



“There is No Other God That Can Deliver”

Show Notes & Transcripts

Podcast General Description:

Follow Him: A *Come, Follow Me* Podcast with Hank Smith & John Bytheway

Do you ever feel that preparing for your weekly *Come, Follow Me* lesson falls short? Join hosts Hank Smith and John Bytheway as they interview experts to make your study for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints’ *Come, Follow Me* course not only enjoyable but original and educational. If you are looking for resources to make your study fresh, faithful, and fun--no matter your age--then join us every Friday and Saturday.

Podcast Episode Descriptions:

Part 1:

Can we take away someone’s agency? Dr. Lili de Hoyos Anderson explores personal revelation and faith amidst trial in the Book of Daniel.

Part 2:

Dr. Lili de Hoyos Anderson continues to examine the Book of Daniel and agency, parenting, and the power inherent in following Jesus Christ.

Timecodes:

Part 1

- 00:00 Part 1–Dr. Lili Anderson
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- 04:27 Daniel and his friends and their Hebrew Names
- 06:07 Can't take away agency
- 09:53 Daniel's service and possibly a eunuch
- 12:44 The Lord can consecrate our afflictions
- 17:21 Nebuchadnezzar, Nabonidus, and Darius
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Part 2

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Biographical Information:



Lili De Hoyos Anderson is a first generation American. Her mother is French and her father is Mexican. She mostly grew up in Michigan and Indiana, but when she started high school, both her parents began teaching at BYU, so the family moved to Provo and she graduated from Provo High School.

Dr. Anderson attended BYU and graduated in Sociology. After almost 20 years of being a full-time homemaker, Sister Anderson returned to school to complete a Masters in Social Work degree at UNLV and a PhD in Marriage, Family, and Human Development from BYU, where she taught for several years in the School of Family Life. She is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and has a full-time private practice in individual, marriage and family counseling.

The Andersons have eight children. They are affectionately referred to as the "Alphabet Kids" because their names are Adam, Bethany, Caitlin, Dominic, Eden, Faith, Graydon, and Harper. The Andersons are now collecting grandchildren with #36 coming this year.

Dr. Anderson is an avid reader. Over the years, she has also enjoyed sewing, music, making stained glass windows, photography, and quilting. Dr. Anderson has published in the *Ensign* and in various books and journals. Her first book, *Family Foundations*, was written in response to student requests when she was teaching at BYU. Her second book, *Choosing Glory*, was released August 2009 and is available on Kindle. For over 25 years, she has presented at professional conferences and to church groups, including a BYU-I Devotional Address and as Keynote Speaker for the New Zealand YSA Conference.

The Anderson family has lived in Oklahoma, Chicago and for 15 years in Las Vegas, where they mostly raised their family. In Las Vegas, Sister Anderson taught both early morning seminary and two Adult Religion classes for several years. Her greatest love, after the gospel and her family, is teaching. Dr. Anderson served for two terms (4 years) as president of AMCAP (the Association of Mormon Counselors and Psychotherapists). She also had the privilege of serving on two committees for Church Public Affairs, one of which was tasked with the .2 version of the mormonandgay.org website.

The Andersons now live in Draper, Utah, where they are members of the Draper Corner Canyon 9th Ward.

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Hank Smith:	00:00:01	Welcome to followHIM, a weekly podcast dedicated to helping individuals and families with their Come Follow Me study. I'm Hank Smith.
John Bytheway:	00:00:09	And I'm John Bytheway.
Hank Smith:	00:00:11	We love to learn.
John Bytheway:	00:00:11	We love to laugh.
Hank Smith:	00:00:13	We want to learn and laugh with you.
John Bytheway:	00:00:15	As together, we followHIM.
Hank Smith:	00:00:20	Hello, my friends. Welcome to another episode of followHIM. My name is Hank Smith. I am your host and I am here with my co-host who is skillful in all wisdom and cunning in knowledge. His name's John Bytheway. Welcome, John.
John Bytheway:	00:00:35	Thank you. I will try to live up to that one.
Hank Smith:	00:00:38	You are. John, when I was reading Daniel chapter 1, I thought John Bytheway all the way skillful in wisdom, cunning in knowledge.
John Bytheway:	00:00:46	It wasn't the youthful part though, was it?
Hank Smith:	00:00:48	No, I actually skipped that part. Hey, John, we are going to be studying the book of Daniel today and we have a guest who has been beloved to followHIM a couple of times. Tell us who's with us.
John Bytheway:	00:01:04	Yes, we are so glad, aren't we, Hank, to have Dr. Lili Anderson back with us. She came before. It was one of the ones I heard the most comments about and really hit home to a lot of people, hit home literally because she talks so much about marriage and family. Let me read this bio again. For those of you who may not have heard the first one, you'll probably want to go back and listen to it. Lili De Hoyos Anderson, first

generation American. Her mother is French and her father is Mexican. She was born in a little border town in Texas, but soon her family moved to the Midwest. She grew up in Michigan and Indiana.

00:01:42 When she started high school, both her parents began teaching at BYU, so the family moved to Provo. She graduated from Provo High School. Dr. Anderson attended BYU, graduated in sociology. In fact, social science runs in the family. Both her parents are retired professors of sociology. Her husband, Chris Anderson, is also a social worker with Church Family Services. She has a wonderful story. After about 20 years of being a full-time homemaker, Dr. Anderson completed her own master's in social work degree. She is a licensed clinical social worker, has a full-time practice in individual marriage and family counseling. Later, Sister Anderson completed her PhD in Marriage, Family, and Human Development at BYU, and for several years, taught part-time there for the School of Family Life. The Andersons have eight children. This is a fun part. They are the alphabet kids. Adam, Bethany, Caitlin, Dominic, Eden, Faith, Grayden and Harper, and 37 grandchildren. Is that up to date?

Hank Smith: 00:02:42 37, yes.

John Bytheway: 00:02:43 That's awesome. She's published in the Ensign, various journals. Her book Choosing Glory is available in paperback and in Kindle. She also has a podcast called Choosing Glory, which I'm sure our listeners will want to go and listen to. She loves to be able to teach, testify, and defend the faith that she loves in a medium that is accessible to people everywhere. Thank you so much for coming back, Dr. Anderson. We're so happy to have you.

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:03:11 Thank you. It's fun to be back. Really appreciate the opportunity. It's a great way to share the gospel with you guys. Enjoy it.

Hank Smith: 00:03:19 We have a lot of fun. I'll say, John, that the two episodes Lili did, I'm going to just give a shout out to you and hope anybody who is maybe joining us just recently and hasn't heard those, the first one was on Doctrine and Covenants 49 and 50. Go back to last year and listen to that episode. Then the one earlier this year was on Genesis 37 through 41, both fantastic. Really worth your time. Take the time to go back and listen to those. It's really a lot of fun.

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:03:48 Great material. Scriptures are just full of amazing things. It's great to be there. I'm just going to add just because I know some people have asked about this, the website that I've had

for years looks ancient and some people don't know if it's functional, but it has been finally upgraded and updated. If you want any information, come to lilianderson.com and we'll be announcing new projects. I'm hoping to get another book out early next year on healthy boundaries.

- Hank Smith: 00:04:14 That's Lili, L-I-L-I.
- John Bytheway: 00:04:17 S-O-N, Anderson, S-O-N, and you'll get.
- Hank Smith: 00:04:21 lilianderson.com. All right, Lili, the book of Daniel. How do we want to approach this? What do we do?
- Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:04:27 Our curriculum asks us to look at the first six chapters, although honestly, I think I'm going to say a few things about that second section, but we'll keep that brief since it's not really in selected chapters for the curriculum, but Daniel is an amazing prophet. He is an amazing man. He had an amazing ministry. He was involved in so many incredibly important events that happened during this time of captivity for many of the Jews who had been brought into Babylon. I just want to start by saying the meaning of Daniel's name in Hebrew is God is the defender of my rights, which is really lovely when you think about that. God is the defender of my rights.
- 00:05:10 Now, obviously, their rights had been abrogated when they were brought into captivity and this had been prophesied by so many of the prophets of Israel and Judah trying to warn them that if they did not repent, that these things would happen. And they did. That doesn't mean that they were all wicked, but that as a nation, they rejected God and so these things were fulfilled. Certainly, Daniel and his Confederates here, sometimes referred to as cousins, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. It is interesting that we tend to refer to Daniel by his Hebrew name, but we refer to Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego by their Babylonian names. That's funny. We do have in the record their Hebrew names, but they're not really referred to in that way, so we tend to know them by their Babylonian names and Daniel by his Hebrew name, he also had a Babylonian name and that's used a couple of times, but we know him as Daniel.
- Hank Smith: 00:06:00 Belteshazzar, I think.
- Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:06:00 Yes, Belteshazzar.
- Hank Smith: 00:06:00 I don't know if it sounds as good. Belteshazzar in the lion's den.

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:06:07 It does have a ring to it that we like, but God is the defender of my right. Even in captivity, the rights that mattered, his opportunity to choose God to exercise his agency, and I want to make a little point here about that. We often confuse agency with freedom. That's a big mistake. They're not the same thing. I think that, sometimes we have parents asking, "Well, I don't want to take away my kids' agencies." I'm like, "You can't. That's a gift bestowed by God himself." You can't take away anybody's agency. No one could take away Daniel's agency. He was always able to choose God or not. That's what agency is. It's not the same as unlimited freedom where you can go where you want to and do what you want to and have what you want. That's a whole different thing. Freedom is a negotiable commodity. They lost the negotiations with Babylon when they were conquered.

00:07:00 Their freedom was abrogated but never their agency. Again, just a little note for parents or in other situations, stop saying things like, "I don't want to take away this person's agency," that would be way above your pay grade. It's not going to happen. You could bury me in a stone box a mile deep. I can still choose to worship God or I can choose to reject him. Agency continues even in captivity and that is the right. God is a defender of my rights. The name of Daniel and the meaning of that name, he always had that right and he exercises it again and again in this record. He chooses to exercise faith and obedience and trust in God instead of rejecting him, and even at the cost of his freedom, even at the cost potentially of his life as we'll see in many situations. The same with Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. Kind of an important point there.

Hank Smith: 00:07:53 I've got to say in that vein that I have a son who is probably listening and he knows who he is, who believes that any rule placed upon him is taking away his agency. If we have any rule, "I thought we had agency." I won't name any names, but I will just say, you know who you are and you just heard it from Dr. Anderson that rules do not take away agency.

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:08:21 They're negotiated commodities. We all give up freedoms in order to get benefits, right? I was driving down here to Provo today and I obeyed the speed limit. I would've rather gone faster, but I give up that freedom in order to not end up in trouble or have to pay big fines or increase my insurance cost. You did give up some freedom in order to get the benefits. I pay taxes so I can be a citizen in good standing of this country, anyway. We do that all the time. We negotiate freedoms. We can do that. When you're teenagers, they can come and try to negotiate those things, but then it's a negotiation and it's like, "Well, look what we're doing for you and we expect some things

in return, or while you're under our jurisdiction and our responsibility in stewardship, we need to make some parameters." Good luck to your son.

- Hank Smith: 00:09:07 Even in captivity, Daniel has agency.
- Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:09:10 Always, whatever our circumstances. We can choose God or we can reject him. Now, I'm going to make another little point. It does tie into a prophecy of Isaiah earlier on that we'll review here. It mentions right in the first chapter of Daniel looking at verse seven. I mean it talks about verse six that here were some of the children of Judah that were brought to the palace. Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, those are the three names of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in Hebrew. Unto whom, verse seven, the prince of the eunuchs gave names and that's where we hear their Babylonian names, Belteshazzar, and to Hananiah, Shadrach, and Mishael, Meshach, and then Abednego.
- 00:09:53 Notice that they're under the stewardship of the prince of eunuchs. It is strongly suspected by a lot of Bible scholars and Jewish scholars as well that have this in their writings, writings of the prophets that they study, that these men were probably castrated and that they probably were made eunuchs, which is sad. It's a really sad reality. It doesn't affect Daniel's ability or the abilities of the others to gain revelation, to have tremendous faith, to fulfill their purpose on life with the exception of being able to marry.
- 00:10:26 We have no record anywhere of Daniel marrying, which was pretty unusual. He is almost always... Well, actually, I don't think there's an exception that is known that when he's depicted in artwork, he doesn't have a beard. Even in his later years, Daniel is supposed to have lived well into his 90s and it would be very unusual for a Jewish man not to have had a beard, but he's always depicted beardless. This is also seen as an indication that he had been made into a eunuch. Here, they are under the stewardship of the prince of eunuchs. That does indicate that connection.
- 00:11:06 The Isaiah verse that speaks about this, chapter 39 verse six and seven says this, "Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store until this day, shall be carried to Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the Lord. And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon."

00:11:40 Isaiah, seeing this day through prophecy, warns them. He warns them that if you continue on this path of defiance, there are going to be great losses to you and to your children, and some of your young men will become eunuchs in the palace of Babylon.

Hank Smith: 00:11:56 Ripped away from their family and then abused like this.

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:12:01 Traumatic. It's traumatic and then it affects their whole lives because they will not marry, they won't have children. Great losses because of somebody else's sin. This does happen, but that does not prevent the Lord from magnifying us. Whatever somebody else takes away from us does not stop us from coming to the Lord, becoming his disciple and having him magnify who we are so that we can fulfill our purpose, remembering that all things will be restored to us in the millennium.

Hank Smith: 00:12:37 You as a counselor have seen probably many traumatic, abusive childhoods turn into-

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:12:44 Profitable wonderful lives where people can go to the Lord and what does he promise? That he will consecrate our afflictions for our good. Having trust in that is so important because yes, bad things happen to good people and life is unfair and the children suffer for the sins of the parents. This happens all the time on our planet. Thankfully, it doesn't happen in every case, but it certainly happens. Nevertheless, God can consecrate all of it for our good. He can magnify us in our weakness, in our injuries. He can help us on that path to healing, knowing that ultimate healing and complete restoration is to come. This is a temporary situation on this life. If we let our losses become our entire vision, we miss the opportunity that God gives us to make something of our lives however they've been hurt. You don't see bitterness in Daniel. You don't see bitterness in Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. They have incredible trust in God. It's beautiful and I think there's an important message there.

Hank Smith: 00:13:51 John, reminds me a little bit of your dad who had such a tough childhood but was able to... such a tremendous, wonderful life.

John Bytheway: 00:13:59 Yeah, I think about that a lot and I've talked about it yesterday in class. We were talking about the laborers in the vineyard, who came in at different times and how, "You joined the church in your 20s? Oh, so you got to..." As if-

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:14:15 That's a bonus somehow.

John Bytheway: 00:14:17 Yeah, as if that's a bonus, as if wickedness was happiness or something. My dad would say, "I never got to go to Firesides. I never had a youth conference.

