebuild their homes in a hostile land.

Daniel stayed behind at the king’s place, where the Persian king demanded he stay and serve. He’s been there at least 50 years. His heart is broken and he goes into mourning for three weeks. On the bank of the river, he sees a Christ-figure. Those who were with him were overwhelmed with terror and fled. Daniel fell flat on his face.

Daniel is so troubled he can’t even lift his head and feels his strength has left him. “*In a state of prayerful turmoil*” – as one scholar puts it, he’s unable to receive comfort and encouragement. He can’t make the horror stop and go away.

The spirit of God comes to comfort and console him. Then we see this image and hear these words:” *While he was saying this to me, I bowed with my face toward the ground and was speechless. Then one who*

*looked like a man touched my lips, and I opened my mouth and began to speak. I said to the one standing before me, "I am overcome with anguish because of the vision, my lord, and I feel very weak. How can I, your servant, talk with you, my lord? My strength is gone and I can hardly breathe." Again the one who looked like a man touched me and gave me strength. "Do not be afraid, you who are highly esteemed," he said. "Peace! Be strong now; be strong." When he spoke to me, I was strengthened and said, "Speak, my lord, since you have given me strength."*

3. Why is Daniel despondent?
4. Describe Daniel's symptoms that show he's struggling and enduring suffering?
5. Who initiates the conversation first – Daniel or the angel/Spirit?
6. What does this passage tell you about God and the battles we face?
7. Think through the quotes below and what they mean for your life today? Why are they both relevant?

## **LIVING OUT "REAL LIFE"**

8. How are you at asking for and receiving help from God and others? Why's this hard sometimes?

## **THE "EXTRA-MILE"**

9. How can you be supported right now as you commemorate the Camp Fire? Act on that step?

Consider how you can be a conduit for helping and supporting others

## **SHARING & PRAYER REQUESTS**

**Pray for the people of Bidwell most affected by the Camp Fire. Pray for our county one year after the fire.**

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES *(shared Sunday)***

"I could never myself believe in God, if it were not for the cross. . . . In the real world of pain, how could one worship a God who was immune to it?" John Stott

"All of humanity's problems stem from man's inability to sit quietly in a room alone." Blaise Pascal

# “Transformation of the Heart”

Daniel 9:1-19

November 10, 2019

Sermon Series: “Courageous Living”

Rev. Tammie Veach

## THE BIG IDEA

Confession is not an antiquated practice but a need of our souls. True confession leads to repentance and a transformation of the heart.

## GETTING STARTED

1. What was your favorite pastime as a child? What is it now?
2. Did you grow up in a tradition that practiced confession? What was your childhood understanding of confession? How has that view changed?

## LEARNING & LIVING OUT SCRIPTURE

Together, read **Daniel 9:1-19**

3. What is the significance of the year given in verse 1, as explained in the sermon?
4. Read Jeremiah 29:10-14. What will happen to the people of Israel after the fall of Babylon? Why does this lead Daniel to mourn in sackcloth and ashes (Dan. 9:3)?
5. When we confess we need to ask for forgiveness based on the character of God. Why does that matter? Look at the words used to describe God and the words used to describe Israel to help you answer this question.
6. Why is listing off our actions an inadequate form of confession? What is really required? Read 2 Chronicles 7:14.

## LIVING OUT “REAL LIFE”

7. When you close your group in prayer, spend a few minutes in silence so each person can have a time of seeking God’s face in order to transform their lives. Think of ways you can incorporate this into your regular prayer life.

## THE “EXTRA-MILE”

8. Memorize Jeremiah 29:11-14, meditate on it when difficult times arise. Remember both God’s promise and his requirements.

## SHARING & PRAYER REQUESTS

# “Driver Attention Level – High”

Daniel 12: 1-4, 13  
November 17, 2019  
Sermon Series: “Courageous Living”  
Rev. Dr. Henry Hansen

## THE BIG IDEA

This message concluded the series on Daniel. It focused on the last chapter and the implications of God’s sovereign reign over life. Throughout the book Daniel believed God’s attention level was high. This was true of him in all of his circumstances and it empowered him to live courageously. Now he has a future vision that further solidifies his believe in God’s sovereign power. He sees the final awakening of the people of God –a true moment of glory – and how this awakens us today to glory in our lives and a new, fresh identity in Christ.

## GETTING STARTED

1. What’s an experience you’ve had driving when you felt at least slightly out of control?
2. What’s behind the message title “Driver Attention Level – High?”

## LEARNING & LIVING OUT SCRIPTURE

Together, read Daniel 12: 1-4, 13.

3. The final chapter of Daniel ends in a word of judgement. The vision he’s been receiving now goes from chapter’s 7-11 where the main focus was on interpretations related to their current times, to switching to the end times.

