

Going Deeper

WITH

A LIFE THAT MATTERS



Your Globally Positioned Life:

Five Rescue Principles
from the Life of Daniel

BY RON HUTCHCRAFT

YOUR GLOBALLY POSITIONED LIFE:

FIVE RESCUE PRINCIPLES FROM THE LIFE OF DANIEL

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You work with them, you live near them, they may be in your family, and they may be your friends. There are people dying without Christ all around you, and there is no meaningless position or activity when you are praying for someone who is dying.

When we read about Daniel in God's Word, we find that his bottom line was to always do what was right even if it might cost him everything. Daniel always knew why he was where he was even in the company of the most powerful, most intimidating people in the world.

Like Daniel, everything around you may change—your job, your family, your age, your health. Everything may change, but your mission never changes. It doesn't matter whether you are in a mansion or a hospital room; your mission to turn people to your Lord never changes. That's why you are where you are, why you are who you are, and why you do what you do. Let's take a look at Daniel.

The second chapter of the book of Daniel says, "In the second year of his reign, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; his mind was troubled and he could not sleep... Daniel went in to the king and asked for time, so that he might interpret the dream for him...The king asked Daniel, 'Are you able to tell me what I saw in my dream and interpret it?' Daniel replied, 'No wise man, enchanter, magician or diviner can explain to the king the mystery he has asked about, but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries...The great God has shown the king what will take place in the future. The dream is true and the interpretation is trustworthy.'...The king said to Daniel, 'Surely your God is the God of gods and the Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries, for you were able to reveal this mystery.'"

Daniel could have just done his job and interpreted the dream. That's all he was asked to do, but he didn't stop there. He saw an opportunity. He knew why he was where he was, and he used his position and his influence to turn people to the Lord.

Daniel, under King Belshazzar's reign, was asked to interpret the writing on the wall for the king. Belshazzar was the most unrepentant, ungodly of all the men Daniel worked for. Daniel reminded Belshazzar of what happened to his father, Nebuchadnezzar, and how he was driven away. Daniel says in Daniel 5: 20-23, "When his heart became arrogant and hardened with pride, he was deposed from his royal throne and stripped of his glory. He was driven away...until he acknowledged that the Most High God is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and sets over them anyone he wishes. But you his son, O Belshazzar, have not humbled yourself, though you knew all this. Instead, you have set yourself up against the Lord of heaven...you did not honor the God who holds in his hand your life and all your ways."

Daniel, under King Darius's reign, was thrown into the lions den for trusting in God and praying to Him. His faith brought him out of the lion's den untouched. After this, King Darius in Daniel 6:26-27 said, "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 the heavens and on the earth. He has rescued Daniel from the power of the lions."

Where has God put you and what kind of people are you in a unique position to influence because of who you are, what your background is, and what you do? Daniel was in a unique situation to influence kings. Most of us are not in that kind of position, but there's a group of people that would listen to you. You represent a potential pool of people that could go to heaven because of you.

Daniel clearly understood that, no matter how intimidating the situation. Have you ever had to tell someone about Jesus who if they didn't like what you were saying could cut off your head? You talk about intimidating! Daniel was talking to men who had the instantaneous power of life and death over him. No matter how intimidating the situation, Daniel always directed people to his Lord.

Sadly, our fears make us silent about life-or-death information. Proverbs 24:11 says, "Rescue those being led away to death; hold back those staggering toward slaughter." Jude 1:23 says, "Snatch others from the fire and save them." Save them because somebody saved you. Don't walk away from the fire and leave them there. Realize what God is asking you to be.

We're usually afraid of what might happen if we do tell them about Jesus. You think they might not like you, they may turn on you, you may lose a relationship, or you might mess it up. What might happen if you don't tell them is far worse than anything that could happen if you do try to tell them. You have information upon which their eternity depends.

Understand the nature of what it means to be a rescuer—self-abandonment. It doesn't matter what happens to you. Someone will die if you don't try to rescue them. All the reasons we haven't told them about Jesus are about ourselves. You'll never get over the fear. It will always be there, but it doesn't have to decide what you do any more. It is the disregard of the fear that is courage.

From Daniel's life, we can find some practical rescue principles that will help turn people we know to Jesus. Let's discuss the first rescue principle from the life of Daniel.

Live Consistently

You've seen Daniel's integrity. Every time his co-workers tried to find anything wrong with him, all they could find was he prayed too much. He had total integrity and he was trustworthy. He got the job done and worked with

excellence. Romans 2:24 is a disturbing verse that says, "God's name is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you." The "Gentiles" were the unbelievers, and Paul was talking to God's people about how they were living. That is still true of God's people today. Often it is the inconsistencies in our life that cause others to disregard God.

It makes all the difference in the world what you do and how you behave when you know someone is watching you. They know of your association. They may just think you're religious, but they at least know that there's some God connection. You are the God person they know. They are judging Him by you, and His reputation is tied to how you live. When you are bitter, angry, negative, critical, or inconsistent, all of a sudden you have contradicted the God that you represent. You need to be a life that shows the Jesus difference.

