

Navigating the City Together

Series: Covenant Entrance

Dan 2:13-19a

End w/ "During the night the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision..."

To The Village Church, 12/10/2006

Main Idea: To navigate the city, we need commanders and colleagues to help us rest in Christ, because through these Christ has promised to work.

Meditation:

America is a nation of strangers.

-- Vance Packard

Post-Sermon Song Theme: Praise for the Church Triumphant

Benediction:

May the Church, through which Jesus Christ has promised to work, challenge and comfort you as you live out your faith in the city.

Charge:

Go forth, resting in Christ, for He is the answer to every dream.

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Current Outline:

<i>I. We Need Commanders</i>	<i>1</i>
A. Daniel stood out to lead	1
B. The ordination of Ruling Elder	2
<i>II. We Need Colleagues</i>	<i>3</i>
A. Daniel needed friends	3
B. Covenant Entrance: Reception of New Members	3

I. We Need Commanders

A. Daniel stood out to lead

1. We've been examining stories of the book of *Daniel*, to learn how to navigate living in a city of exile, since, we've found, as a community of followers of Christ in NY, we're in a very similar situation. Today the pulpit going heavy on application. We're doing lab. Because people are taking steps today that are critical to navigating our city life.
2. But the events today arise from the events in Daniel as well. There are two things we see in these stories that are necessary to following God in a land where He is invisible:
 - We need commanders and we need colleagues.
 - Leaders and friends
 - We need elders, to lead us and we need community of sisters and brothers to support us.
3. There were many upper class Judean youths that were brought to Babylon to be trained for service to the court. But there was one that stood out, for a certain role.
4. Recall the account of Daniel 2, w/the king having a momentous dream and a draught of interpretation for it. Belteshazzar, aka Daniel, took it upon himself to handle the problem.
5. **vv14-16**--Daniel rose to the occasion here, taking the lead. What did He do exactly? He took responsibility. Taking responsibility for others, being an elder. And through his life he was acknowledged to be an elder.
6. And just as the covenant community of Judean youths in Babylonian exile needed a leader for their spiritual walk, so always, leaders are needed to help the covenant community in exile come to maturity.
7. **Eph 4:13**—Leaders are given until the church comes to maturity. So to make us mature in faith.
8. And what leadership means in a church, what it should mean, what we make it mean here at the Village Church, is taking responsibility for other people.

B. The ordination of Ruling Elder

1. Call up and Introduce Dr. David Bush:
 - Several years ago, showed up
 - Involved in men's group with Todd, and helping lead a number of bridge groups with me, for people who don't believe as we do, to introduce interested folk to the NT gospels and to Christianity.
 - Took the leading role in our annual Village Church does WSPark.
 - Early this year, when we had nominations for the office: elder of this church, David was nominated by a number of you to undergo training and evaluation.
2. So we went through a long process with David and Natalie, who is crucial to this process. Important to me that an eldership draw a marriage together, not apart.
 - In His work: Research Scientist working for Joe LeDoux, one of the world's leading neuroscientists. Dr. Bush has much of the responsibility of running Dr. LeDoux's lab. didn't want to lose any of his time—typical post-doc supervisor.
 - Gave the Session confidence in addition to the training and evaluation, by me, to recommend David to you as an elder.
 - So you nominated him, we recommended him, last week, you unanimously elected him.
3. David is here, just like Daniel, to help lead us, to help us reach maturity. Any final words before your life changes forever!
4. Ask questions—Nathan
5. Charge: Lead in resting in Christ. Just like Daniel in this story. That is the leadership that people need.
6. Pray for David—Sam.
 - A long road. But he has felt your hand, as those do Whom you are raising up.
 - Be his shield and stay.
 - Ask that you form good relationships between David and the other members of the Session.
 - Work out Bush's apartment situation and their citizenship situation—Lord, give them a home here, since they have found a home here in the VC.
7. Give mug.

II. We Need Colleagues

Now, we need commanders but we also need colleagues. We need elders and we need friends. Just like Daniel:

A. Daniel needed friends

1. **vv17-18** They needed each other to help walk the line, and recognize where the line is.
2. Daniel needed his friends as much as his friends needed Daniel.
3. Different roles to play in God's work: Daniel goes to the lion's den. Daniel's friends go off to the fiery furnace. They had their own challenges apart from their leader's challenges.
4. We need community: We need to join something different than other kingdoms, a place that helps us to rest in Christ, just as these friends helped each other rest in faith in their God who would deliver them.
5. How do we define that help called community? By church membership.
6. The Scriptures repeatedly show God's concern to define the visible membership of His People—People who start to read the Bible find this to their dismay.
7. NT also pleads a family of support in our walk with Christ
 - **Gal 6:1-2** Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Look to yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.
 - **Heb 10:24-25** And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another-- and all the more as you see the Day approaching.
8. As followers of Christ, we join a church to join with one another. To fulfill these NT commands, to fulfill the law of Christ, because this is the way that Christ has said He would work in the world, through the church.

B. Covenant Entrance: Reception of New Members

1. So, three times a year, we receive new members into our community. And I'm going to call some people up today who have come to realize that they need companions in their faith, and want to fulfill these commands about community.
2. When you come up, come forward and then line along the front.
3. Introduce
 - See Exploration Class of 11/2006.
 - To navigate the city as followers of Christ, we need colleagues, because these are how Christ has promised to work.
 - These people are saying, today, like Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, more commonly known by their Babylonian names—guess why—Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, we need each other to rest in Christ.
4. Ask Questions—by one of our elders, David Bush.

5. Pray--Nathan