

Daniel's Band

#0647

Study given by W.D. Frazee—February 13, 1980

Will you turn with me, please, to Ephesians, the sixth chapter. We'll read the Word of God beginning with the 10th verse of the sixth chapter of Ephesians:

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore...”

This verb that is repeated again and again here is what? Stand. And that does not mean to yield, it does not mean to bend, it does not mean to compromise. It certainly does not mean to turn and flee. It means to stand, to stay put.

I've been very interested in studying the book of Daniel to note the blend of history and prophecy, of narrative and prediction, that God has put in this wonderful book.

What did Jesus say about the book of Daniel?

“...whoso readeth, let him understand” Matthew 24:15.

Whoso readeth, let him understand. Again and again, in the book of Daniel, we are presented with a picture of somebody standing all alone or nearly alone for God.

Who is the hero in the first chapter? Daniel, and with him some others. You might be interested, you *will* be interested, in this statement from *Ms 113*, 1901. Listen carefully to this inspired insight:

“Lessons of great importance may be learned from the history of Daniel and his companions. These youth were bound together in the sacred bonds of Christian fellowship. Daniel's name is placed first on the record because he exerted a strong influence over the other three, who looked upon him as a leader. Had he failed to take a firm stand for the right, had he pleased and indulged self, his companions also would have failed” *Manuscript Releases, Volume 4*, page 129.

Let me read that sentence again:

“Had he...” *Manuscript Releases, Volume 4*, page 129.

That is, Daniel.

“...failed to take a firm stand for the right, had he pleased and indulged self, his companions also would have failed. They would not have been handed down to us as young men signally honored by the God of heaven” *Manuscript Releases, Volume 4*, page 129.

So everything hung on one man, and he was 18 years old. Somebody would have said, Just a boy. Thank God, he was a man—a man.

Now, interestingly enough, although his companions were influenced by him, and this says they would have failed if he hadn't taken a firm stand, when we come to the third chapter of the book of Daniel and the test on the plain of Dura concerning bowing down and worshipping the great golden image, where is Daniel? He's not there.

I don't know where he was. I know where he wasn't, because if he'd been there he would have been standing, but in the providence of God—don't miss it—in the providence of God, the leader was gone, so that those other three young men would stand on their own feet.

It's a wonderful thing to have somebody that you look to that can help you, encourage you and strengthen you and comfort you and counsel you, but friends, you will not have that always, no. In the providence of God, sooner or later, every one of us will be placed where the decision we will make will be our own decision, not influenced by the presence of somebody else that might help us, which means that we must develop a character that can stand alone.

Joseph did, and where did he develop that character? Not in Egypt. It was revealed in Egypt, manifested in Egypt, demonstrated in Egypt, but do you know where Joseph developed that character? He developed it at home. His own brothers were hardly a spiritual lot, and Joseph's character was developed as he took a stand against their worldliness and their wickedness. He stood alone before he was put alone into that pit. In fact, that's why he was put in the pit. Wasn't it?

Think of it, among all his 10 brothers that were there that day, there was a unity and a harmony to get rid of Joseph. You know why? Because Joseph was standing alone for righteousness, for truth, for purity, for loyalty and obedience, and thank God, there are Josephs and Daniels today, and you and I are called to be in that royal line.

You know, not long ago, I was talking with someone a long way from here, but it could have been nearby for all that—it happened to be at quite a distance. It was a

father that was talking with me, and he was burdened about—What can we do, he says. What can we do?

What was his problem? Well, his problem was his little children were going to a school and things were going on in that school that he didn't believe in, and that he didn't appreciate, and his children were being influenced, and they were saying, Daddy, why won't you let us do so and so. All the children are allowed to do these things, and this is a Christian school, and the idea is, Surely, it must be all right, if everybody is doing it.

He said, What can we do? I said, my dear brother, what are you getting your children ready for? To meet the mark of the beast? If you are, remember this. The reason that Daniel stood alone in Babylon—he'd learned to stand alone in Jerusalem.

And instead of feeling sorry for your children because the mainstream that they're associated with is something that they must stand against, if they stand for what you and I know is right—instead of feeling sorry for the children, feel sorry for the other children that are going the wrong way, but don't feel sorry for your children. Inspire in them a noble purpose to be true to God.

Again and again, my mind is impressed that we're in great danger of a state of mind that is manifested in colonization. Do you know what colonization is? We're warned against it. Colonization is, here is a group of people that want to live the life of heaven on earth, so we'll go over here to an island. It may not be an island in the ocean, but it's somewhere where we can be entirely separate and apart and live there the life of heaven on earth, and there we can raise our children and they can grow up loyal and obedient. Does it work? It's a beautiful ideal, dear friends.

