

Sermon Title: **A Seeking Man of God**

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Vessel: Russ LaFlamme

Scripture Reference: **Daniel 9:1-19**

Thesis: **Daniel was a man of prayer seeking a deeper relationship with God;**

Purpose: **Today, we will learn how to be a seeking man or woman of God.**

Key Word: "Praying"

I) Introduction: Scripture Reading is: **Daniel 9:1-19**

A) The Setting:

1) **Do you have trouble praying?**

- (a) Do you just wish you could pray like the characters of the Bible?
- (b) Do you feel God's power as you pray?

2) **Well, first of all, I don't want you to get discouraged because I believe that most of the time it is difficult to pray.**

- (a) We often just say the same things we learned when we were young over and over without any passion or sense that God is listening.
- (b) That is why it takes a commitment to pray; especially to be able to pray as Daniel did.

3) **We know from our study last week that Daniel was a man who prayed.**

- (a) Daniel prayed regularly – 3 times a day
- (b) Daniel prayed in a regular place – In his room with his windows open toward Jerusalem.
- (c) Daniel prayed in a regular position – On his knees humbling himself before God.

4) **Daniel was serious about his prayer time.**

- (a) About time spent alone with God without distractions.
- (b) Just God and Daniel meeting.

5) **It is now the first year of the reign of Darius.**

- (a) And now, I believe Daniel is praying seeking what is going to happen to his people now that the Babylonian empire has come to an end.
- (b) Daniel goes to the One whom he has always sought answers from . . . God.

6) **Daniel was a man of prayer who longed for a deeper relationship with God;**

- (a) This comes from being someone who is passionately seeking to draw nearer to God.
- (b) **Today, we will learn from Daniel's prayer how we can be a seeking man or woman of God.**
- (c) Seeking to draw nearer to God through our praise, petition, and in complete humility.

7) **So what would Daniel say; how would this great man of God pray?**

- (a) That is what I want us to look at this morning.
- (b) Let's see the story for ourselves from our scripture reading in **Daniel 9:1-19.**

B) *Sermon Prayer*

C) (The Hook)

1) **We know very little about Daniel's father or mother for that matter.**

- (a) We only know that he came from a family that was well off.
- (b) Daniel was well educated for a Jewish boy,
- (c) And we also know that Daniel had a relationship with the Living God.

2) **This is Father's Day and while I am not going to make this into a Father's Day message I thought we should point out that Daniel was like many in our society today.**

- (a) Daniel had a family in Jerusalem;
- (b) But because of losing the war with the Babylonians Daniel was ripped away from his family and father and taken to Babylon.

3) **Many families today are being torn apart for a variety of reasons by the war on the family.**

- (a) There are more kids being brought up apart from their fathers and parents than ever before.
- (b) Daniel had to grow up without the aid of his earthly father; but his heavenly father would be there to help.
- (c) And while this assault on the family is real; so is our Heavenly Father's ability to overcome and be there to help our children when their own fathers are not present.
- 4) **This should give us great hope and courage to know that God is there to help us.**
 - (a) If you take nothing else from this message this morning you should remember that God, the Father, is with you at all times.
 - (b) God does not abandon us when the circumstances of life leave us wondering what has happened.
 - (c) He is the best Father we can have.
- 5) **Daniel's prayer takes about three and a half minutes to read.**
 - (a) About the same length as the longest recorded prayer we have of Jesus in John, chapter 17.
 - (b) It is not that we have to pray long; but that we must seek God with all our heart.
 - (c) There should be some passion in our prayers.
- 6) **Daniel is not just praying for himself; he is praying for his people.**
 - (a) He is pleading with God for mercy, for restoration and for direction.
 - (b) Daniel wants God to return his people to their homeland.

TS: And while this is Daniels impassioned prayer, we can learn from Daniel how we can seek to deepen our relationship with God; so, let's begin by noticing that . . .

II) Body: (Key Points)

A) Key Point #1: **Daniel's Prayer began by seeking God through His Word**

- 1) **Notice that Daniel has been studying the Holy writings of the Prophet Jeremiah.**
 - (a) He has read of God's 70 year judgement on the Jews.
 - (b) He was given a vision in his early years of the judgement on Babylon at the end of those years.
- 2) **Reading the Word of God is always a good place to start in our prayer time.**
 - (a) God speaks to us through His Holy Word.
 - (b) **Read over a passage for the day and read it again and maybe again.**
 - (i) See what words seem to be lifting off the page that God is using to speak to you through His Word.
 - (ii) Use those words in praying and asking God to reveal Himself to you through your reading.
- 3) **Don't just hurry through so you can get on to the next thing;**
 - (a) Take the time to meditate on the words letting them soak into your thoughts and prayers.
 - (b) God wants to meet with you.
- 4) **How would you feel if your child came in and quickly rambled off what he desired and ran out to do something else?**
 - (a) Wouldn't you feel hurt and as though you weren't very important?
 - (b) Wouldn't you rather your child took the time to sit and talk with you and let you ask questions and share your thoughts on their ideas.
- 5) **Imagine how God feels when we don't take time to just be in His presence or acknowledge how much God does for you.**
 - (a) You don't think God loves you?
 - (b) God so LOVES YOU that he sent His Son to die for your sins so you could be restored into a right relationships with Him.
- 6) **When was the last time you stopped to spend some quality time with God?**
 - (a) I challenge you to try it out; set aside some time to spend with God and begin with reading and meditating on His Word.
 - (b) It will give you things to pray about and make things much clearer in your day.