Hank Smith: 00:14:26 I saw fires. I saw men dying around me.

John Bytheway: 00:14:29 His military, his World War II experiences, and so wonderful to have him find the gospel and to embrace it. Thanks for bringing that up, Hank, with an interesting childhood.

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:14:40 I love that verse in scripture that tells us that this is kind of the plan of God. I had a client that put it in a nice way not long ago that I loved, and I don't know why I hadn't thought about this before, but maybe some of you have heard of the old efforts at alchemy. Remember that word alchemy? The idea was that these people who were kind of mystics and scientists they thought were trying to turn lead into gold. That's what they wanted to do, was to take lead which is cheap and turn it into gold, which is incredibly valuable.

00:15:12 I was talking to this client, really great student of the scriptures and he said, "We can let the Lord do his alchemy." I thought, "How brilliant and beautiful is that use of that term because that's what he does." He takes lead and turns it into gold in our lives if we let him. You see that in Daniel's life. In spite of the trauma taken away from home and family, put in the palace, probably made a eunuch, and God makes gold of him and of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. It's beautiful.

00:15:46 Then all those things which have been lost are restored because God is a restorer. It all works out in the end and nothing is lost to the righteous. If we persist in righteousness, any losses are compensated for in abundance. You know how the Lord measures. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over. That's from Luke 6. It's going to be fine and we can get lost in bitterness at the unfairness of life or not. Bitterness takes away our chance to participate in the Lord's alchemy.

John Bytheway: 00:16:19 That's a great phrase.

Hank Smith: 00:16:20 Can consecrate thy afflictions for thy gain.

John Bytheway: 00:16:24 I'm reminded of Joseph Smith. All of your losses will be made up to you in the resurrection if you continue faithful. By the vision of the Almighty I have seen it. I love that idea of God is a restorer and he'll give you better, beauty for ashes.

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:16:38 Beauty for ashes. So many ways that he tells us this again and again, if we can listen, if we can participate and partake of this amazing, amazing blessing. Daniel served under five kings, which is extraordinary that his ministry covered five different administrations. The first three were Babylonian and then we get Cyrus of Persia and Darius the Mede who is actually a general of Cyrus's, so two different conquering companies. But the first of course is Nebuchadnezzar. We hear him referred to a lot. In these first six chapters, he plays a large part. We don't really hear of Nabonidus, who was the son of Nebuchadnezzar.

00:17:21 After Nebuchadnezzar dies, Nabonidus becomes the king, but he didn't like to rule and he didn't like being in the capital. He goes to another city and tries to make an oasis city of that one, and he turns a lot of the governance over to his son, so the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar is Belshazzar. Belshazzar is only king for one night and we can talk about that later. Then Cyrus of Persia conquers Babylon and rules only one year, but has a significant interaction with Daniel during that time that we'll talk about.

00:17:52 Then Cyrus's general, who was Darius the Mede rules after that and again has a very close relationship with Daniel. It's amazing that these are powerful men, powerful gentile men who recognize in Daniel something amazing. They see that light. They see that wisdom and they value it and promote him to great responsibility and learn from him and hear witnesses and even see witnesses of the power of the God of Israel. Even in their gentile state and they tend to be pantheists in that time, meaning that they believed in lots of gods, but we even see Nebuchadnezzar change that into understanding that there actually is a God, which is a fascinating story, but let's not jump ahead too well. Daniel, he lived well into his 90s. It is supposed an incredibly long administration. I also want to say, this is an amazing statement, Sir Isaac Newton, who was the inventor of calculus, we have the famous story of the apple falling.

Hank Smith: 00:18:53 In high school, I did not like him. I did not like him in high school. Calculus.

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:18:58 Had to learn too much about him. Well, calculus for sure. But brilliant, brilliant man. In fact, it was very common for people in his profession to be ordained as ministers, Anglican ministers just because of his scientific studies and so on. He refused being ordained as a minister because he did not believe in some of those tenants.

00:19:23 Here's what he wrote about Daniel. "He who denies Daniel's prophecies undermines Christianity, which is founded on Daniel's prophecies concerning Christ." I'm going to read that again. This is quite the statement from this genius Christian man. "He who denies Daniel's prophecies undermines Christianity, which is founded on Daniel's prophecies concerning Christ." We'll tie that in as we go along, but it's quite the statement.

00:19:59 Daniel has been studied by so many religious scholars over the years because of the prophecies contained in chapters 7 through 12, which like I said, I think we should touch on them as we go, but we won't spend a ton of time on that. The first story we have in chapter one of course is that here with the prince of the eunuchs, he's responsible for having these guys look wonderful and healthy and so on. There are big portions of meat and wine that are given for that purpose. Daniel and his associates there that are faithful to the gospel don't want to eat that rich food. They want to eat the simple foods of pulse that have been part of their teachings from their youth. The prince of the eunuchs is concerned because he'll get in trouble if they don't flourish as well as the other young men in his charge. We have this experiment that is suggested in, I guess is it verse 12 there?

John Bytheway: 00:20:54 Yeah. He says, "Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, 10 days and let them give us pulse to eat." The footnote says foods made of seeds or grains. "Pulse to eat, and water to drink. Then let our countenances be looked upon before thee, and the countenance of the children that eat of the portion of the king's meat: and as thou seest, deal with thy servants."

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:21:15 That's right. Let's do a scientific little test here. It's a little medical test where you can do a before and after and we've got a control group because the other guys will be eating that rich food and we won't, and then you can see how we flourish. 10 days is a pretty quick turnaround for a study like that, but there was an apparent difference, because after that time, you can sense in verse 14 and 15, at the end of 10 days their countenance has appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat the portion of the king's meat.

00:21:46 It worked and they said, "The Lord will do this." They had faith that if they followed their eating code, that in spite of the fact that there was a lot of pressure to conform, and again, they must have been pretty nice guys to begin with because this guy who could get in trouble if they don't flourish, gave them this opportunity. Speaks a lot to how well they presented to others.

They were not obviously adversarial people. They were working to find collaboration. They were working to get along and to be able to have influence that's required, so we don't come in like gangbusters. We are hearing a lot in conference these days and from our leaders about being peacemakers. Neil Andersen gave a wonderful speech last conference about peacemaking, but we are hearing that from various leaders in our church.

Hank Smith: 00:22:33

President Nelson, get rid of contention.

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:22:36

That's right. It's really important that we realize that because we're in a very adversarial world and people love to engage in combat basically, verbal and otherwise. They didn't do that. They didn't come in there with an adversarial or combative attitude even though they are captives and they have very limited choices. They obviously were peacemakers and are able then to ask for some things that people feel like granting to them because they're not troublemakers. I think that's such a good lesson too.

00:23:09

Then they show the truth of the blessing that comes from obeying our Lord and God. And so, we see that in verse 17, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom. That's the compliment that Hank gave John today. Daniel has understanding in all visions and dreams. These gifts come and they're tying it into their obedience, which makes perfect sense because God reveals his secrets to people who obeyed, people that he can trust.

00:23:40

Then in the last verse of chapter 20, almost the last verse, in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king enquired of them, he found them 10 times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm." Well yeah, God against sorcery. Another little detail, if you'll forgive me, that I found interesting is that he did associate Daniel and Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego associated with the other people in the court that were considered wise men. As they mentioned here, they're called magicians and astrologers and so on.

00:24:12

It is suggested in some writings that it is because of Daniel's influence in his long tenure of being a counselor to kings and interpreter of dreams and so on, and because of his prophecies concerning the coming of Christ, that he would have taught those men of the east who were magicians, magi, astrologers, of the coming of Christ and the science concerning his birth. This may be why the three magi came to bring gifts to Christ. That may have been under the direction of Daniel who knew when Christ would come and may have said, "Teach this to all

the people who are coming, who are these wise men of the east, because there is a king coming and he should be worshiped and take these gifts to him because he will need them."

Hank Smith: 00:25:05

That's awesome.

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:25:06

This is coming and the angel has shown me the time. You be watching and these signs will appear and then you are to take these kingly gifts, these royal gifts to the real king and it will bless him and his family when they need to go to Egypt. In chapter 2, we have a famous dream of Nebuchadnezzar. We throw around this term all the time in our era about narcissists and there are so many YouTube videos on, are you married to a narcissist or how to deal with a narcissist? I worry about that because I think we over-diagnose and although there are some patterns, I like to say that narcissism isn't so much a disorder as it is a sin, because it's really just selfishness run amok.

00:25:47

I mean, can you recover from that? Yeah, you can repent and you don't have to be a narcissist your whole life even if we cross that line into some narcissistic behaviors or even a lot, we can repent. Yet here we have a real narcissist in Nebuchadnezzar and we'll even see that he can change to an extent, at least, under the tutelage of Daniel and Daniel's God who is the God. But here, we see Nebuchadnezzar is so used to getting his way. His power was absolute. Whatever he said was done.

00:26:24

There are legends, we're not sure if this is exactly true, there are some question about where these gardens were, but it is rumored, so to speak, historically that there were these hanging gardens of Babylon that were one of the ancient wonders of the world because things should not have grown like that, but they used the river Euphrates and they had these screws that brought the water up into these terrace things that apparently he built because his wife missed her home, which had mountains and Babylon didn't have the mountains.

00:26:50

He curated these artificial mountains that were watered by this elaborate system because Nebuchadnezzar says, "I need this for my wife." And so, they go to work and they create all these marvels just because he said he wanted it. He had incredible power, incredible wealth, and anybody around would run at his beck and call. Here, he dreams a dream and in a typical narcissist fashion, even though he can't remember the dream, he's going to demand that his magicians of the court tell him what the dream is and then interpret it because it disturbed him. They're like, "Well, can you tell us what it is?" No!

John Bytheway: 00:27:26 No, you tell me what it is.

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:27:27 You tell me and if not, I'm wiping you all out. It would've been death to all of them, including Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, because they were housed with these wise men, even though like we say, their wisdom was 10 times that of their confederates. Look, one of them responds in verse 11 of chapter 2. It is a rare thing that the king requireth. I mean, he's trying to hold back from crazy and insane and certainly unfair. And there is none other that can shew it before the king, except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh. There's nobody on the planet who can do this for you. The king gets angry. Verse 12, he's going to destroy all the wise men. And the decree goes forth in verse 13 that everyone should be slain and they find Daniel and his fellows where they are to kill them as well.

00:28:19 Then in verse 15, Daniel says, "Why is the decree so hasty from the king?" Can we pause for a moment? Daniel in verse 16 goes in and desires of the king that he would give him time and then he will show the king the interpretation. Then he goes and talks to Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, his companions and they all pray together for the mercies of the God of heaven, this is verse 18, concerning this secret that they should not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.

00:28:50 In verse 19, the secret is revealed unto Daniel in a night vision. They go exactly as we all should, petition the Lord for light, truth, understanding when it's needful. God who knows all will impart, as appropriate, for our circumstances. He knows when to give that information and when it's not the time, but in this case, it certainly was the time to get that and he gives that in a night vision to Daniel and Daniel blesses the God of heaven and blessed him forever and ever, wisdom and might are his. He changeth the time of the seasons. He gives us beautiful testimony of God's power and he praises him.

00:29:29 The next verses, he removeth kings, and setteth up kings; giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding, revealeth the deep and secret things, knoweth what's in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him. I thank thee, and praise thee, it is a psalm, and bless you who hast given wisdom and might, and hast made this known unto me.

00:29:47 Then he goes to the guy with the messenger and then he sets him up with the king. In verse 27, he answers in the presence of the king and says, "The secret which the king has demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the

soothsayers, shew unto the king; but there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets."

- Hank Smith: 00:30:09 Man, he is bold.
- Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:30:10 He is a witness of Christ. He's always a witness of Christ. He never takes that honor into himself and says, "I got the answer." He says, "God had the answer," and then he reveals it according to his will to people on this planet. He is a messenger of this great message. And so, he tells him what the dream is. But look again, verse 30, But as for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living. Look at this incredible understanding and humility. It's not me and I don't even want you to think I'm better than anybody else.
- Hank Smith: 00:30:52 I want to make that clear.
- Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:30:52 I want to make that really clear that the Lord reveals according to his will, for their sakes that shall make known the interpretation to the king, and that thou mightest know the thoughts of thy heart. This is a blessing for Nebuchadnezzar as well. Then he says, "This is what you saw, great image," verse 31. Then he talks about this image of metal and this is fascinating. This ties into some pretty cool history, but the image's head is a fine gold. The breast and his arms of silver, belly and thighs are brass, legs of iron and his feet part of iron and part of clay, and all of this has such specific meaning that's pretty exciting that we get to talk about today.
- 00:31:32 Then in verse 34, this phrase that we're very familiar with in the restored Church of Jesus Christ, thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and break them to pieces. Then was the iron and clay and brass and silver and the gold, broken to pieces together; and the wind carries it away, no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth. This is the dream and we'll tell the interpretation now.
- 00:32:07 First, I'm telling you what you couldn't even remember that as Nebuchadnezzar hears it, undoubtedly, he's saying like-
- Hank Smith: 00:32:14 He's sitting there. "Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah."
- Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:32:15 That's it. I forgot it, but that's the dream. It did disturb him. Now, Daniel, through the goodness and revelation of God is able to tell the king this and then he says, "You're the king of

kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom." Again, look at the boldness with which he tells this narcissistic king who has absolute power and anything at his beck and call and he says, "The God of heaven has given thee a kingdom."

- Hank Smith: 00:32:44 You only have this because of God.
- Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:32:47 Whether you know it or not, God is in charge.
- John Bytheway: 00:32:50 You think you did all this?
- Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:32:53 The walls around Babylon were so enormous and they even give measurements in some of the histories. But I'm just going to say that at the top of the wall, it was wide enough that two chariots drawn by four horses each could race on the top of the wall. That's a really big wall. I mean it's not just a turret for a guard to look out. He's pretty full of himself and has all that power but Daniel never, never quails at telling him it's God that has given you this.
- 00:33:25 Then you are the head of gold at the end of verse 39. Then there will be another kingdom in verse 38. The end of that is where the head of gold is. Nebuchadnezzar and then another kingdom in 39 will arise. It's inferior to thee, and then the third kingdom of brass and the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron.
- 00:33:43 Then in verse 41, the kingdom shall be divided, but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, because that's mixed with the clay in the feet of the statue. The toes of the feet are part of iron, part of clay, so that kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. This is fascinating as we get in to talk about that. Then God will set up a kingdom, in verse 44, which shall never be destroyed. His own kingdom back on the planet after The Great Apostasy. It has come to an end and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms and stand forever.
- 00:34:22 Forasmuch, verse 45, as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it break in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, silver and gold. The great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain and the interpretation thereof. Sure.
- 00:34:39 Another witness, Daniel is a witness of truth. He is a witness of Christ, a defender of all that truth in a situation in which he could lose his head at any moment or be cast into furnaces or

cast into the lions as he and his colleagues are. Nebuchadnezzar falls on his face and worships Daniel. Verse 46, he says, "Of a truth it is that your God is a God of gods." Again, he's a pantheist so he believes in lots of gods but he says, "Wow, your God seems to be better than a lot of them," and a lord of lords and a revealer of secrets. So, the king makes Daniel a great man.