Juxtapose verses 1-4 with *1 Corinthians 15:12-20*, *John 3: 16-17*, *Acts 26:23*, and *Revelation 20: 12*.  
What do these Scriptures share in common?

4. Michael the archangel is presented in the first verse. As you think about the present of angels (which are manifestations of the Holy Spirit), what image does this bring up about the stakes?
5. Look at verse three. Consider the images there of “brightness” and “stars.” What’s it describing? See also Matthew 5: 14, Revelation 1:6 5: 10, and even Psalm 8.

What does this tell you as God will one day restore the earth and completely reverse the curse of sin and death for eternity?

6. When you think about our everlasting hope, do you consider that there will be a new heavens and new earth (Revelation 21:21), and that we’ll reign over the latter?
7. What’s the importance of being “awake” as we see in verse 2? It seems Daniel was aware of this reality. How is there a final awakening in this life everlasting and to what degree to we experience that today? Remember Paul says we are a “new creation.” What realities does this open us up to?

## LIVING OUT “REAL LIFE”

8. Consider this quote by CS Lewis – “The Christians who did most for the present *world* were just those who thought most of the *next*.” ***Consider the juxtaposed to the final vision of Daniel. What is keeping the end in mind and having an imagination for it so important to how we live?***

What does this have to do with being “awake” to glory – both in the present and future?

## THE “EXTRA-MILE”

9. This message introduced the idea that New Testament Scholar NT Wright highlights in this book *After You Believe*, about being priests and rulers over the earth. This idea is biblical and resonates with this Scripture illustrating that we’ll be as “bright as the heavens” and “like stars.” How are we challenged to embody this today and what it tells us about our spiritual authority and identity in Christ? As one example see 1 Peter 2:9.

All this to share how you view yourself as a follower of Jesus Christ. Yes – we’re beloved children of God. What about priests? Rulers? Ponder this and consider why identity is so vital for how we live out our faith.

## SHARING & PRAYER REQUESTS

Pray for Camp Fire Survivors and the challenge of believing “God’s Attention Level is High,” when a person has lost so much. The Thanksgiving holiday is a tender season for many, especially as they think about their loss.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

*After You Believe, NT Wright.*

# ‘The Man Who Did the Opposite’

Luke 10: 25-37

November 24, 2019

Sermon Series: “Courageous Living”

Rev. Dr. Henry Hansen

## THE BIG IDEA

This message looked at the parable told by Jesus about the Good Samaritan and what we can learn about being a neighbor to those in need. Though the expert in the law confronted Jesus with a hard question and desired to justify himself, Jesus caused the man to frame the issue by asking a deeper question of the man’s identity and understanding of his relationship to others. The question that’s most poignant for him and therefore for us to ask is not “who is my neighbor,” but am I acting as a neighbor to those Christ has placed on my path. The Samaritan did the opposite of what society would have expected him to do and what was more than likely most natural for him to do which is walk to the other side of the road and ignore the injured man’s needs. Sometimes we too need to act the exact opposite of what we might feel.

## GETTING STARTED

1. Describe one of your favorite neighbors growing up in your neighborhood and why?
2. What’s behind the message title “The Man Who Did the Opposite?” What are examples of when you have had to do the opposite of what you might feel (Ex: going to the gym, attending an even with people you struggle to get along with, and so on).

## LEARNING & LIVING OUT SCRIPTURE

Together, read Luke 10: 25-37

3. What does it mean to “justify” oneself? Why did the experts in the law want to do that? Remember the expression in the message about the “minimum requirements” to get into heaven and to be in right standing with God.

Why would a person desire to justify himself instead of simply want to do what is a right and pure thing to assist and help others? Where does that need come from?

4. Describe the view common Jews had of Samaritan’s versus Levites and Priests. Why is that pertinent in this story?
5. Describe the steps the Samaritan man takes in assisting the injured man that was left for dead. Talk about every detail.
6. Consider the move Jesus makes by using narrative to cause the expert in the law to think about his question and motivations. Describe the power of narrative and how it challenges our assumptions, convictions, and shapes our behavior.
7. How would you describe what mercy is? Why’s that important in the Christian faith?

## **LIVING OUT “REAL LIFE”**

8. On Sunday you were led through a guided meditation of the steps taken by the Samaritan to assist the man left for dead. What did that bring for you in terms of your call to be a neighbor? Who could you more intentionally be a neighbor to? What does and will mercy be like in your own life toward others?

## **THE “EXTRA-MILE”**

9. Be a neighbor to someone new this week or take a big step in acting mercifully toward someone you feel Christ has placed on your path.

## **SHARING & PRAYER REQUESTS**

Express gratitude for your blessings. Share what you're thankful for in other people and how God is working in their lives.

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**