**Sermon Notes**

**‘Daniel - encountering God under pressure’**

Share together particular pressure points you are facing or have faced in life?

For something of the background to the event we will be studying you might like to read Daniel Chapter 1 or summarize the context for how Daniel and his friends found themselves in Nebuchadnezzar’s court.

* Why is verse 6 significant (‘But Daniel…’ ) for the future trajectory of Daniel’s life?
* Imagine the upheaval of being in exile (lives turned upside down) and separated from every familiar landmark and yet God had not abandoned them (v17). How might ‘exile’ be a lived experience for you and what might you learn from this.

Read Daniel Chapter 6. Daniel, (a foreigner) one of the exiles and in his 80s is being given preference and promoted above his Babylonian colleagues.

* What has provoked their response and have you ever experienced anything similar in your work place?

Verses 6-9 The conspiracy is hatched and the trap is set. Notice how they went ‘as a group’ v6 (and again in v11).

* What does that suggest to you? What tactic did they deploy?
* Share any occasion when you may have been picked on, mocked or accused falsely because of your faith? Do you think Daniel was aware of what was going on behind his back? How might he have felt?

Verse 10 reveals Daniel’s response.

* Why did he respond in this way knowing a trap had been set for him?
* Why could he not have been more private about his prayers, less public? Why put himself in a place of danger?
* Are there times when you have found strength through the routine of meeting with God in prayer and worship?
* How important is routine for your own spiritual well-being?

We know well the rest of the story. The ‘group’ press home their accusation forcing a reluctant King to apply the judgement of his own law etc etc.

***If your acts of prayer are the most regular thing in your life,***

***I think you will find they regulate everything else’*** W E Orchard

We all have certain routines we undertake every day. What place does prayer, worship and reading the Bible have for you? Discuss together how might you establish this more effectively?

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