Well, you say, Brother Frazee, shouldn't we have such places? It all depends on what our understanding is. Enoch withdrew from the iniquitous cities of his time and from the prosperous Sodoms of the plains he withdrew, and he raised little Methuselah in a good atmosphere.

But that doesn't mean, dear friends, that either Enoch or Methuselah was entirely removed from temptation. It's impossible in this world—impossible—and even in Eden, God allowed the serpent a certain access. Didn't He? It's true he had access only at the forbidden tree, but he had access there.

Angelic perfection failed in heaven. Human perfection failed in Eden. And God through the plan of salvation has set Himself to demonstrate that if a man or a woman or a boy or a girl, even a child, like little Samuel—if he wants to be right, he can be right, even if the sons of Eli are full of iniquity and vice and lasciviousness. And on the other hand, dear friends, no amount of help, no amount of environment, can make you a Christian—to stand right.

Now, our text says to do what? Stand, stand, stand. And there are dangers in this, of course. I don't know anything that isn't dangerous. Do you? You take traveling—isn't traveling dangerous? Airplanes—every now and then an airplane

does down. Well, I don't think I'll take an airplane. What'll I take? Well, maybe I can get on a train. Do trains get wrecked? Yes.

Maybe I can go on a bus. Do buses sometimes have accidents? Maybe I'll just walk. Do pedestrians sometimes get hit? Yes. Dangerous, isn't it—dangerous. Well, maybe I'll just stay home, and you'll smile but it's the truth, when I remind you that more people die at home than anywhere else. Yes.

So there's no way to avoid certain risks—no way. We ought to do all we can to keep out of trouble, physically, mentally and spiritually, but what I'm getting at is this, dear friends. Thank God there is provision that you and I can stand up and be counted for God and need not yield, no matter what the risk, no matter what the pressures, no matter what the persecution, no matter what the bribes, no matter what efforts of the enemy to seduce or defeat us may be. This is Daniel's band. This is Joseph's group. This is the experience of the remnant, the 144,000.

Now, when Jesus came down here to show us how to live, He could have had the benefit of any environment that He chose, and it's true that He didn't go to the heart of Sodom. His early life was spent in a little mountain village, but it was the byword for iniquity.

And even as a child, Jesus met temptation, didn't He? Did he have to be different? Yes. And on page 89 of *Desire of Ages*, we have paragraph after paragraph, a wonderful picture, of a boy, a youth, standing alone for God, not in some proud, arrogant way, not in some bold, boastful way, but not in some apologetic, kowtowed, craven way—not a bit of it.

Cheerfully, joyfully, scripturally, He stood His ground. He knew what he believed and why He believed it, and His actions showed it. And concerning the 144,000, it's written:

“...These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth...” Revelation 14:4.

You know, friends, it's something to live in a world like the world we live in, both in the church and out of the church. I mean conditions in society today are such that, if there ever was a time when it was safe to go along with the element that you're surrounded with, that time is *not* now—that time is *not* now—and it won't be tomorrow or the next day.

I'll tell you when it will be—when we take that seven days' trip through space to the city of our God. Then, it'll be safe to eat whatever the other people eat and dress the way the other people dress and talk about the things that the other people talk about—it'll be perfectly safe in heaven and all the way on that trip, but not *till* then, my friends—not till then.

And that is not to be lamented—I repeat only in the sense that it's too bad that everybody isn't walking with Jesus—but the people who walk with Jesus shouldn't feel sorry for themselves, and if your child or your brother or your friend is put in a

position where if to be right he has to stand all alone, don't feel sorry for *him*—don't feel sorry for him.

Who do you think was most to be pitied that night that Daniel spent in the lion's den—Daniel or Darius? Darius. Don't you think so? And certainly, the fellows that put Daniel in there needed pity. They did the next morning after breakfast, didn't they? They certainly did. No. Let us have a true, a noble, an enlightened view of this whole matter.

Where do people learn to swim? And how do they learn to swim? By swimming. There is no other way, my friends—there is no other way. And people learn to cook by cooking, people learn to garden by gardening. Am I correct? And people learn to stand for God by standing for God, and they learn to stand alone for God by having to stand alone.

I was about to say, then we need to take a second look at this whole idea of allowing what other people are doing to influence us. I said, we should take a second look at that. I don't think we should look at it at all.

Do you know what happens in institutional boards that follow that pattern? The question will come up in the committee or board, What are we going to do about this, and some wise one—quotes around the wise one—will say, Well, I'll tell you, over in such and such an institution, I see that they're handling that problem this way. And too often, it means a lowering of the standard, a compromise, but we want to keep step—we want to keep in step.