- 7) **Daniel took the time to write this prayer down.**
 - (a) There are some advantages to writing down our prayers.
 - (b) For one we can work them out to say just what we want to say.
 - (c) Second, we can make sure that they don't ramble on in vain repetition.
- 8) **In this case, I think Daniel wanted his people to read it and remember the lessons of straying from God's commands.**
 - (a) Keeping a prayer journal is a way for us to write down our requests and God's answers.
 - (b) And just like it serve Daniel and his people to remind them of the lessons of God's discipline in Babylon . . .
 - (c) It can be a source of encouragement to look back and remember all the good things God has done for us.

TS: **The next thing we should see is that . . .**

- B) Key Point #2: **Daniel's Prayer was Intense Prayer**
- 1) **Daniel Fasted and put on sackcloth and ashes before He prayed.**
 - (a) The point of fasting is to give up the physical for a period of time to focus on the spiritual.
 - (b) Daniel wanted total concentration on God as he sought to pray.
 - 2) **The putting on rough cloth made for sacks was the lowest form of clothing to show the poor helpless state of the sinner.**
 - (a) They might also sit in ashes and even put ashes over their head.
 - (b) Again a way of acknowledging that our sin makes us completely unworthy to God.
 - (c) It was a way of acknowledging ourselves before a Holy God in repentance to show our heartfelt sorrow for our condition.
 - 3) **You don't believe that you are a sinner?**
 - (a) Paul wrote in **Romans 3:23** "*for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,*"
 - (b) And in **Romans 3:10** Paul wrote "*None is righteous, no, not one;*"
 - 4) **This is not a popular message in the world today.**
 - (a) The world view is that we are not bad; we are not sinners; we just make bad choices.
 - (b) This is one of those half-truths for God's word teaches us that we are all born into sin.
 - 5) **Psychology today says that this creates shame and guilt and that this is not good for people to live under.**
 - (a) I don't disagree;
 - (b) But before we can do something about a problem we have to admit we have one.
 - 6) **God doesn't want people to live under shame and guilt either.**
 - (a) God offers a way for forgiveness and restoration.
 - (b) God wants to make His children whole and heal the scars of guilt and shame.
 - (c) It is Satan that is the great accuser who wants you to live a defeated life of guilt and shame.
 - (d) It is the Devil who wants you to think you are so bad that God could never accept or forgive you.
 - 7) **God through His Grace offers forgiveness for all His children who give their lives to Jesus.**
 - (a) Jesus paid the penalty for our sins with His Own shed blood on the cross to save the world, not condemn it.
 - (b) When we give our lives over to Jesus, God sends the Holy Spirit to take up residence and begins the work of transforming us into kingdom citizens.
 - (c) **This is the good news, the gospel which we preach.**
 - (d) We bring a message of Hope, not despair.

TS: **It is for this reason that we see that . . .**

- C) Key Point #3: **Daniel's Prayer Included Himself**

- 1) **In the Bible, besides the Lord Jesus, there are only two people who God had nothing bad to say about them.**
 - (a) **And yet, Daniel includes himself in this prayer:**
 - (i) V5, We have sinned and done wrong.
 - (ii) We have been wicked and have rebelled;
 - (iii) We have turned away from your commands and laws.
 - (b) V6, **We have not listened to your servants and prophets.**
- 2) **Daniel acknowledges that God is right to judge His people who acted shamefully.**
 - (a) Daniel includes the people who are in exile and those who remained in the land.
 - (b) But Daniel also acknowledges God's mercy for their refusal to obey God's commands.
 - (c) Daniel even points out that the Law that Moses gave them warned of these judgements if they failed to follow God's commands.
 - (d) And now they are asking God to pay attention to their pleas.
- 3) **Daniel even reminds his people how God brought His people out of Egypt.**
 - (a) Then Daniel asks forgiveness for all their sins; his included.
 - (b) While we don't know what sins Daniel committed; we can guess that before the exile he too was one of those who mocked Jeremiah's warnings.
 - (c) Perhaps this is way Daniel feels so responsible and so included.
- 4) **Daniel reminds God of the devastation of His temple sanctuary before asking for mercy.**
- 5) And then Daniel boldly asks God in verse 19 what he desires God to do: **"O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and act! Do not delay for Your own sake, my God, for Your city and Your people are called by Your name."**
- 6) **Daniel's words of petition ring like a pounding hammer in rapid succession:**
 - (a) **"O Lord, hear!"**
 - (b) **"O Lord, forgive!"**
 - (c) **"O Lord, listen and act!"**
 - (d) Then Daniel concludes his prayer with the reason he feels God should answer: **"Do not delay for Your own sake, my God, for Your city and Your people are called by Your name."**

TS: **So, what have we learned about seeking God in prayer?**

III) Conclusion (Life Application)

- A) **What we can learn from Daniel here is that we too should pray for our nation.**
 - 1) We really need to pray for our nation; pray we will repent and return to God.
 - 2) Our nation is quickly forgetting where the blessings we have experience has come from.
 - 3) **We also need to include ourselves in that prayer for if we are honest we too have not done all we can to hold our government accountable to God.**
 - (a) We dare not speak; because we dare not offend anyone.
 - (b) But we should not and cannot be ashamed of God's Word.
 - 4) **We need to commit more time, a regular habit when we read and pray using the Word of God.**
 - (a) We need to study, meditate and learn from it by taking quality time with God on a Daily basis.
 - (b) If you fail on a day; then don't get discouraged; just begin again; God will be pleased that you are trying.
 - 5) **We need to seek God passionately like we are going to visit our loving Father; for our Heavenly Father is the best father we could have.**
 - (a) Seeking God to become men and women who want to deepen their relationship with God comes from doing it with commitment, with passion, and by humbling ourselves acknowledging God's rule over our lives.
 - (b) Then we can seek to find God's desire and purpose for our lives.

IV) Invitation: **Let us Pray!**