00:35:18 It's understood in Jewish tradition so that several times during Daniel's ministry with these kings, he's offered heirship to the throne. Nebuchadnezzar apparently offers him to be an heir and Daniel refuses. That's not his role and he's not there to govern. He's given a lot of governance and he certainly does handle things for the king. He wants to be a servant of the Lord and do what the Lord asks of him. But he does have some pretty impressive moments here and the kings admire him. We can see that as we go through these different administrations that he works with.

00:35:55 The silver, which are the arms and the neck of the statue is the Medo-Persian empire. That is Cyrus and Darius. We see later that they don't have quite as much power as Nebuchadnezzar did because they're actually bound by some of their own edicts in a way that Nebuchadnezzar is not. Nebuchadnezzar can do whatever he wants, but there is a change that's made in the government inasmuch that Cyrus and then Darius later with the lions doesn't feel like he has a choice, and his counselors in the kingdom hold him to something that he has said, which would not have happened with Nebuchadnezzar. There is a lessening of power that happens with the silver in the statue in the Medo-Persian empire.

Hank Smith: 00:36:40 That seems to happen during Queen Esther, her story as well.

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:36:44 That's true.

Hank Smith: 00:36:44 Because the king seems to say I can't change certain laws. He's part of the Persian administration.

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:36:52 You can see that because actually, when people get rid of a king who has absolute power, they often institute those kinds of protections that like, wait a minute. This happened in Great Britain, maybe some of you know a lot of this history where after King Richard, the lion heart, his brother John takes over who is the bad guy in the Robin Hood stories. He becomes the king after anyway. He is a really vile king who also has this absolute power of royalty.

00:37:20 It is because of King John that the other nobles gather together in Great Britain and demand that he sign the Magna Carta. The Magna Carta is one of those big beginning points of the restoration because it limits the divine right of kings and holds them subject to some laws. This allows for more growth towards freedom. It often comes as a result of somebody who abuses power, and then people kind of try to combine and say like, "Wait, this is too scary that you have this absolute power." They put some restrictions and that's the silver is the Medo-Persian and then that has somewhat less power. Then bronze is Greece. In some of the prophecies of Daniel, the person who's being discussed there, it's pretty clearly Alexander the Great.

Hank Smith: 00:38:09 Alexander the Great and he made his kingdom huge from Southern Europe all the way over to India.

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:38:16 Then after Greece comes Rome. The iron is Rome. Those are the legs of iron, Imperial Rome. Then what's so fascinating here, if you look at the history, and many of you are probably familiar with this, but maybe some of you aren't. Imperial Rome, which was the Caesars, those emperors of Rome and so on, morphs into papal Rome, meaning the Holy Roman Empire, but that's still Rome. The Vatican is in Rome. We have this transition from this absolute power of the Roman emperors and Caesars into a church power, which is the Holy Roman Empire.

00:39:01 That is where the feet come in and the toes that are ironed still because they're still in Rome there and some of the power of Rome, but it's mixed with clay, meaning other worldly kingdoms. You see this shift from these powerful kingdoms to a powerful church, but it's mixed with clay because there are these other kings that have armies, and in fact, sometimes they stretch that power. We'll see what stopped the power of the papacy in preparation for the restoration, because what was the other part of the dream? That this weaker mixture of iron and clay-

Hank Smith: 00:39:36 Iron and clay, the toes.

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:39:38 ... which is that Catholic consortium of countries with lots of different kings there in Western Europe is broken in preparation for the restoration. Napoleon Bonaparte played a big part in ending that absolute power of the papacy. Napoleon Bonaparte, very impressive and obviously charismatic leader. His men loved him. He's got this incredible ability to lead men in battle and be successful. He invaded Italy in the year 1798. 1798, now, that's after the French Revolution. After the American Revolution and then after the French Revolution, Napoleon Bonaparte invades

Italy and he defeats the papal troops. He defeats the pope's armies. And he effectively in that year dethrones the pope from that position of great power. He removes his power as an earthly king and he declares the papal lands free.

00:40:38 He's really divesting him of property, which there's power in property, and demanded that the pope renounce all temporal authority. This is Napoleon. Now, the pope won't do that. He won't go that far. He loses his lands, his army's defeated. He won't denounce his temporal authority, but it ends anyway because he's imprisoned. He's arrested in August 1799, the pope dies in captivity and papal authority is never restored to previous levels. They don't have an army anymore that can counter or intimidate the kings of Europe.

00:41:16 Napoleon then clears the way for something that happens seven years later when Joseph Smith is born. Then in 1820, just not that many years after that, we have the first vision and the beginning of the restoration. I just think that if we read and study these things, we get a better understanding of omnipotence and omniscience, that God sees all things as present and that God has all power. He works in the affairs of men to accomplish his purposes with or without their knowledge.

00:42:01 I'm certainly not saying that Napoleon Bonaparte was on a mission from God, but God knows who's going to be where, when. And so, he can tell his prophets this is going to happen and that will set the stage for this because he uses of course both the righteous choices of his people and he uses unrighteous choices of his people also to accomplish his good. All of this is a testament to omniscience and omnipotence that comes from God and can really increase our understanding and our trust in him. He never gets it wrong. He's not guessing. We see the trajectory, we see the message, we see the testimony and the witnesses of Christ, always of Christ, and of his doings and of who he is.

Hank Smith: 00:42:50 Lili, we wouldn't pick up on this if we didn't know our history. Babylon then Persia, then the Greek empire, then the Roman Empire. That's exactly how it went.

John Bytheway: 00:43:00 I'm looking at section 65 of the Doctrine and Covenants. The wonderful thing as Peter, James, and John came. And so, I'm reading verse two of section 65. The keys of the kingdom of God are committed unto man on the earth, and from thence shall the gospel roll forth unto the ends of the earth, as the stone which is cut out of the mountain without hands shall roll forth,

until it has filled the whole earth. There's the fulfillment. Peter comes back, restores the keys, and now the stone, and I think maybe our listeners wonder what does it mean without hands? Well, I think it means without earthly hands, it's going to be something that man didn't do.

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:43:40 Joseph Smith didn't have power. That's right. He wasn't wealthy. He wasn't famous. He certainly had no armies at his command. It was done through the gift and power of God and the Holy Ghost given to a steward on the earth to be the restorer, but he had no power of his own life to make those things happen.

Hank Smith: 00:44:00 President Hinckley spoke about the stone cut out of the mountains all the time. I remember as a teenager listening to President Hinckley, he said at one point, "After centuries of darkness and pain and struggle, the time was ripe for the restoration of the gospel. Ancient prophets had spoken of this long-awaited day.

00:44:19 All of the history of the past had pointed to this season. The centuries with all of their suffering and all their hope had come and gone. The almighty judge of the nations, the living God, determined that the times of which the prophets had spoken had arrived. Daniel had foreseen a stone which was cut out of the mountain without hands and which became a great mountain and filled the earth."

00:44:40 He goes on later to say, "That glorious day dawned in the year 1820, when a boy, earnest and with faith, walked into a grove of trees and lifted his voice in prayer, seeking that wisdom which he felt he so much needed. There came in response a glorious manifestation." The stone was small in the beginning it was hardly noticeable, but it has grown steadily and is rolling forth to fill the earth. I love the excitement in President Hinckley.

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:45:08 God does reveal his secrets to the prophets. It is exciting when we see that happening and recognize the hand of the Lord is never halted. It's never halted by the affairs of men. He utilizes it. We're going to get that information even more here with Nebuchadnezzar. Going back to Daniel in chapter three, we have the infamous story of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. Now, it's interesting that this doesn't involve Daniel, but it is suspected that because of some of the writings that he was out of the capital at the time.

00:45:40 What's interesting is here, Nebuchadnezzar has heard this dream, given to him again and then interpreted by Daniel and

he knows he's the head of gold. What does it narcissists do? "I think I'll make a statue to myself of gold and I'll make people worship it." He doesn't really get the overarching power of God. It's just kind of like, "Oh, I get to be the gold."

- Hank Smith: 00:46:02 I get to be the gold head.
- Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:46:07 He makes a statue, which must have been at least 90 feet high. We're given a measurement here, threescore and six cubits. The Statue of Liberty for reference is just over 150 feet high. It's almost two thirds the size of the Statue of Liberty. He erects this in one community and then he assigns some musicians to play... It mentions what the different instruments are, to play basically his theme song every once in a while.
- Hank Smith: 00:46:35 He has his own theme music?
- Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:46:37 When they hear the theme music, they all must bow down and worship the statue or be burned in the fire. He's already got the consequence in mind. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego are there, but they won't do it. As is usual, when some people are favored by royalty, there's a lot of vying for royal favor. They already have people who don't like them, who are obviously envious of this great revelatory power that they're able to tap into because they worship the true God. They point out to the king that, this is in verse 10, they tell the king-
- Hank Smith: 00:47:13 You've made this decree and they're not doing it.
- Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:47:17 In verse 12. They won't do this.
- Hank Smith: 00:47:19 Whistleblowers.
- Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:47:19 Exactly. Well, sometimes whistleblowers are good, but anyway.
- Hank Smith: 00:47:24 Snitches get stitches, John.
- Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:47:26 These are snitches. These guys are trying to get him in trouble for sure.
- John Bytheway: 00:47:30 What are you going to do about them, Nebuchadnezzar?
- Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:47:34 He goes right to them because a king values these men already. He says in verse 14, "O, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image of me which I have set up?" He says, if you're going to be ready to do that, fine, but if not, you're going to be cast in the midst of a

burning fiery furnace, this is verse 15, and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands? You really think anybody can save you from that? They give such a beautiful answer. It should be remembered by all of us forever.

00:48:08 In verse 17, if it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from a burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. Verse 18. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we were not served by gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up. We only worship God. We will not worship you. You may be all powerful in this earthly sphere, but this is not the power that we're concerned with. We're concerned with the omnipotence of a God who is good and just and merciful, and we will only worship him.

00:48:51 Talk about pressure. You're facing an immediate fiery death. But no, and as mentioned in the curriculum in our Come, Follow Me curriculum, there's a great conference speech by Elder Dennis Simmons, who was actually our stake president for a while in Vegas.

Hank Smith: 00:49:09 Oh, wow.

John Bytheway: 00:49:09 Wow.

Hank Smith: 00:49:09 Then, just at the end of his tenure there as stake president. Then he gave this wonderful speech in April 2004, But If Not. Quoting from that speech, Elder Simmons says, "They knew that they could trust God even if things didn't turn out the way they hoped." That's powerful. "They knew that faith is more than mental ascent, more than an acknowledgement that God lives. Faith is total trust in him." In the good times and in the bad times. But that doesn't change who God is or who he can be to us if we choose to have that complete trust.

00:49:53 This is different. It's harder to do than it might sound at first because we love these stories and we like to think that we would try to be the same in our life's choices. But what I find when I work with people, good people, really good people who haven't quite understood this completely yet or been able to fully embrace this level of trust in God, because sometimes we want to dictate the way our blessings come.

00:50:20 We have a good idea of what we think would be beneficial in our lives. I want to get married at this time, or I want to have children at this time, or I want to get this job, or I want to have this illness taken away or this challenge taken away or

whatever. I want to avoid these hardships and are those righteous desires? Sure, I'm not saying they're not righteous desires, but remember when we pray that we're invited to include something along the lines of all these things according to thy will in an acknowledgement that God's will may not be the same as ours and that his is superior to ours. We can petition for blessings that we think would be good for us or our stewardships, our families and so on, our loved ones, but there should be that at least internal if not articulated acknowledgement that God's ways are better.

00:51:17 Remember we talked about Isaiah recently. My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor my ways your ways. Mine are higher. They're higher because I do see everything not just now, but the end from the beginning. I know how this ends. I know what will really be the best in this situation considering our eternal trajectory. Sometimes, that is granting our petitions and sometimes it is not, because it's better not to because there's growth or stretching or it leads to another experience that ultimately is consecrated for our gain.

00:51:52 The Lord knows those things and we don't. If we try to get things to our way and then we don't think God is God because we don't always get things our way, we're missing out on this level of faith as demonstrated by these three amazing men, who say, "We know he can save us from the furnace, but if he doesn't, that doesn't change a thing in the way we believe in God and will worship only him because that would be for a higher purpose than perhaps we can see at this point in time, but we know that it is the case because God never fails to do what's best for us."

John Bytheway: 00:52:27 Those three words, but if not, it reminds me of Abinadi. He was not saved from the flames. And yet, Abinadi's last words, I'm intrigued by last words in the Book of Mormon, Abinadi's last words were, "Oh God, receive my soul." He went through it. He did burn. The opening paragraph of the manual says, "Most likely no one will ever threaten to throw you into a fiery furnace or a den of lions because of your faith in Jesus Christ. But none of us get through this life without a trial of faith. We can all benefit from the example of people like Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who were taken captive as young men by the mighty Babylonian Empire, were surrounded by an unfamiliar culture with different values and faced great temptations to abandon their beliefs and righteous traditions." This But If Not story, it reminds me of Job too. Will I keep my faith in God even when things don't work out? If God is able to

do this, but if he doesn't, I'm still going to love him and be devoted to him is-

- Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:53:36 That's right. Trust in his higher purposes.
- John Bytheway: 00:53:38 I'm going to trust the outcome like Abinadi must have.
- Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:53:42 Trust that it is a manifestation of his love that he doesn't always give us what we want and trust that he has a higher purpose and that all will be restored in the end again. To know who he is and know that I'm not going to end up on the short end of the stick if I trust God. That is a different level.
- 00:54:01 I love what you read there from the lesson, always a good reminder. Another one who did that was Joseph Smith who gave his life and sealed his testimony with his blood at age 38 with a young family and having already listed many trials. Hyrum, his brother as well. We were recently in Nauvoo, so great to be back after 20 years, when we went to the Temple open house and were there to speak for conference, but one afternoon we drove over to Carthage, which is sacred ground as well.
- 00:54:28 You really feel the spirit of Joseph Smith in Nauvoo and Carthage. I had forgotten how that felt, but you feel it strongly in those places. It's such a tender reminder that God does require hard things. Nobody would pray that they could seal their testimony with their blood. Nobody would pray for that. Nobody would pray that they leave their family at a young age. We don't pray for those things. But as we pray, if we can plumb the depths of our heart, of our soul and mind and say, "Am I willing to submit to all things that the father see it fit to inflict upon me with the trust that it is ultimately for my gain, that he would not do these things for any other purpose than love, for any other purpose than perfect charity because he knows and sees everything and knows what my customized curriculum," a Neal Maxwell phrase, "should be for my best outcome." "Am I able to trust at that level so that I truly can say, 'Nevertheless, thy will be done.'"
- 00:55:39 Which is the example of Christ, thy will, not mine, and that is the pattern for each of us to come to that place where we don't just trust when things work out the way we want. We trust when they don't. It's a great essay if anybody wants to read it. I think it's collected in the book Approaching Zion by Hugh Nibley. But this essay which he wrote singly first was called Work We Must but the Lunch is Free. But the main message of that essay is that God requires us to do what he has

commanded us to do. That includes the work of this life and then certainly obedience to his commandments and to our covenants. But sometimes, we want to act as though it is our work that brings the blessings. What Nibley is suggesting is that we should detach those two things, because we don't earn our blessings.