People today are not looking for proof that Jesus is the Son of God or that the Bible is God's Word. They're looking for something that makes a difference. Look at how things are advertised on TV today, like Subway sandwiches. Do you know why there are more Subways than McDonald's? It is because of Jared. Remember Jared, the guy who lost a whole person out of his pants because he ate their turkey sandwiches? The guy lost 300 pounds because of food he ate at Subway. You see body builders on TV saying, "You, too, can look like this." They talk about the difference their product will make. They don't tell you everything. They don't tell you how much it hurts, but they tell you the difference it'll make. That's really what people want to know.

Show others the Jesus difference—peace when everyone else is stressed out of their minds, calm when everyone has lost it, joy when everyone is depressed, positive when everyone else is critical and tearing other people down, a family that's under control when theirs is out of control. Show them the Jesus difference by living consistently.

1 Peter 2:12 says it this way, "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." Is this Daniel or what? The outcome is that they are going to end up glorifying God because of the way you lived.

Let's discuss the second rescue principle from the life of Daniel.

Win Their Respect

Maybe you have already done that. Daniel 1:20 says, "In every matter of wisdom and understanding," Daniel and Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were ten times better than all their other co-workers.

Daniel 4:9 says, "Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians, I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in you, and no mystery is too difficult for you." Belteshazzar is Daniel's Babylonian name, and that pagan king saw something different in Daniel.

Another example in scripture is found in Daniel 5:11, "There is a man in your kingdom who has the spirit of the holy gods in him. In the time of your father

he was found to have insight and intelligence and wisdom like that of the gods." Look at the reputation Daniel has. Everybody says, "This is a guy who's got God's spirit in him." Is that your reputation? Are you known to others as a Godly person?

In every example, Daniel wins the respect of others. You can do that by working and living in this world as a person of God. Stand out by exhibiting a difference that would be meaningful to them. They don't care if you go to religious meetings or about how many times you go to church. Those are not the differences they're really interested in.

Ask Jesus what He could change in you that they would notice. Show them the meaningful difference Jesus has made in you. Ask yourself, "What change could I ask Jesus to make in me that would make me stand out with a positive difference and would win the respect of the people around me?" You can do the work of the world as a person of God by establishing yourself as a spiritual go-to person where you are.

Do others look at your life and wonder what is different about you? When they are in trouble, is it you they're going to think of?

Live in such a way to establish yourself as the spiritual go-to person. Win their respect so you can point them to Jesus Christ.

Let's discuss the third rescue principle from the life of Daniel.

Treat Them With Respect

Once you have won their respect, you must treat them with respect. There are many examples from the life of Daniel where he treated others around him with respect in order to point them to his Lord.

Daniel 1:8 says, "Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine, and he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way." Daniel asked for permission, out of respect, to not eat the king's meat or drink the wine given to him and his friends. Instead he asked the guard to test him along with Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah for a period of ten days by giving them vegetables and water and then compare them to the ones who were given the king's food. After ten days, they looked healthier and better nourished than the others. Daniel 1:17 says, "To these four young men God gave knowledge and understanding of all kinds of literature and learning. And Daniel could understand visions and dreams of all kinds." He handled this situation respectfully and God blessed him.

Daniel always addresses the people he's talking to with utmost respect. For example, Daniel 2:37-38 says, "You, O king, are the king of kings. The God of heaven has given you dominion and power and might and glory; in your hands he has placed mankind and the beasts of the field and the birds of the air. Wherever they live, he has made you ruler over them all. You are that head of gold." He speaks highly of the king.

Daniel 4:19 says, "My lord, if only the dream applied to your enemies and its meaning to your adversaries!" He didn't want to reveal bad news to the king. He wanted to reveal the meaning of the dream in a gentle way, and he did so respectfully. Daniel 4:27 goes on to say, "Therefore, O king, be pleased to accept my advice." Daniel was asking the king to consider what he was saying to him.

He always shows respect to the people he's dealing with. Respect wins you the right to be heard and opens closed hearts. You don't go in there with both guns blazing to change someone's religion. It is important to show others respect for their beliefs and respect for their privacy. Respect them by asking for their permission before you tell them more about the difference Jesus would make in their life. Treat everyone with the highest respect.

Let's discuss the fourth rescue principle from the life of Daniel.

Look for Rescue Opportunities

Daniel looks at the chance to interpret King Nebuchadnezzar's dream as an opportunity. His dream gave Daniel an opportunity to speak of the God of heaven who gave the king dominion and power.

Over and over again Daniel looks at a situation and says, "This is an opportunity." Colossians 4:5 says, "Make the most of every opportunity." You might think you don't have many opportunities, but opportunities to bring up Jesus are all around for those with eyes to see them. Paul says in Colossians 4:2-4, "Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should." The three-open prayer is a revolutionary prayer for someone who has a heart for the lost and who wants them to be in heaven with them.