In World War I, General John Pershing led the American Army overseas for the decisive thrust that enabled the allied forces to defeat the enemy. In one of the camps that was established, it was the practice every day at noon for the cannon to fire, signaling the noon hour. This was back from the lines where the American soldiers were engaged in preparing to go to the front.

In order that the timing might be precise, a young soldier was sent every morning down to the town—the French town there—to check the time, and there in the local watchmaker's shop was a great clock, and he checked his watch with that, and went back and fired the cannon.

One day, he said to the watchmaker, Are you sure that your clock is right? Oh, yes, he said. I set it every day by the firing of the American cannon out at the fort. And this is what is happening—this is what is happening.

Institution after institution is setting their watches by the firing of a cannon, and the place where that cannon is fired is setting its watch by the place that's setting its watch by it. And so, what do you have? You have human reason substituted for divine revelation.

I wish—oh, I wish, dear friends, that I could tell you that every book that claims to be a Seventh-Day Adventist book *is truly* a Seventh-Day Adventist book, but I can't tell you that. If I ever could, I can't now. The idea that to look over an array of books or to read the advertisements—the editor of the *Review* plainly stated

in one of his editorials that there are even books sometimes advertised in the *Review and Herald* paper, that he couldn't recommend. He stated that editorially. Did you read it?

Well, why did he say that? He wants you and me to develop a sense of careful weighing and looking to God for directions. Even if all the books were good, dear friends, there isn't time to read them all. You know that, don't you. Nobody reads them all. Nobody can. There's too many.

Be sure that the Holy Spirit is guiding you in your reading. Be sure that the books and magazines and papers that your children are reading are such as will give them strong spiritual life and true views of life practices.

There are all sorts of tapes, dramatic productions, records, programs of many kinds today, that are filled with ideas which lead away—that's the substitute, that's the counterfeit, that's the pseudo Daniel's band—and if the Devil cannot get us in the net of conformity, of yielding to peer pressure, then he will try to get us to stand up and boast of our righteousness, like the Pharisee did it in his pride.

But the remedy for either of those errors is not to go to the other one. The remedy for the Pharisee is not to say, Okay. I won't be so good after all. I'll quit paying tithe because I used to pay tithe and boast about it, and now I won't pay tithe and so there won't be anything to boast about. No, that's not the remedy—that's not the remedy.

Let's turn to Galatians, the second chapter, and the 20th verse. Will you read it with me:

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" Galatians 2:20.

What happens to me? I'm what? With whom? Now, what does it mean to be crucified with Christ? Let's turn to Galatians, the 6th chapter, and the 14th verse. Will you read this one with me:

"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world

Between the Christian and the world stands the cross. The cross shows what the world did to Jesus, and the cross shows what Christ did for me. The cross shows how much the world hates righteousness. The cross shows how much God loves me, and that is a barrier which stands between me and the world. I cannot compromise because I must never forget that it was sin that killed my Savior.

Do you remember a man who was very loyal to Jesus—so he thought—and who was loud in protesting that he would stay with Jesus no matter what, **who lost out**? Who was he? What was his name? What was it that he failed to do? He

failed to stand. Peer pressure pulled him down. He would have faced bows and arrows and swords and spears, but he couldn't face the finger of scorn, or even the question of curious interest in his identity.

My dear friends, will we be able to face the coming crisis? We're being tested now, and the burden that's on my heart tonight is that you and I shall cultivate a spirit of willingness to suffer with Jesus the pain of standing alone—to suffer with Jesus the pain of standing alone.

Let's learn to do it courteously, as Daniel did. Let's learn to do it humbly, but let's do it. What do you say? And what will enable us to do? To be crucified with Jesus. We can never learn this lesson apart from the cross of Christ. We can never learn it apart from fellowship with our Lord.

The reason that Daniel—don't miss this—the reason that Daniel was willing to stand alone, both in Jerusalem and Babylon, is this—he had learned to walk with his Lord, and he would rather walk with Jesus alone than to walk with the crowds and leave Jesus. That's the secret.

We must not think of ourselves in standing alone as though we were *all* alone. Let's turn to 2 Timothy and read a very interesting statement here by the apostle Paul. 2 Timothy, the 4th chapter, verses 16 and 17. This is the last letter that Paul wrote in the dungeon in Rome shortly before his execution by Nero.

“At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge”
2 Timothy 4:16.