00:56:38 The lunch is free. It's because God is good, because he is merciful, because he is generous, unfailingly so. That's where the blessings come and they come in the time and in the way that the Lord in his omniscience knows will best benefit us eternally. I mean, he does make promises, but they are eternal promises that are going to be fulfilled in the end, not necessarily now. That's why we see people like Abinadi and Joseph Smith and Job go through very hard things that are certainly not fair and certainly not the results of their hard work or their obedient lives. But if we can disconnect that, we don't lose our faith as so many sadly do when prayers are not answered.

00:57:17 But as we get into these higher levels of faith, the Lord is telling us, "Trust me. You do the work because that's what I've asked you to do in keeping your covenants and doing the work of this life and trust that the blessings will come at the time and in the way that I know will most benefit you. It may not look like that to you, but you trust me." That's exactly the message of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. We can become more like these men as we honestly submit our will to his, according to thy will, according to thy way. Not my will, but thine.

John Bytheway: 00:58:00 I love that it's not just Daniel. It's the three of them saying, "We are not careful to answer thee." This example of young men that are so strong in an unfamiliar place with a threat of a very unpleasant death is really inspiring. It's also making me think, man, could I do that? I'm not sure I could do that. I don't think burning to death would be a fun way to go, but they were prepared. If not, do what you have to do, but we're not going to worship your gods. Hank, didn't you do a talk called I Love My Friends or something that you often hear in testimony meeting about Daniel and his friends?

Hank Smith: 00:58:40 Yeah, because I had heard that so many times from my students. "I love my friends. I like my family. I love my friends." And so, I talked a little bit about how important it is to have good friends and I went to these chapters because you can see we talked about in Daniel 2, that when Daniel had his problem, he went to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, and said, "We need to work together on this desire of God." Then you pointed out the pronouns of we are not careful-

John Bytheway:	00:59:10	We're not careful.
Hank Smith:	00:59:11	... to answer this. It wasn't a, "Well, I don't know about these two, but I'm not going to do it."
Dr. Lili Anderson:	00:59:17	That's true.
Hank Smith:	00:59:19	That it's important to surround yourself with friends who believe. It's hard to follow when you're surrounded by friends who believe. Thanks, John.
Dr. Lili Anderson:	00:59:28	Now, the other side of that coin is that as awful as it is to be slain for your beliefs, and we have talked about some great people.
John Bytheway:	00:59:38	Like Abinadi?
Dr. Lili Anderson:	00:59:39	Yes, and the early Protestant reformers and other good people through the ages, who because of their desire to have integrity and to be honest in their beliefs and true to them, anyway, lots of innocent good people have been slain as martyrs. We may not be called upon. Most of us will not be called upon to die for our testimonies, but are we living our testimonies day by day and seeking to yield our wills to the will of the Lord and do things in his way, not in our way when it concerns you what seem to be pedestrian things but are sometimes exactly where that rubber needs to hit the road, like how we wear our garments, or do we pay a full tithing? Do we honor the Sabbath day? Are we honest in all our dealings? Are we kind? Do we harness our tempers to not have the destructive anger and tempers that Christ warns about in the New Testament?
	01:00:36	Are we living the gospel of Jesus Christ? Are we strengthening our marriages? Our partners in marriage, our husbands or wives, do they feel our love? Do our children feel safe with us? Are we living the gospel of Jesus Christ? This is where we can get the same demonstration of trust in God that I can overcome my pettiness or my bad temper or my weaknesses or my selfishness in order to demonstrate that I trust that God's blessings are greater than that moment of natural man pleasure that I get from indulging those weaknesses or those bad habits.
Hank Smith:	01:01:15	To add to that, I do these things not because I have some expected blessing. I have some picture in my head. I remember growing up and over and over in the Book of Mormon it says, "If you keep my commandments, you shall prosper in the land. If you keep my commandments, you shall prosper in the land."

Then it finally occurred to me that I was like, "I don't think my definition of prosper and his definition of prosper is the same." It was a couple years before I went, "Define prosper!"

- Dr. Lili Anderson: 01:01:43 The blessing will come in the time and in the way that the Lord knows is best for us, which is so different from how we're... I want that candy bar right now. I put my dollar in.
- Hank Smith: 01:01:53 I had a definition of prosper in my head that I think the Lord let me have until it hit me in the face that that's not his definition.
- Dr. Lili Anderson: 01:02:03 I don't think that word means what you think that word means.
- Hank Smith: 01:02:05 Yeah.
- John Bytheway: 01:02:05 You keep on using that word. "I do not think it means what you think it means."
- Dr. Lili Anderson: 01:02:09 Exactly. That is building our trust in the Lord and it is a gradual day by day process. It doesn't have to be an extreme moment. Here it is as a great example to us, but it really is in these day by day yieldings of our natural man desires in order to do things in God's way. That's how we progress in our lives. That's what builds the kind of trust that if required will lead to these kinds of sacrifices. But whether or not it's required in this life, it is required that we build that trust in God and that we not try to carve out the blessings that we want and say, "If you really love me, Lord, this is what you'll do for me." This is how it will look and this is when it will happen.
- John Bytheway: 01:02:50 We don't do it because it works. Sometimes it does. We do it because it's right. Please join us for part two of this podcast.



John Bytheway:	00:00:02	Welcome to part two of Dr. Lili Anderson, the Book of Daniel. They were doing the right thing. Boy, it was a come what may. They were going to do the right thing. In verse 20, they bound them, threw them in.
Dr. Lili Anderson:	00:00:18	After heating it up to seven times its normal.
John Bytheway:	00:00:21	I don't know what kind of thermometers they had back then, or if seven just means complete, like it sometimes does.
Dr. Lili Anderson:	00:00:28	It's high enough that the guards that throw them in perish from the heat, which must not have been the normal occurrence.
John Bytheway:	00:00:36	Then let's finish this amazing experience. In verse 25, "I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire."
Dr. Lili Anderson:	00:00:45	Didn't we just throw in three?
John Bytheway:	00:00:47	Yeah. They have no hurt. This intrigues me. I can't wait to ask both of you because we don't see the phrase, "Son of God," very often in the Old Testament. "The form of the fourth is like the Son of God." I was expecting to see a footnote on that or something, but how often do we see that in the Old Testament?
Dr. Lili Anderson:	00:01:08	Good point. It's interesting that it's coming from a pagan.
John Bytheway:	00:01:14	Yeah, that's right. Nebuchadnezzar said that, right?
Dr. Lili Anderson:	00:01:18	Yeah. He's like, "Who is that in there? He looks like the Son of God." Now, he believes in lots of different gods. He does know about the God of Daniel and Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. He has been acquainted with Him through their testimonies and their witnesses. It seems to be that's coming from there. You're right. That's an unusual phrase and especially coming from a gentile in the Old Testament. Then of course, they call them out. These three men come out unscathed. They don't even smell of smoke, it says.

00:01:48 Then there's this beautiful kind of witness given by Nebuchadnezzar in verse 28 and the next couple verses also, where he says, "He spake and said, 'Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king's word.'"

00:02:06 Now that's quite a statement coming from an absolute monarch. "And yielded their bodies." Let's say that. "Changed the king's word and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any God except their own God."

00:02:17 That's amazing to Nebuchadnezzar because there are all these different gods that he worships. "Therefore, I make a decree, that every people, nation, and language, which speak anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces." Now see, he still hasn't lost that narcissistic, absolute power.

Hank Smith: 00:02:34 Yeah, he's still... Come on.

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:02:35 Off with their heads. He's not really trying to please that God.

John Bytheway: 00:02:39 You're the guy that threw him in, Nebuchadnezzar.

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:02:40 That's right.

John Bytheway: 00:02:41 Are you worried at all?

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:02:42 But if you speak against Him, you are going to be cut into pieces.

Hank Smith: 00:02:46 He's just looking for reasons to kill people sometimes.

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:02:48 To flex that muscle. That's right.

Hank Smith: 00:02:50 Goodness.

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:02:51 Because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort. The king promised Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego this thing. He still hasn't really caught the vision of a covenant life, but he does acknowledge this power.

00:03:04 He has so much power himself that it is still quite an acknowledgement to say, "Wow, there is something so much greater than anything I can do or any of the gods that I have seen. At least be respectful to this power." He sends that decree

out there. I don't know how it was enforced, if at all. That is an interesting statement coming from a gentile absolute monarch. Then in Daniel 4, let's just handle this one quickly. It's a strange chapter that's written mostly by Nebuchadnezzar. We have this gentile king who writes most of Daniel 4. What's the purpose of this chapter? I mean, He has another dream. He calls for Daniel, and Daniel says, "Wow, I wish this dream had been given to your enemies," which is kind of interesting.

00:03:47 That's over there toward the end of 19 where he says, "My Lord, the dream be to them that hate thee, and the interpretation thereof to thine enemies." I kind of wish this hadn't happened to you. "The tree thou sawest, which grew, and was strong," and whatever. Anyway, it's you, and you're cut down to a stump. Out of the stump comes this beast. "Hew the tree down, and destroy it," in verse 23, "yet leave the stump of the roots and let his portion... " At the end of verse 23, "let his portion be with the beasts of the field, till seven times pass over him," which turns out to be seven years.

00:04:22 He says, "This is the doctrine that you're going to be driven from men, and thy dwelling," verse 25 here, "will be with the beast of the field. You'll eat grass as oxen till thou know," a few lines down, "that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men and giveth it to whomsoever he will."

00:04:41 Even though Nebuchadnezzar has acknowledged the power of Daniel and Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego's God, the God of Israel, he still is not humble. He's built this statue to himself. He still doesn't really bow down to God. He recognizes Him, but he doesn't humble himself.

00:04:58 Daniel says, "The Lord isn't done with you. He wants you to know that God is the one who gave you this kingdom. You're doing something that God wants. You didn't take it of your own strength." In other words, again, acknowledge and be humble.

Hank Smith: 00:05:11 He begs him to repent. Verse 27, "Let my counsel be acceptable to thee. Break off thy sins and show mercy to the poor."

John Bytheway: 00:05:19 That's guts to talk to a king that way. When I'm reading the end of chapter 3, I just wonder if Nebuchadnezzar is kind of looking up, like, "Okay. Anyone who hurts Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego's God, I want you to hear this because I'm defending you now."

Hank Smith: 00:05:34 Right, yeah.

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:05:36 Is that enough? I still got to be a son of a gun sometimes because I'm kind of a death spot, and I just threatened to cut them in pieces.

John Bytheway: 00:05:45 I'm defending you now, God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Daniel's got guts to say, "Oh yeah. Sorry about your dream, but that's you. You're going to be grazing like an animal pretty soon."

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:05:58 This happens. I mean, there's a 12-month kind of respite. Maybe Nebuchadnezzar tried to do some of those things. At the end of 12 months, verse 29, that's what happens, and then he becomes like a beast. This is what happens. "The kingdom is departed from me," the end of verse 31. "They shall drive thee from men. Thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field," in verse 32. "All those things which were promised are fulfilled." Verse 33, "The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar. His hairs," at the end of that verse, "were grown like eagles' feathers and his nails like birds' claws."

00:06:30 He really was not living a human type existence. That lasts for seven years, which it says in the footnote there for verse 34. Finally, at the end of that time, Nebuchadnezzar lifts his eyes to heaven, and his understanding returned. He blessed the Most High.

00:06:47 He finally gets the message. "I praised and honored him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion." His reason, in verse 36, returns to him. "I was established in my kingdom," at the end of that verse, "and excellent majesty was added to me. Now I..." Look at the change in language. "Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise, and extol, and honor the King of heaven." Not Daniel's God or Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego's God, but the king of heaven.

Hank Smith: 00:07:17 God of heaven.

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:07:19 There's a different level of acknowledgement here. "All whose works are truth, and his ways judgment, and those that walk in pride, like I have done, he is able to abase." There's a different level of understanding of God. That's a pretty stringent message for seven years you're like a beast.

John Bytheway: 00:07:39 It's unique. Do you think this is maybe after the fact, "Hey, Nebuchadnezzar, you should write that down"?

Hank Smith: 00:07:45 Yeah.

John Bytheway:	00:07:46	Because it is odd that he is the one that's written this.
Hank Smith:	00:07:49	Voice for this, yeah.
Dr. Lili Anderson:	00:07:53	It is. It's very unusual. I think it probably is after that he's like, "All right. I'm going to tell my own story here and how Daniel's and Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego's God humbled me and got through to me, not just as their God but as the God."
John Bytheway:	00:08:07	Something I've just felt this whole time is that this is a very involved God, isn't it?
Dr. Lili Anderson:	00:08:13	He is in the affairs of men.
John Bytheway:	00:08:15	Yeah. In these kingdoms, He's very involved. He wants to be involved. Even though Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego are in Babylon in captivity, He's involved in their life. He's watching over them and helping them. We can get the same kind of message for us, I hope.
Dr. Lili Anderson:	00:08:32	Well, it's back to that... I don't know if we said this. Elizabeth Barrett Browning's beautiful sonnet... It's the Portuguese. At the end verse, she says, referring to Moses and the burning bush... You kind of have to know the backstory, that Moses comes off this path to see this marvel of this bush that's aflame but not being consumed.
	00:08:51	Then the first thing he hears is, "Take off thy shoes from off thy feet. For the ground thou standest on is holy ground." He does because this is temple area. The Lord Himself is visiting this area. It's sacred ground.
	00:09:03	Knowing that backstory, Elizabeth Barrett Browning penned these words. She said, "Earth is crammed with heaven, and every common bush is a fire with God, but only he who sees takes off his shoes." In other words, do we have eyes to see the hand of God, or do we go around with our feet or with our shoes on, and we don't acknowledge or notice that God is everywhere, and He is in everything?
	00:09:35	Sometimes we see Him as kind of hands off, and some people complain about that. "Why won't God do this? Why won't God do that?" It's like His ways are higher. He's playing the long game. He always plays the long game. It's about eternity.
	00:09:49	Trust in Him. Even if you can't see exactly what His purpose is right now, you know His purposes are good, and they are

bringing to pass the immortality and the eternal life of men. That's always the long game He's playing. Then when we have eyes to see, we can see that even the times He's hands off, it's for our good. We see His hand even when it is restrained.