The first part of the prayer is "Lord, open a door." A door is a natural opportunity for you to bring up your relationship with Jesus. It's not something forced. It might be something going on in their life that gives you a chance to tell about how Jesus Christ has helped you with that kind of thing in your life. A door could also be something going on in your life or maybe in the news. It is then that you have the greatest opportunities to tell them about your Jesus.

Use your personal hope story to tell others about the difference Jesus makes in your life. What kind of mom or dad would you be if there were no Jesus? What kind of wife or husband would you be? How would your lonely times be different if there were no Jesus? How would your depressing times be different? How would you face the bad news from the doctor if there were no Jesus? When you start to tell them your personal hope story, that is the greatest door opener of all.

The second part of the prayer is "Lord, open their heart." Ask God to get them ready to hear what you are going to say to them and ask Him to do

things in their life that will make them aware of their needs. Our God is an awesome God and the Most High; this is easy for Him.

The third part of the prayer is "Lord, open my mouth." Ask Him for the approach to take, as it is God's script, not yours. Ask God for the courage to open your mouth when the time is right and let God speak through you.

Do this every day with the names of people you care about and those you meet during the day. "Lord, open a door. Lord, open their heart. Lord, open my mouth when the opportunity comes." If you will pray the three open prayer every day of your life, you will have the most amazing natural opportunities. You will find amazing things start to happen. Then, fasten your seat belt because you're on your way to becoming a rescuer!

Let's discuss the fifth and final rescue principle from the life of Daniel.

Deliver God's Message Clearly

Daniel was so faithful in delivering God's message. He saw many opportunities to tell others about the God of heaven.

To deliver God's message clearly, you must go back to the basics of Show And Tell. You can't just show it, you have to tell about it. It's that way with Jesus. You need to be the living proof of your message by the way you live, but that's not enough. Someone could watch you for the next fifty years. They are not going to say, "Joey is such a nice guy. I'll bet Jesus died on the cross for my sins." They won't figure that out. You have to tell them! To rescue is to show and to tell.

What do you have to tell? It's very simple—tell about a person. Tell them about Jesus. It's not about Christianity or about a church. Jesus said, "Follow me!" It's all about Jesus. If they are distracted by hypocrites, tell them "Jesus didn't say to follow His followers, but He said to follow Him. The only reason not to belong to Jesus Christ, is if you have a problem with Jesus." Ask them if they have a problem with Jesus, because it's all about Him. Paul said in I Corinthians 2:2, "I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified." Stick to Jesus and His cross.

You have a relationship to tell about. Forget the religious part. You don't have meetings for them to go to, a creed for them to believe, or rules for them to follow. You have life's most important relationship to offer them. They can have the greatest love in the universe to fill the hole in their heart, and the greatest power in the universe to change what they could never change about themselves. You have that relationship and you should want it for everybody. Introduce them to the One who has helped you. You want them to know Jesus, what He did on the cross for them, and that they can have this special relationship.

Before the cross of Christ, God gave Daniel the vision of what was going to happen in the Holy City and that the Prince would come to put an end to sin. Six hundred years down the road he sees the death of Jesus. He doesn't know

what he's looking at, but he says, "There's going to be a prince who will come and put an end to sin to atone for wickedness and bring in everlasting righteousness." Daniel was already looking ahead to the cross of Jesus Christ. Your job is to get others to put their name in John 3:16. The death penalty we deserve was taken by the Son of God.

Everybody you know in your world is waiting to hear about the One who hung on the cross. You know all about him. They don't understand yet, and He is your message. The most important thing you could ever do is to tell others about the sacrifice Jesus made for them. The greatest possible difference you could make with the rest of your life is to help others be in heaven with you.

Every person in your personal world is on one of two lists: saved or lost. 1 John 5:12 says, "He that has the Son of God has life. He that does not have the Son of God, does not have life." There are two destinations for everybody we know. Think of the people you know and love as you hold their eternity in your hands. That's why you are where you are.

Live consistently, win their respect, treat them with respect, look for rescue opportunities, and deliver God's message clearly. Will you be a rescuer to those dying without Christ all around you? Rescue them because someone rescued you. Rescue them because it's your God-given mission. Don't be silent any longer with the life-or-death information about the cross of Jesus Christ. Follow Daniel's example by doing what is right by choosing to use your position and influence to point others to Jesus. The greatest possible difference you could make with the rest of your life is to help others be in heaven with you!

About Ron Hutchcraft

Ron Hutchcraft is committed to communicating the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the lost in their language and to motivating and equipping believers to communicate Christ to the lost in their world. In all he does, he seeks to reach the lost and the young with the life-changing message of Jesus Christ.

As President of Ron Hutchcraft Ministries, Ron and his team specialize in developing authentic, relevant, and creative tools to reach people with the message of Jesus. A veteran of over 48 years of youth and family work, Ron has presented the Gospel across North America and around the world. Mr. Hutchcraft is also involved in work with Native Americans, and is founder of the On Eagles' Wings® Native leadership program.

For more information about Ron Hutchcraft Ministries, visit www.Hutchcraft.com.

To find out how you can begin a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, please visit www.ANewStory.com or call 1-888-966-7325.

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