Were there no Christians in Rome at this time? Yes, but not one came forward to stand with the aged apostle as he stood there before Nero—not one. Seventeenth—what does it say:

“Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me...” 2 Timothy 4:17.

Alone, but not alone—alone but not alone. Oh, friends, what is there more glorious in all the history of these 6,000 years than to see a man standing alone for God, like Joseph did in Egypt, like Daniel did in Babylon, and like our blessed Lord did in Gethsemane and the judgment hall and at Calvary, and like the aged apostle Paul did, as he stood there before Nero. Let's take our place in that line of heroes. What do you say?

Not for human glory, not for price, not to be different just to be different, but to be different for Jesus' sake. And remember, the only way to learn to swim is to swim, the only way to learn to stand alone is to stand alone, and that doesn't mean that we're to go around hunting up opportunities to be odd, queer, peculiar, nothing of the kind.

It means that down on our knees, instead of listening to the booming of the American cannon or checking with the watchmaker's shop, but down on our knees

we're setting our timepiece with God day by day, that we're finding from the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy what inspiration has told us, what the testimony of Jesus says about diet and dress and music and reading and association and recreation and child training and Sabbath keeping and how to conduct Sabbath school and so on and on and on.

The blueprint is there, but it will not do for you to depend upon somebody else to hunt it all out and put it into practice and then you merely copy what they do—no, no, no, no. God will see to it that *you* must study for yourselves and follow for yourselves.

And if it puts you out of gear, examine your sources again. Check back with God. Don't be arrogant. Don't be stubborn. Be willing to be shown, but be willing to stand alone for Jesus, if that's where God's providence puts you. What do you say? And do it for whose sake? For Jesus' sake—for Jesus' sake.

I wish you'd turn to 497—497. What's the last two words of the second line in each stanza? Daniel's band. Have you heard about it? Quite an army, isn't it? No, it's not. Sometimes Daniel's band is made up of a very small number. Fear not, little flock.

Noah, after 120 years' preaching, had seven other people with him in the ark, but they were all saved. Thank God, Jesus is going to have in this remnant of time a group of people who, like those that voyaged with Noah in the ark, are saved and brought over from one world to another. I want to be a part of that for His sake. Don't you?

Let's sing this:

[Singing.]

Standing by a purpose true, Heeding God's command,
Honor them, the faithful few, All hail to Daniel's band.
Dare to be a Daniel, Dare to stand alone,
Dare to have a purpose firm, Dare to make it known.

Many mighty men are lost, Daring not to stand,
Who for God had been a host, By joining Daniel's band.
Dare to be a Daniel, Dare to stand alone,
Dare to have a purpose firm, Dare to make it known.

Now, just a minute. I want to ask a question. Did an arrow from the Lord's quiver reach some heart tonight? Is there some boy or girl here, some young man or woman, some older one, whose heart responds and says, Oh, God, help me to stand, if need be, all alone for you. I wonder if there's somebody that knows in a very special, particular way, that God has brought you here tonight to hear this particular message, and by God's grace you're going to respond.

If there's somebody like that, I wish you'd stand and get the blessing, as if you were the only one in this audience that responded. Don't think of those about you.

Think of Jesus and His Holy Spirit pointing out in your life things that you need to settle with God, not by peer pressure, not by what others do or don't do.

This will not discourage the spirit of true unity, dear friends. We should be humble and we should leave room for other people to have their convictions just as we must have room for our convictions. Doesn't need to make us bigots at all. It won't, if we're following Jesus, if we're crucified with Christ.

Dear Lord, you see us standing here. Oh, we thank Thee for the great privilege of being soldiers in the army of Prince Emanuel, loyal soldiers, and although it sometimes means to stand all alone, God help us to be faithful. We ask it in Jesus' name, amen.

Be seated.

Many giants great and tall, Stalking through the land,
Head-long to the earth would fall, If met by Daniel's band.

One of our missionaries in China of a generation or two ago was telling us of an experience he had there years ago, where there was a great feast, and the governor of this province was the one who was giving the feast, and there came a time in the feast when every guest at the feast had a little cup and wine was poured into that and it was drunk in honor of the governor. What should he do?

Well, of course, he could refuse the wine. That might offend the governor. He didn't want to do that. He might drink the wine. It was only a little bit. Wouldn't kill him, probably, or he might simply raise it to his lips and not take it, you understand.

But as he sat there, the Lord helped him to be a Daniel, and decided that kindly and courteously, he would decline. The governor told him afterwards—he said, We were testing you to see what you would do. Thank God, he was true, dear friends—thank God he was true. Will you be true?

God bless every one of you. You're dismissed. Have a wonderful Sabbath.

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