- John Bytheway: 00:10:10 Oh, I love it. They had to trust Him to be able to say, "But if not." Then I go to Abinadi who had to trust him and trusted him so much. At the moment of his death, he could say, "Oh God, receive my soul," and was okay with that outcome.
- 00:10:29 Oh. I love what you've said about trust here. This is an involved God. Trust means that you'll accept His will when you don't get it, when it doesn't make sense. Can I trust Him when nothing's making sense, like Job that we've talked about before?
- Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:10:47 Like the injury that is given to innocence. We can trust Him that it will all be right in the end. Again-
- John Bytheway: 00:10:53 There's an eventually coming.
- Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:10:55 Yes. It's our knowledge of God that can do that. In the third lecture on faith, that is one of those teachings, that knowing the character of God is essential for the exercise of true faith, His character, His perfections.
- 00:11:10 Too often, a lot of the pain in our life is because we don't know who He is. We have our doubts about how merciful, or how good, or how trustworthy, and that is our failing because He is forever the same, yesterday, today, and forever.
- 00:11:24 All goodness, all love, perfect charity. We can trust it. Is it a leap of faith? Absolutely. Faith is believing what we can't see. It's a choice to believe that. It's our choice in how we choose to see what happens in life.
- 00:11:40 Do we take off our shoes because we see Him, and know who He is, and know His perfect character, or do we go around with that chip on our shoulder that gets knocked off all the time because life is hard for the unbeliever? It's hard for everybody.
- John Bytheway: 00:11:55 Our friend, Meg Johnson, who's a quadriplegic... She accidentally jumped off of a cliff while hiking in southern Utah and prayed her heart out when she was going through this, "Will I be healed? Can I be healed?" Is a quadriplegic. She wasn't healed, but one of the answers she got, which was so profound to me, is, "Don't envy that which you don't have because I have given you more," God said to her.

00:12:21 It's one of those, you can either have what you want, or you can have something better, which sounds... It doesn't make sense to us, but to her, that was an amazing, revelatory answer to her, "I've given you more somehow." She has learned to trust His outcome.

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:12:39 That's beautiful, really putting it on the line in these moments. We all have that opportunity at some point, to put it on the line, because God does give each of us that opportunity if we are followers of Christ. Chapter 5.

Hank Smith: 00:12:54 Well, it sounds like the end of Babylon is right around the corner.

John Bytheway: 00:12:58 We might even say, "Oh Babylon, oh Babylon, we bid thee-

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:13:02 Farewell.

John Bytheway: 00:13:03 ... farewell.

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:13:04 That is right. What happens here is that after this humbling of Nebuchadnezzar, his sons don't seem to get the message too well. As I mentioned, Nabonidus, who's not mentioned here, specifically... He didn't like the capital. He didn't like ruling. He did have his son... The grandson of Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, is mostly in charge but doesn't become emperor until his father dies. It lasts, basically, for one night because in that night, Belshazzar is celebrating with a thousand of his closest friends.

Hank Smith: 00:13:32 Drinking from the vessels of the temple.

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:13:34 Yes, he sends for the sacred things from the temple of Solomon.

John Bytheway: 00:13:40 You still don't get it, do you?

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:13:41 Yeah, you really don't get it. That message was not transferred very well, generationally. He is blaspheming and being full of sacrilege here for these sacred items. Then this finger appears and draws on the wall.

00:13:55 The writing on the wall is the phrase that we hear often. This was where it came from because then... Now Daniel was sort of into at least semi-retirement at this point. He hasn't been counseling this man, but he remembers that Daniel can interpret things.

00:14:08 He sends for Daniel, and Daniel comes in. Again, unafraid, he gives him some bad news again, which in 22, "And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this." You heard about this stuff, even about your grandfather being like a beast of the fields, and you still weren't humble. You didn't learn from vicarious experience, and you've been a son of a gun yourself.

00:14:33 Here we go, then the interpretation of the words in verse 25, "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin." I'm not sure how to pronounce that. "This is the interpretation. God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it. Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting."

John Bytheway: 00:14:52 Ouch.

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:14:52 "Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians." You're out of it now. "That night was Belshazzar," in verse 30, "the king of the Chaldeans slain, and Darius the Median took the kingdom." Now Darius was a general for Cyrus, so he's working for Cyrus. He's the one leading the charge against Babylon. Now Babylon, as we said, hugely protected by this enormous and powerful wall, but it had a vulnerability because the river, Euphrates, traveled through the city of Babylon coming under that wall.

00:15:24 What Darius does is he stops the river. He dams the river, which leaves an opening under the wall for the troops to come in and overtake the city of Babylon in one night. Apparently, from history, it tells us that the people who killed Belshazzar were his own counselors, and generals, and so on, who saw that they had been taken over like that by the Medes and the Persians. They killed him themselves according to tradition.

00:15:52 Darius is the one who conquered it, but Cyrus is the king for a while. This is a little obscure here because we read about Darius in chapter 6. There was a relationship between Daniel and Cyrus. It's an interesting relationship. He, after one year, turns the kingdom over to Darius even though Cyrus is doing other things abroad.

00:16:14 What Daniel does almost immediately is that he shows Cyrus a letter written to him by name by the prophet Isaiah, in the writings of Isaiah, well before this time. Kind of summarizing that, this is from Isaiah 44 and 45, he basically says to Cyrus, "You will say to my people, 'Go rebuild my temple.'" Cyrus is the one who writes the decree that sends Jews back to Jerusalem to

rebuild the temple of Solomon and, ultimately, the wall around the city.

- Hank Smith: 00:16:50 We talked about that with Dr. Ludlow: Ezra, Nehemiah, and the rebuilding.
- Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:16:56 That's right. The order is a little bit confusing in the chronology of the Old Testament. The books aren't always in chronological order. Cyrus is the one who gives that decree. Isaiah saw that and puts this basic letter from God to Cyrus, saying, "I am He who calls you by your name. It is I who have girded you for battle even though you do not know me."
- 00:17:16 Again, like you were saying, John, God is working through the affairs of men. He raises up people, and He lets them fall. "I will raise you up, Cyrus, to fulfill my righteousness, and I will guide you. You will restore my city and free my people without seeking any reward for doing so."
- 00:17:33 You remember when we did study Ezra and Nehemiah, it seemed kind of amazingly generous that he says, "Oh yeah. Go back and build your place. Here are all the fittings for the temple," all that came out of the treasury that Belshazzar was being sacrilegious about. Babylon had taken them as spoils.
- 00:17:51 Cyrus, without asking for any recompense, sends them back for the rebuilding and the rededication of the temple. Can you imagine how this pagan king, again, comes in? Daniel, this great counselor, comes and says, "The Lord knew of you. You didn't know of Him, but He knew of you, and He raised you up for this. This is one of the reasons He raised you up to power, so that you would send this people back to rebuild that city and their temple." Cyrus is like, "Wow. He called me by name. A prophet of Israel called me by name years and years before this happened, and I will do it."
- Hank Smith: 00:18:26 Over 150 years, previous.
- John Bytheway: 00:18:28 One of the things that kind of surprised me in my master's degree was that there are Bible scholars who are not Bible believers.
- Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:18:35 That's true.
- John Bytheway: 00:18:36 I guess I figured if you're going to study the Bible, you're going to believe it. There's a lot of people who think that the prophecy about Cyrus was not actually written by Isaiah

because how could Isaiah know his name? Well, that's why we call him a prophet, you see. That's what that means. They call it Deutero-Isaiah or something. They give it another name. It's impressive that, yeah, Isaiah knew Cyrus's name before he was born, evidently.

- Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:19:02 The last story, fascinating, concerns kind of a Daniel and the lions' den, part one, which is not included in the King James Version. Because the people of Babylon were angry that Daniel is debunking their gods, they go to Cyrus and say, "He's turning you into a Jew. You need to deliver him to us, and we'll fix it. We'll make this end."
- 00:19:25 He is delivered to these Babylonians who are very angry at what Daniel has done, and he is thrown into a pit of lions. It says, specifically, seven lions. They don't feed the lions what they normally feed them. At the end, Cyrus comes to mourn Daniel, to bewail his loss because he was liking him pretty well. Instead, he finds Daniel seated peacefully amongst the lions who are now starving but not eating Daniel.
- 00:19:54 He delivers them out of the lions' pit and, again, throws in the ones who wanted to get Daniel killed. The lions immediately eat them. Imagine Daniel's life, how fascinating these events. I mean, he really was a player in these big ways throughout the system here, but he did upset people because he was unafraid to call out the truth, and to debunk these false idols, and to witness of his God, the true God.
- 00:20:20 Then in chapter 6, we have the more familiar story of Daniel and the lions' den. I think most people know this by now. When I was young, they often depicted him as a fairly young person being thrown in with the lions. This is toward the end of his ministry, so he was an older man. There are many pictures who do depict him that way.
- 00:20:38 Here it's possible that Darius then knew of the first round in the lions' den where Daniel survives. That could be because in chapter 6... What does he say? This is verse 16 when Daniel is set up again by some of the enemies that are jealous of his influence in the court. They cast him into the den of lions. "Now the king spake and said unto Daniel." This is chapter 6, verse 16, "Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee."
- Hank Smith: 00:21:08 He's a believer.

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:21:09 He's a believer. It may be that he knows from Cyrus that this has already happened once before, and he was delivered. He says, "Don't worry, Daniel. Your God will do this again. You're falsely accused again." Of course, this time, as we see, that Darius is bound by his own decree.

00:21:26 That didn't happen with Nebuchadnezzar. Now there is a limitation on this silver kingdom. He had made this law not thinking about Daniel, of course, whom he cared for. He said that anybody who made a petition to God or any other man for 30 days, except of the king, would be cast into the den of lions. Then they know that Daniel will do that because he prays consistently, night and morning, every day.

00:21:50 They then say, "Look, Darius. He's breaking your decree." Darius wasn't thinking of that because he didn't mean this to happen, but here he has to follow his own decree. He does put him in the pit of lions, but he kind of believes already that Daniel can be saved again. He is, as we know.

Hank Smith: 00:22:05 Yeah, the king's right there on that day.

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:22:08 He fasts for Daniel that night. He doesn't have anybody bringing music to play to him or anything. He's like, "No, I'm thinking of Daniel, and I want him to be saved." He goes very early the next morning, "Oh Daniel, servant of the living God." Again, here Darius believes at least in the power of Daniel's God. "Is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?" Daniel says, "Oh king, live forever. My God has sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths." He's delivered. Of course, again, he throws in the guys who accused Daniel with their wives and children. Kind of gory.

John Bytheway: 00:22:43 Brutal.

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:22:44 He's mad, and he takes some vengeance there against the accusers. Then he makes a decree at the end of the chapter, verse 26, "In every dominion of my kingdom, men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel. For He is the living God and steadfast forever, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and His dominion shall be even unto the end."

00:23:07 Beautiful testimony here. "He delivereth and rescueth, and He worketh signs and wonders in heaven and earth, who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions. So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian."

Hank Smith: 00:23:18 Yes, what a life.

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:23:21 Then what happens in these next six chapters, which again... No, were not part of our curriculum reading, so this can be very brief. It's kind of fascinating how so many scholars, particularly mathematicians, have studied these prophecies of Daniel because he did ask when these things would occur. When would the Messiah come?

00:23:41 It says, specifically, that the angel, Gabriel, who, as we know, was on earth as the prophet, Noah, but comes again as an angel to Daniel to give him this information and gives him incredible prophecy. Now let's talk practical applications here from another message of Daniel.

00:23:59 I have to start with a disclaimer because some people don't like to talk about parenting anymore because their kids are grown, and maybe some of them, even after all the valiant efforts of their parents to teach them the gospel and to be good examples, see them leave the church.

00:24:12 I want to talk for a minute to those parents and say that I have material for you at the end of this discussion that is powerful, hope-instilling messaging from the prophets and from God Himself, that things will be okay. I hope that you'll hang on to hear that because one of my daughters-in-law, when I was kind of talking about Daniel with her and thinking some early thoughts about it, wisely cautioned.

00:24:36 She said, "If you're talking about parenting, don't forget that there are a lot of parents who feel bad about being told about good parenting practice because they tried their best to teach their children the gospel and have seen their children fall away." I thought that was a really tender reminder.

00:24:53 I am saying that there is a message coming that gives great comfort to parents in that situation. I am going to begin with a practical application idea of trying to raise Zion children in the midst of Babylon because Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were Zion youth, and they became Zion men. They lived in literal Babylon.

00:25:19 We are also in the midst of Babylon, and it's often referred to in that way by our prophets. Elder David Stoney gave a speech not long ago called Building Zion in the Midst of Babylon because that's what's happening here. We are admonished to try to

build Zion because the Lord will not come until there's a Zion people to receive him.

00:25:38 We can be in that path right now and should be. If we are believers, we should be seeking that Zion life, not creating a Zion cult, not trying to organize before the prophets call it to happen because this will come in wisdom and in order through our leaders, through the prophet himself when the time is right.

00:25:56 We need to be prepared by living that Zion life, which basically means being on the road to sanctification. That comes through consistent obedience. I've used the term before on this podcast, boring obedience, boringly consistent obedience, where we do not falter, as did these wonderful people that we read of in the scriptures. They stayed faithful no matter what.

Hank Smith: 00:26:19 Steady and deliberate.

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:26:21 That is the road to living as a Zion person. That would qualify us when the time comes. We're not going to become Zion people after Christ comes. We need to become Zion people now. Anyway, how do we help our children and give them the best possible opportunity to become Zion children in the midst of Babylon? Because they are growing up in Babylon.

Hank Smith: 00:26:41 Which is exactly what happened to these four boys.

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:26:43 Literally happened to them. We don't hear about their parents, but we could give a tribute for a moment.

Hank Smith: 00:26:51 There's got to be something there.

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:26:52 The teachings that came to these young men in their youth that helped instill in them through their own choices, their own acceptance of those messages, and their own acts of obedience. Instill that testimony. They learned this from somewhere. We could think for a moment of their parents that began that teaching.

00:27:11 Then I want to start with kind of a sobering statement, another prophetic statement, by Neal Maxwell in a speech called Becometh As a Child from April 1996. We're talking over two decades, almost two and a half decades, before now. Ever since I heard this in conference, it has been something on my mind.

00:27:29 He said, "I have no hesitancy, brothers and sisters, in stating that unless checked, permissiveness, at the end of its journey,

will cause humanity to stare in mute disbelief at its awful consequences." He is specifically talking to parents about permissiveness, and he's warning them that permissiveness brings awful consequences.

- 00:27:58 Let's talk about that. I'm going to repeat the statement one more time. "I have no hesitancy, brothers and sisters, in stating that unless checked, permissiveness, at the end of its journey, will cause humanity to stare in mute disbelief at its awful consequences."
- 00:28:15 Having that in my mind and working as I do with families, that has come to my remembrance many times as I've seen struggles that parents have with children in a world, that is, Babylon. We are not immune in the church as we all know.
- 00:28:32 Some of these statements come from a man named Leonard Sax in a book that he wrote called The Collapse of Parenting. I think it kind of helps to set a little bit the stage for what Elder Maxwell was warning against. "Over the past four decades," says Leonard Sax, "there has been a massive transfer of authority from parents to kids."
- 00:28:53 Now that's one way of describing permissiveness, a transfer of authority from parents to kids. You remember... I'm not suggesting we go back to the harsh days where children had to be seen but not heard and could never budge. There was too much maybe roughness about that.
- 00:29:08 We've gone way too far to the other end of the spectrum here. The pendulum has swung all the way to now, where that doesn't seem to be just diminished. It's reversed, where kids have authority, and parents don't.
- 00:29:21 Now think of the TV shows that we see or the movies we see. There are studies that show that the 150 most popular shows in our media... Not one of them depicts a parent who acts responsibly or reliably.
- 00:29:38 Men in particular, studies have shown, are often... Father figures particularly are characterized as buffoons. They cause trouble that the children have to solve. That's when they're not evil because sometimes fathers are depicted as evil.
- 00:29:54 Now mothers don't get a lot better treatment, but it's not quite as bad as some of the depictions of fathers in this popular media. Those of you who are as old as I am or watched

Nickelodeon when you were young, maybe you remember shows like The Andy Griffith Show. I mean, there were others like Father Knows Best.

- Hank Smith: 00:30:10 Oh no. You mentioned The Andy Griffith Show. John, how do you feel about that show?
- John Bytheway: 00:30:17 Me and Barney Fife had a good run.
- Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:30:21 There's some really good family principles taught in that. Andy Griffith is a widower, and he has this son, Opie, who grows up a lot during the show. He has a teacher, Miss Crump. If he was ever disrespectful for Miss Crump, and that became the episode, what happened? The whole town came down on Opie. Floyd the barber is snatching him off the sidewalk, "Opie, you don't talk to your teacher like that."
- 00:30:42 Gomer Pyle and Barney, so beautifully depicted by John here... The whole town knew about it, and they all sent the same message, "You cannot disrespect adults. You have to be respectful." Then here we read just a few weeks ago in Isaiah that in the last days, a child would vaunt itself against its parents, and little children would rule over them.
- 00:31:04 That's what Leonard Sax is talking about. He's not the only author who does this, by the way. This is a pretty well-known phenomenon amongst those who are studying parenting and showing that we've got this reversal of things where children now are consulted about everything. "Along with that, in many families," this is Leonard Sax again, "what kids think, and what kids like, and what kids want now matters as much or more than what the parents think, and like, and want. Let the kids decide, is often kind of the manner of traveling of families."
- 00:31:36 In one study... This is terrible. The attitude of American teenagers toward their parents was described as ingratitude, seasoned with contempt, ingratitude, seasoned with contempt. We've seen it. It might have happened in some of our homes.
- 00:31:54 It's not healthy. It's not right. How much influence can you have over a child who sees you with ingratitude and contempt, and has basically abandoned any thought of parental authority?
- 00:32:06 Billy Graham once said, "A child who is allowed to be disrespectful to his parents will not have true respect for anyone." We can see how that would include God because God is a parental figure. He is a father.

- 00:32:24 How do kids learn to respect deity? Well, they start with the parent figures that they grow up with because a little child... That's what they know. If they learn to treat that parent with respect, it is not difficult to transfer that respect to a heavenly parent. If they grow up without respect towards their earthly parents, why should they respect God who is just another parent after all?
- 00:32:50 This is so dangerous because then, we do see how this can kind of set kids up for abandoning their faith because they weren't able to develop that respect for parental authority and then transfer it. Many people have been in this situation.
- 00:33:03 My own mother had an abusive father, and she had a hard time feeling God's love for her because He was a father too. That's when I first heard about this connection, was long before I was married. My mom would talk about how that had been a challenge for her.
- 00:33:17 Since then, as a counselor, I've worked with many people who've had a painful relationship with a father. Sometimes it's the mother too because she's also a strong parenting figure. It can make it difficult for a person to feel loved by God and to feel trust and respect for God because He is a parent.
- 00:33:34 My mother overcame that, and it is possible to heal from that. She was intentional about that and realized that she needed to come to know a different kind of father, one that she could trust and feel loved by, not overlooked by or disdained. She very successfully navigated that path. I've tried to help others along the way who've been injured in that way.
- 00:33:54 You can see the connections. They're so important. How a child has a relationship with their earthly parents very much impacts their openness and their approach to a relationship with a heavenly parent.
- 00:34:07 This is not a small thing. That's what Neal Maxwell is talking about. Permissiveness can cause us to stare in mute disbelief at its awful consequences at the end of the road. That has happened incrementally as the world has descended into more and more permissive attitudes where we have fewer and fewer children who are taught to be respectful. Parents don't even know that they can demand it anymore.
- 00:34:26 You didn't have to demand it in Mayberry because everybody expected it, and everybody supported it. Now hardly anybody

else is doing it. You have to swim upstream if you want your children to respect you. You have to teach them.

- 00:34:39 I even remember, my husband's always been wonderfully supportive, but he had to travel when we were in Chicago. We already had four little kids and had two more there. I remember those young women's lessons that talked about how your husband should teach your children to respect you.
- 00:34:55 I thought, "Well, that sounds like a great idea," but sometimes dads aren't around. They go to work every day, and if they have to travel, especially. I realized I couldn't wait until Chris came home in order to teach my kids to respect me. I had to do that.
- 00:35:10 Honestly, I was very prayerful about it because this was something I hadn't learned early on. I prayed to learn how to help my children learn respect for their parents. Of course, to do that, if we're going to have integrity, we have to behave in respectable ways, not perfect ways.
- 00:35:26 There's a lot of on-the-job training for parents. No matter how many manuals you read, it's an on-the-job learning course. If we are diligent in trying to be good examples, not perfect but good examples, and trying to be respectful to our children, and when we make mistakes, we apologize, and repent, and show that we are willing to improve as parents, we can deserve their respect, but we kind of have to teach it.
- 00:35:52 Otherwise, the world is teaching an entirely different message. Their friends are often not taught these things, even from good families. There are many good families who have kind of slumped into permissiveness. This is so incredibly important.
- 00:36:06 I just want to hit a few points. There's a great researcher, Diana Baumrind, from Berkeley who developed a Baumrind parenting model that's used in research all the time. I'm very quickly going to describe it.
- 00:36:17 It's basically a graph, like the old geometry graphs with two axes. The horizontal axis represents warmth and responsiveness, the quality of the relationship between parents and children. Now that's individual because with some kids, you might be very close, and other kids might be a little more defiant or less compliant. It's a little bit of a harder relationship with them.

- 00:36:36 We have to look at children, individually, not just as a group, and see, are they feeling my love? Do they feel safe with me? Because that is an essential component of healthy parenting. Even though we may love our children, it's different maybe how they feel that and if they can feel safe, or that we're trustworthy for them.
- 00:36:54 The vertical axis is demand and regulation. It's how well do we enforce the rules of the family and enforcing not in a brutal, harsh, demeaning way that's never acceptable to God, but in a successful way that does demand respect and compliance, a measure of compliance for appropriate standards.
- 00:37:14 Now we are so blessed to have the gospel of Jesus Christ because we can know what's important and what's not. If it matters to God, it should matter to us as parents. If it doesn't matter to God, we should drop it.
- 00:37:26 To fight over red socks or blue, that's foolishness. That's not going to make a difference as to whether or not they're qualified for the kingdom. Telling lies, that's different. That matters to God. He's a God of truth. We can't have a positive relationship with God if we're liars, and we can't really have a relationship with anybody else that has much quality if we lie.
- 00:37:42 If it matters to God, if this is something that would help our children qualify for the kingdom someday or have an opportunity to do that, if they choose to pursue that path, then it should matter to us as parents. It's worth enforcing. If it doesn't matter, let it go.
- Hank Smith: 00:37:56 Like verbal abuse.
- Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:37:59 Verbal abuse matters. Being kind, being honest, being respectful, doing your work, learning to do work that is not comfortable, because that's a big problem for permissive families, is that the kids might do the work that they like or that has an immediate reward.
- 00:38:15 Maybe they're good students. They do their homework because they get rewarded. Their teachers like them. They get high grades, other opportunities. They do that work, but they don't want to clean the bathrooms because there's no reward in that that's immediate or all that pleasant. They just do the things that reward them.

00:38:31 Maybe it's athletics. Maybe it's music. Maybe it's art. They may have these areas where they feel rewarded on a fairly quick basis. They pursue those and maybe put a lot of effort into it. We think, "Oh, at least they're learning some self-control and discipline," but it's not really self-control and discipline unless it's tasks that do not provide an immediate reward.

00:38:51 That's where self-control and discipline are manifest, in conquering the natural man and doing the unpleasant tasks of life. Cleaning your bedroom, learning to do the wash, cleaning the kitchen, cleaning the bathrooms. What we find is that a lot of our kids are only doing the things that bring a pretty immediate reward, and then they go on a mission.

00:39:09 The mission doesn't have an immediate reward attached. A lot of grueling days on a mission. You're just one of a whole hoard of missionaries. You're no longer special. You might have a companion you don't particularly care for, right?

Hank Smith: 00:39:23 Right.

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:39:23 You might be in an area that they don't have a lot of people who are interested in the gospel. These are real trials to your faith. If all you can do are things that are comfortable or bring a reward, it's pretty hard to be successful in a setting that's very different, and yet that's the kind of steadfast obedience we've been talking about, doing it no matter what.

Hank Smith: 00:39:41 It's important to God.

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:39:43 It is so important to God that we be able to do the right thing without reward and even in the face of an immediate consequence that's negative. We're really robbing our children if we only let them do the things that they enjoy, and that they're naturally good at, or that they find a reward in pretty quickly.

00:40:00 Anyway, I'm just going to say that in this Baumrind model, the upper right-hand quadrant is the good one. It's high in both dimensions. It's high in warmth and responsiveness, and it's high in demand and regulation.

00:40:13 Now, as members of the church, we're not perfect. We certainly can have parents with real problems, but it's not hard to love your children. It's not hard to provide that warmth and responsiveness if we were fairly decent and not too messed up by our own past. Loving our kids is not typically the hard part.

We do need to check it and make sure that our kids feel it well, and they're receiving that well, and so on.

- 00:40:37 The hard one is usually the vertical axis, which is demand and regulation. Both of them need to be high in order for us to be the kind of parent God is. This is called authoritative parenting. That's the kind of parent God is. He's authoritative. The love is undeniable.
- 00:40:54 Then he says things like, "I'm bound when you do what I say. When you do not what I say, you have no promise." There are conditions. There's a high demand, and it's enforced with consequences.
- John Bytheway: 00:41:04 There's boundaries.
- Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:41:05 Limits. Yes, limits. There are boundaries. There are standards. There are commandments.
- John Bytheway: 00:41:09 Expectations.
- Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:41:10 Blessings are contingent on our compliance. Not everybody can get a temple recommend, but those who comply with those requirements to a certain extent. Not everybody will enter the celestial kingdom but those who comply. God is clear about that. He is definitely in that upper right quadrant, the authoritative parent. That's where we should try to be. That is not permissive. Permissiveness is the lower right quadrant where we're high in love. Like I said, this is pretty easy for Latter-day Saint parents. It's low in demand and regulation.
- Hank Smith: 00:41:44 I love you, so you can do whatever you want.
- Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:41:46 Yes, that's right. I don't want to fight. That's what moves a lot of permissive parenting, is I don't want to fight with my kid because I don't want to lose the warmth and positive nature of our relationship. Instead, I'll just say, "Okay, I'll let it go," or sometimes we slip into the authoritarian quadrant where we say, "Because I said so."
- Hank Smith: 00:42:06 My house, my rules.
- Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:42:08 Yes, that's the upper left quadrant. It's at the cost of the relationship because if we become frustrated and then we just lay down the law, we tend to get a little too harsh or too authoritarian. We impose some pretty severe consequences, or at least it varies in degree. That's not good for the relationship.

That becomes more fear-based. Do it or else. That's at the cost of the relationship.

00:42:28 There are some authoritarian parents still on the planet, and sometimes we swing into that quadrant. We move around a little bit. I would say most good parents, I mean, most decent human beings actually want to be authoritative parents in that upper right quadrant, high in both dimensions, whether they know the model or not because they want their children to feel loved. They want them to grow into useful citizens and maybe even citizens of the kingdom someday.

00:42:50 We have that desire. The problem with staying in the authoritative quadrant is that kids push back. When they say, "I don't want to," or, "I'm not going to," parents don't know what to do, so they tend to drop into the permissive quadrant. Okay, let's not fight, and we let them get away with it, or we jump into the authoritarian quadrant and say, "Because I said so," but that doesn't work either because it becomes fear-based. As soon as they're old enough, they're going to shake the dust off their feet and get out of town. They're not going to look back or maintain the values we've tried to teach.

00:43:19 The authoritative quadrant is the one where we're able to transfer values and help our children become more acceptable to God, to harness their natural man, to see the blessings of the gospel as well as, because they are harnessing their natural man, they become eligible for the visitation of the spirit because when we don't do what's right, we chase the spirit away from us.

00:43:41 When we are rebellious, or obnoxious, or disrespectful, we chase the spirit away from us. Then what are we, going to launch these kids into Babylon without the spirit? That's an abnegation of our responsibility as parents. If we can help our kids learn to harness that natural man by authoritative parenting, our children harness their natural man because they do have to comply with expectations and standards that are not conducive to the natural man getting what he wants or what she wants.

00:44:10 They have to overcome that in order to qualify for approval or the rewards that are established, the positive consequences. Then they are fit to take the spirit with them when they leave our homes. This is such an important gift to give our children.

00:44:23 Neal Maxwell saw all of this, obviously, when he and many other prophets have warned us about teaching our children

when they're young. The earlier we start, the better. Now, can you do this with a 16-year-old? Yes, you can. It's harder if you haven't done it before, but don't give up. You can still teach good principles.

- 00:44:41 Some parents say, "Well, I've never done this before. If I do it now, my kids are going to complain and say, 'You never did this before. You didn't do this for the older kids,'" or whatever. My answer is always, "Yeah, but you upgrade your software, don't you?" What does that mean, you never did it before?
- John Bytheway: 00:44:56 It's a good way to put it. Well, I've upgraded since last time.
- Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:44:59 That's right. I've upgraded. Aren't you lucky because you're going to benefit from my upgrade.
- John Bytheway: 00:45:08 You're going to get parent 4.0.
- Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:45:08 That's exactly right. It's going to keep growing. The Collapse of Parenting by Leonard Sax. It's a little bit older book now. I mean, it's been around for a while, but it's still very relevant. We could update some of the data that he includes there, but it's going to be along the same trend that he has identified. There are many good voices out there about this, but I do particularly like this book.
- 00:45:28 The Baumrind model is different, but it's used in a lot of research. You actually hear about it sometimes even in kind of just news reports or magazines and things like that because it's been such an effective model in research. People don't talk about it from a religious point of view, but it fits so well with gospel principles that it's a very useful model, simple to describe, and incredibly useful.
- 00:45:48 Now let me explain a little bit how to stay in the authoritative quadrant because it's not hard to want to be there, but to stay there when the kids push back is difficult. To avoid permissive parenting, which is what Elder Maxwell is warning so stringently about, is to be able to maintain the rule when the kids push back without becoming brutal, without resorting to my way or the highway, or becoming harsh, or angry, or punitive.
- Hank Smith: 00:46:20 You're creating resentment, creating the rebellion.
- Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:46:24 They very well might throw the baby out with the bathwater and leave the gospel behind too, if that's what the gospel seems to produce in their parents. In order to maintain structure and

compliance with rules, we need to consider... This whole phrase matters, "A structure of consequences consistently enforced that yields the desired behavioral outcomes in our children."

- Hank Smith: 00:46:48 I can't make up new rules on the spot?
- Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:46:52 No, but I must say some trial and error may be involved because-
- Hank Smith: 00:46:56 Okay.
- Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:46:56 ... children are different in how they perceive consequences. Some kids love to be sent to their room, and some kids hate it. We have to be a little bit idiosyncratic about how to motivate our children with that structure of consequences.
- 00:47:09 The truth is that every human behavior is motivated. This is really pretty basic. God knows us so well. What it comes down to is that every behavior has within it costs and payoffs.
- 00:47:22 There are certain costs to the behavior, and there are certain payoffs. If the payoffs exceed the costs, the behavior will continue. It's more worth it than not. If the costs exceed the payoffs, the behavior will stop.
- 00:47:40 This is true of every human being. Now some are more stubborn than others. That difference might have to be greater, but it is true of every human being. Now where we really differ is in our perception of costs and payoffs. People look at us as members of the church and say, "You guys are fools. You're missing all the good parties and all the good fun."
- 00:47:59 What are we saying? We're saying that I perceive that the reward to come in the hereafter is such a huge payoff that I am willing to make whatever you think is a sacrifice now because there's no contest to me in terms of the cost and the payoff. Others are like, "Yeah, I don't know if it's worth it. I'm having a lot of fun now. I don't really believe in what's to come or whatever," or they think that God will beat them with a few stripes, and they'll be at last saved in the kingdom of God.
- 00:48:26 Anyway, we perceive things differently. We do need to kind of know our children and know ourselves to recognize what's going on there. In parenting, it's good to look at our children and say, "What does constitute a cost that will help to help change their behavior?"

- 00:48:39 A couple of examples. When I was an early morning seminary teacher, and I may have mentioned this in a previous episode, but I taught the juniors. They were mostly driving. Almost every semester, somebody would come in and say, "My parents took my car keys." I'd say... Oh, I never said, "That's too bad," by the way, because I was delighted that the parents were trying to parent.
- 00:48:57 Instead, I would ask, "Oh, what happened?" It was usually grades. Report cards had come out, and they had not been too diligent. The parents were like, "You can't drive the car." Again, I wouldn't say, "That's too bad."
- 00:49:07 I would ask, "How long do you have to get your grades up? Do you have to wait for another report card?" Or, these days it's all online and stuff. "How many weeks do you have to get your grades up to get your keys back?"
- 00:49:17 Every single time... I taught for five years, so this happened a lot over those years. They would say, "Oh, I don't have to do that. After two or three days of getting up to bring me to early morning seminary, they'd give me the keys back."
- 00:49:33 I wish your parents could hear you now. You totally have their number. You hold your breath for a few days, and they back off on the consequence. You get your way, and you don't have to change. That happens all the time.
- 00:49:46 We really need to look at ourselves and say, "What am I doing? Am I really getting the desired outcome?" If not, I need to go back to the drawing board and make sure the costs are high enough. Again, not brutal, not demeaning, never abusive. There are plenty of costs. They owe everything to us in the tangible sense.
- 00:50:04 They live in our houses. They use our media. They use our internet. They're usually paying for their devices. They're driving cars. People will say, "I can't get my kids to do anything." Then I'm like, "Well, you're not trying very hard because you actually have a lot of things that you can impose as consequences."
- 00:50:18 Some of them can be incentives. If you do this, then we can do this. Some of them are costs. You lose this privilege for a while. Parents just don't want to do it. Why? Because of what those parents were saying about early morning seminary.

- 00:50:28 When we impose a cost on our children, we impose a cost on ourselves, by definition. Sometimes parents are too soft on themselves because it's hard to impose that consequence in a consistent, long-lasting way that is sufficient to change their attitudes or change their behavior. We give up long before the kid does.
- 00:50:48 Once, one of my daughters-in-law came to me. Her oldest was probably about three at the time. She's now over 16. She's a wonderful kid. I mean, nobody would believe this because she's like an angel child. When she was a little girl, she was pretty stubborn.
- 00:51:01 My daughter-in-law called and said, "She won't pick up her toys. I just can't get her to pick up her toys." I told her the basics of this model. I said, "Okay. When are you asking her to pick up her toys? Is it at bedtime?" She said, "Yeah."
- 00:51:12 I said, "Well, that's a lousy time because the payoff of not picking up her toys is that she gets to stay up later, and she doesn't want to go to bed." Three- year-olds usually don't want to go to bed. They want to stay up.
- 00:51:21 I said, "That's a bad time to do it. Do it before lunch. Now I know you really want it picked up at night, but you can change the time later. Let's just get compliance first. Let's get her used to doing what she's asked to do. Do it before lunch because you have a built-in, cost-payoff thing."
- 00:51:37 She doesn't get lunch until she picks up the toys. It's a simple task. I mean, it was like a basket, and she had to put some things in there. I mean, it wasn't some grueling task that wasn't age-appropriate. It was totally age-appropriate, and it was a good way to start her complying with a job, a chore that she needed to be responsible for that didn't have a built-in reward by itself, but that she was being obedient to her mother.
- 00:51:59 My daughter-in-law said, "Okay, I'm going to try that." Then she called me back the next day, and it was like 1:30 or something. She said, "She won't pick up her toys, but she's crying because she says she's hungry."
- 00:52:11 I said, "Okay. Make her favorite sandwich. I mean, it's peanut butter and jelly dripping with jelly, really good and juicy. Then kind of wave it under her nose, like, 'Boy, I sure hope you pick up those toys because as soon as you pick up those toys, you

can have the sandwich. If you don't pick up the toys, you don't get the sandwich."

00:52:30 She told me that at some point, her daughter's holding her stomach and saying, "I'm so hungry. I need to eat." I said, "That girl is not going to starve to death today. Let her be really hungry. If she's really stubborn, take a bite of that sandwich."

00:52:44 Say, "Wow, it's sure a good sandwich. I sure hope you pick up your toys and have this." See, you can then even be an advocate for your child. Even though you're imposing the consequence, you can encourage them.

Hank Smith: 00:52:56 You can cheer them on.

Dr. Lili Anderson: 00:52:57 Yes, you can cheer them on instead of having it just be about a temper battle between the two of you. "Yes, you will." "No, I won't." No, we want to avoid that. We want to just say, "No, here's the structure. Even though I'm the one who created, I mean, enforcing the structure or both, but I sure hope you'll get the prize. I sure hope you'll get back this privilege because as soon as you do, it's going to be a lot nicer, and I know you're capable."

00:53:18 She called me later, and she said, "She picked up her toys." She had to do that a few days to kind of get that principle lodged in her stubborn little girl's heart and mind. Then there was no problem.

00:53:29 Like I said, if you start when they're young, there's a really great spillover effect. If they learn to be obedient in their early years, they tend not to be inclined so much to be rebellious. The sooner they find out they can get away with it, the harder it is to turn that course.

00:53:46 Don't give up. You can do this with a 16-year-old. It's a little trickier. If they have their own money by then, that's harder because they can just go buy what you're taking away, or if their friends have money or transfers... Anyway, it's a little harder as they get older. Don't give up. Be prayerful because God wants us to get this right.

00:54:02 Why is this so important? Well, because being authoritative parents rather than permissive blesses our children in millions of ways and ways I'm sure that we can't even measure at this point, but we'll see it someday very clearly.

- 00:54:16 Children who are raised permissively tend to have poor levels of self-worth. Now this makes perfect sense if you understand where self-worth comes from. Self-worth comes from self-mastery. It doesn't come from somebody telling you you're good. Now we tried that in the '80s. They used to send magnets home or lists home for the parents, 100 ways to praise your children.
- 00:54:40 You know what? They don't believe you if they're not doing good things. They know that they're not doing what's right, and you can't... Was this Ezra Taft Benson who said, "You can't do wrong and feel right"? That's what happens to our children. We can say, "You're wonderful," and somebody else can tell them they're wonderful, but if they're not doing the things that they know are right, they're not going to feel like good people. They have this kind of shaky or worse self-image because it comes from appropriately mastering ourselves and the appropriate parts of our environment.
- 00:55:09 Think of a little kid who learns to tie his shoe. He is so pumped. He feels so good about himself because he conquered that fine motor coordination, which is tricky for little kids. He conquered something in himself and an appropriate part of his environment. You can't take that feeling away from him or her.
- 00:55:26 We take that away from our children as they grow because we don't ask hard things. We don't want to fight. We don't want to have to come up with a consequence. We let them slide. They grow up not feeling good about themselves. This has been born out in lots of research because this model is used all over the place as if we needed it. That's the problem.
- 00:55:43 That's one of the problems that Neal Maxwell saw, prophetically. What happens if they don't have a good self-image? They are much more vulnerable to depression and anxiety. Shocker.
- 00:55:56 We have increasing levels of depressed and anxious kids at younger and younger ages and, of course, suicide accompanies that. Since our lockdowns and whatever, that has really been aggravated and exacerbated at scary levels. These kids are not flourishing.
- 00:56:13 We have some great kids that still learn things in a good way. I don't mean that this is every child. I'm saying there is a tendency here that is easily seen if we look. It is not going the right direction. That's why our prophets warn us against it.

- 00:56:28 I remember when I saw those stats start to rise meteorically on anxiety and depression at younger and younger years along with suicide. I remembered Neal Maxwell's statement, which was well before those numbers went up. This is one of the things he saw, that there are awful consequences to our children that happen when we don't teach them authoritatively to harness the natural man and to develop, thereby, strong self-worth, that we have too much permissive parenting.
- 00:56:59 Those parents are loving parents. It's not that they want bad outcomes for their children. I know that's true. I've talked to so many. They don't know how to expect enough of their children, and the neighbors aren't doing it. The kids get used to going with that natural man impulse. They do a work if they feel rewarded. If they don't, they don't. They don't develop that strong sense of worth.
- 00:57:22 Their identity... What did President Nelson tell us just recently at that Worldwide Youth Fireside where he talked about identity? We need to know. Our children need to know we are a child of God, a child of the covenant, and a disciple of Christ. How can they know that if they don't feel good about themselves, or how can they know what that means and how it can protect them if they don't really know who they are?
- 00:57:43 They don't feel solid and good because they have not been asked to do things that are uncomfortable, and to get good at those things, and to be rewarded from that capacity growing in them, not because there's an instant reward attached but because it's the right thing to do. We are robbing our children of that strength, and then they are gathered by every wind and tossed.
- 00:58:06 We can do better. The gospel of Jesus Christ teaches us how to do better. Before I saw the Baumrind parenting model... Because my mother, as wonderful as she was, was not a disciplinarian. Probably because her dad was so authoritarian, and nasty, and abusive, she didn't want to be like that. She kind of over-corrected, and she was a little bit more permissive but at a less dangerous time, I will say.
- 00:58:30 The world wasn't quite marshaled against kids at that point as it is now and will be in the years to come. I didn't learn this from my mother. I learned lots of wonderful things from her, but I didn't learn this. Then we started having all these kids. I hadn't anticipated having so many kids so close together, but it was the right thing.

- 00:58:48 We felt guided, and blessed, and were healthy. It was a huge blessing in my life. I hadn't even babysat when I was a teenager because I felt overwhelmed by trying to get kids to do stuff.
- 00:58:59 I didn't know how to be a disciplinarian or even have any authority. I prayed my guts out as a young mother, "Lord, teach me how to teach discipline to my children, self-control and delayed gratification. I don't know how." He taught me through the Spirit. There were experiences that I had that I could see He was guiding me and molding me.
- 00:59:19 I learned to do this as a young parent because God loves us, and He loved my kids. He loved me, and He wanted me to learn what I was asking to learn. Line upon line, precept upon precept, I learned these principles. They work. I can testify they work. Now I know that there are exceptions. There are kids who are particularly defiant and stubborn. We are not blaming the parents for that.
- 00:59:42 Remember we've said this before, that the product of parenting is not the child. Ultimately, the product of parenting is the parent. It's what we learn to do that makes us more like God because He is an authoritative parent. Our children will exercise their agency to comply or to not comply.
- 00:59:58 Nevertheless, we have been told that there is more likelihood that children will comply when parents know how to teach. This helps us to grow in our roles as parents and to become more like God Himself. It gives our children the best possible chance.
- 01:00:15 Then they make their own choices, and we don't blame the parents for that. That's too spurious a correlation. It's not consistent, and it's not founded in truth. Look at God Himself. He would be condemned with all His rebellious children. We don't measure God by His rebellious children. We measure Him for who He is and how He is, and that's how God will measure us.
- 01:00:37 These things are so valuable. When I saw the Baumrind model in my PhD program, many years later, my kids were all grown, I recognized it for truth because that was what God had taught me in the trenches. I was so grateful that God will speak to us. We can learn this. We can bless our children with a positive self-worth, positive, strong sense of identity that can help them to withstand all these philosophies of men.

- 01:01:06 The benefits of parental authority are substantial when parents matter more than peers. How often does that happen in our families these days? It should, and it can. They can teach right and wrong in meaningful ways. That is the intergenerational transfer of values because, ultimately, we don't want to just corral our children's behavior in the process of not being permissive and having consequences, incentives and disincentives.
- 01:01:33 We need to be teaching them and answering the question, why. That's where we really, again, transfer values and help to convert them to the principles of the gospel. We don't want them to behave like this when we're watching. We want them to behave like this on a desert island, alone, because it's the right way to behave. They trust in what the Lord is asking them to do.
- 01:01:52 That transfer of values happens with parental authority. Otherwise, we try to teach our lessons, and they just blow us off because we don't have any real authority or power in their lives or respect. They don't seem to think that we are deserving of respect. We can then help our children develop more robust and more authentic sense of self. That's what we've been talking about.
- 01:02:14 Then we can teach our children, as parents with authority, to educate their desires. That's about harnessing the natural man. This is a non-LDS author, but he has the principles down. We can help to educate their desires, which is to help them harness the natural man which qualifies them for the attendance of the spirit so that when they launch, they take the spirit with them instead of offending the spirit because they still serve the natural man too much.
- 01:02:38 This instills in them a longing for higher and better things: in music, in the arts, in their own character, spirituality, and in their worship of God. There is good evidence that you can boost a child's conscientiousness including his or her honesty and self-control in a matter of weeks without spending any money. We do still need to learn how to be the kind of parent God is, which is good for us. Do not allow yourself to be paralyzed by your own inadequacies.
- 01:03:11 I think that's great counsel for parents. Of course, we're not going to be 100% consistent, but if we keep trying, and praying, and seeking revelation and guidance from the Spirit, and we are earnest in our endeavors to become a better version of ourselves as a parent, to learn more about God-like parenting,

God will bless us. He will bless and consecrate that experience for our good, and our children will be recipients of that better parenting, whatever they choose to do with it.

01:03:39 Raising your child to know and care about virtue and character is not a special, extra-credit assignment reserved for the superior parent. It is mandatory for all parents. When you are given a mandatory assignment, you must do your best, regardless of your own shortcomings, regardless of whether your peers, other parents are paying attention to the assignment or not.

01:04:05 I am telling you, you're going to be swimming upstream because when you're asking your kids to do things that the neighbors aren't... Most of the neighbors aren't asking that of their kids. There is no greater responsibility given to a parent during that season of life.

01:04:18 I do want to say, let's go back now to what I promised in the beginning of this section, which is comfort for parents whose children have gone astray or have rejected their teachings. I will add this too. I've probably said this before.

01:04:33 Chris worked with missionaries for a long time at the MTC as a counselor. I mean, for years. He would find that some of these missionaries would come in and kind of be beating themselves up because they just had heard a fireside or a devotional on being the best missionary you can be, and they didn't feel like they were being the best. What does that even mean?

01:04:49 Chris was great. He said, "Well, let's just make a search of it." I said, "You know that the word, best, does not appear in scripture?" God doesn't really ask us to be our best. I mean, that's sort of a weird target. Some days, people can lift cars off children. If I'm not doing that every day, am I doing my best?

01:05:06 That's not really what God asks. What God asks repeatedly in scripture is that we be diligent. Diligence is the way to go forward. Not worrying about perfection but being diligent. I can apologize to my children, which really increases my moral authority because I'm holding myself to the same standards that I'm asking them to comply with.

01:05:25 I'm leading out. I'm not pushing from behind. I'm trying to lead out in becoming a better version of myself and being a better parent. Now to those parents whose children have already fallen away, I remember a woman that came into my office

probably almost 20 years ago now. This was the first time I had heard it, but since then, I've heard it many times, that a woman is only as happy as her least happy child.

01:05:48 She had a daughter who was already into the drug scene, an older teenager. Then as a young adult, it continued. She was miserable because she saw this as a real failure, personally. She loved her daughter, but she took a lot of ownership over that and thought, "I'm a terrible parent."

01:06:05 Part of the problem with that is that she had other children. I'm like, "What kind of advertisement is this for living the gospel of Jesus Christ? That if your child goes astray, you are miserable. The gospel can't do any better than that in your life? That you have to be culpable, and then you have to be miserable. Your children see that? Why should they be drawn to a gospel that leads to that kind of misery and depression despondency?"

01:06:30 I thought about that all that evening. After I'd seen all my clients, that thought came back. I was like, "Okay, is that a good thought? I'm a mom too." Even men say that that kind of resonates, that you're only as happy as your least happy child. I thought, "Is that how we're supposed to feel?" I thought, "No, that can't be right."

01:06:45 Of course, it was easy to think that because I thought of God who has a lot of wayward children, and yet is full of joy. Why would we have wanted to be like Him if He were only as happy as His least happy child? He has some pretty miserable contenders for that least happy position, and a lot of them, right? He is full of joy, or we would've had no desire to be like Him, or to receive what He offers.

01:07:10 Obviously, He's full of joy. I thought, "Well, how does He do that?" Well, He knows the end from the beginning, and He knows it's a happy ending. The plan is more generous than we sometimes remember or think about. God is so merciful. He is so generous, so munificent in His character.

01:07:33 Again, we've talked about knowing the character and attributes of God. We need to remind ourselves of how incredibly kind and generous the Father is. Everybody gets a happy ending, other than those who basically could have that, and then spit in God's eye, and reject it. Those are the sons of perdition. There are so few. We don't need to worry about them, but they do it with full knowledge and awareness, so you can't feel sorry for them.

- 01:08:00 All receive more than we deserve. For those who want it, we can have all that the Father offers us. We can be co-heirs with Christ. That blows my mind. I don't know how to contain that idea, that He can raise us to the stature of Christ Himself, our Savior and Redeemer, the Lamb of God. I mean, it's amazing how generous this plan is.
- 01:08:21 We suffer so much because we don't think of how merciful it is. We think that our kids will be eternally unhappy. No, they will not. Even the most rebellious of them will not be eternally unhappy.
- 01:08:34 Now it's not over till it's over. Boyd K. Packer gave a great speech many years ago called the Play and the Plan. It was back in 1995 at a CES Fireside. He talked about the plan being a three-act play, the pre-earth life, the first estate, the second estate being mortality, which continues until the end of the spirit world and the end of the millennium.
- 01:08:56 Again, Boyd K. Packer said, "Nobody walks out of a play at the end of the second act and thinks they know how it ends. Why are we trying to judge the final outcome of our children by the end of the second act, which doesn't even end until the end of the spirit world and the millennium?"
- 01:09:14 He's telling us, "Don't think you can second-guess exactly how things work out. You don't know yet. Trust in God's kindness and mercy." Then we have all these amazing statements. Boyd K. Packer does mention, "Remember, the line, 'And they all lived happily ever after,' is never written into the second act."
- 01:09:35 That's true, right? This line belongs in the third act where the mysteries are solved, and everything is put right. Let's not be precipitous and think that we know exactly how judgment is going to occur by the end of mortality.
- 01:09:51 These wonderful quotes from prophets that I want to share... Many people have heard this. "The prophet, Joseph Smith, declared, and he never taught a more comforting doctrine, that the eternal sealings of faithful parents and the divine promises made to them for valiant service in the cause of truth would save not only themselves, but likewise their posterity. Though some of the sheep may wander, the eye of the shepherd is upon them. Sooner or later, they will feel the tentacles of divine providence reaching out after them and drawing them back to the fold. Either in this life or the life to come, they will return. They will have to pay their debt to justice. They will suffer for their sins and may tread a thorny path. If it leads them at last,

like the penitent prodigal, to a loving and forgiving father's heart and home, the painful experience will not have been in vain. Pray for your careless and disobedient children. Hold onto them with your faith. Hope on, trust on, till you see the salvation of God." That's an Orson F. Whitney quote.

01:10:49 Brigham Young, "Let the father and mother who are members of this church and kingdom take a righteous course and strive with all their might never to do a wrong but to do good all their lives. If they have 1 child or 100 children, if they conduct themselves toward them as they should, binding them to the Lord by their faith and prayers, I care not where those children go. They are bound up to their parents by an everlasting tie. No power of earth or hell can separate them from their parents in eternity. They will return again to the fountain from whence they sprang."

01:11:20 Lorenzo Snow says something very similarly. "If you succeed in passing through these trials and afflictions and receive a resurrection, you will, by the power of the priesthood, work in labor as the Son of God has, until you get all your sons and daughters in the path of exaltation and glory. This is just as sure as that the sun rose this morning over yonder mountains. Therefore, mourn not because all your sons and daughters do not follow in the path that you have marked out to them or give heed to your counsels. Inasmuch as we succeed in securing eternal glory and stand as saviors and as kings and priests to our God, we will save our posterity."

01:11:55 Boyd K. Packer, "The measure of our success as parents will not rest solely on how our children turn out. That judgment would be just only if we could raise our families in a perfectly moral environment, and that is not now possible. It is not uncommon for responsible parents to lose one of their children, for a time, to influences over which they have no control. They agonize over rebellious sons or daughters. They are puzzled over why they are so helpless when they have tried so hard to do what they should. It is my conviction that those wicked influences one day will be overruled. We cannot overemphasize the value of temple marriage, the binding ties of the sealing ordinance, and the standards of worthiness required of them. When parents keep the covenants they have made at the altar of the temple, their children will be forever bound to them."

01:12:43 We have the endorsement of our prophet, Ezra Taft Benson, of this Nibley statement. "There comes a time when the general defilement of a society becomes so great that the rising generation is put under undue pressure and cannot be said to

have a fair choice between the way of light and the way of darkness."

- 01:13:04 I remember hearing that years ago, but I've remembered that. It makes so much sense that in Babylon, sometimes some children will be blinded and will not have a complete opportunity to exercise their agency with their eyes open. If we as parents are worthy and keep our covenants, there is a blessing and a power that comes to our posterity that we know very little of. We don't know the mechanics of it, but why would we bet against God?
- 01:13:31 That has been so motivating to me as a parent. In fact, when I went through the temple before I was married, those words stood out to me even then, before I had any children. I knew that that would commit me to even more motivation to live my covenants because it could bless my children. I am not going to limit God. He does honor agency.
- 01:13:52 Again, God doesn't give us all the answers yet, but He asks us to believe Him and that there will be joy. That's what Henry Eyring said in that great talk. This is April 2019, A Home Where the Spirit of the Lord Dwells. "Some have tried with full heart to establish a home and family in righteousness, yet it has not been granted. My promise to you is one that a member of the Quorum of 12 Apostles once made to me. I had said to him that because of choices some in our extended family had made, I doubted that we could be together in the world to come.
- 01:14:32 He said, As well as I can remember, you are worrying about the wrong problem. You just live worthy of the celestial kingdom, and the family arrangements will be more wonderful than you can imagine."
- 01:14:50 I believe that with all my heart, and I have believed that for a long time, which is why I noticed when Henry Eyring said that, and thought, "That is what I have been trying to testify of to parents that I work with who are in pain because of the rebellion of some of their children."
- 01:15:07 Trust God. We've been talking about that throughout this wonderful time with Daniel. We can as parents trust God when He says that our keeping of our covenants will be an outcome that is more wonderful than we can possibly imagine with our finite, limited, mortal brains. We can trust Him.

01:15:30 We cannot become bitter. We cannot fail in our faith because God is good. He is loving and merciful. It never faileth. His goodness never faileth. He wants us to be full of joy as He is, and we can start that right now if we trust in Him.

Hank Smith: 01:15:52 Wow. Lili, thank you. Oh my word. That was just absolutely wonderful.

Dr. Lili Anderson: 01:15:58 It's lots of fun to talk about these things.

Hank Smith: 01:16:01 Yeah, thank you for your passion, and your excitement, and your inspiration. It really is inspiring. I'm going to be a better parent.

Dr. Lili Anderson: 01:16:08 May we all keep climbing that mountain, little by little, line on line, precept on precept. God is patient. We can be patient too.

John Bytheway: 01:16:15 I think sometimes as parents, we recite Moses 1:39 to ourselves like this, "This is your job and your glory to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of your children." That's not what He said. He said, "This is my work and my glory." As we learned today from Daniel, "I am able to do my work."

Dr. Lili Anderson: 01:16:34 Is my arm shortened at all that it cannot redeem, or have I no power to deliver?

John Bytheway: 01:16:39 That's kind of a, phew, you got to help me with this one, and He will.

Hank Smith: 01:16:42 Mighty to save. We want to thank Dr. Lili Anderson for being with us today. What a joy. We'll have her back. We want to thank our executive producers, Steve and Shannon Sorensen, and our sponsors, David and Verla Sorensen. We hope all of you will join us next week. We've got another episode of followHIM.

01:17:04 We have an amazing production crew we want you to know about: David Perry, Lisa Spice, Jamie Nielsen, Will Stoughton, Krystal Roberts, and Ariel Cuadra. Thank you, to our amazing production team.

WHY DOES IT MATTER WHO MY FRIENDS ARE?



- Hank Smith: 00:05 Hello everyone. Welcome to another followHIM Favorites. My name is Hank Smith, I'm here with the just practically perfect in every way, John Bytheway.
- John Bytheway: 00:14 Will you stop that?
- Hank Smith: 00:17 If you've been following followHIM Favorites, this year, we take a single question from each week's lesson and talk about it. This week we are in the book of Daniel. And so John, I thought of a question right when I thought of Daniel. He has three friends in Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. Or their Babylonian names, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. He has three really good friends and he's a good friend to them. So my automatic question was, do friends matter? Do the people that I hang out with, do the people that I spend my time with, does it matter? What would you say to someone who is a little bit younger who says, "Come on, it doesn't matter who I hang out with. So what if they don't believe what I believe or they're trying to get me to do bad things? They're my friends." What would you say?
- John Bytheway: 01:03 Oh. Matters a lot. When I first got my driver's license, my friends taught me this. We'd drive along, we were walking home from high school, we'd drive along the road, roll down the window, "Hey, you want a ride?" And they'd say, "Yeah." And we'd say, "Call your mom, ha ha ha," and drive off, right?
- 01:21 I've always felt like the analogy of a driver and passengers is really good for friendship. If you get in somebody else's car, you're going where they're going. And sometimes it's like that with friends. You're either an influencer or you just get influenced. And if you're in the backseat, you don't have a lot of say. And it's really important to surround yourself with friends who are going where you're going. That's just so important. And I love the story that we all know of, "Men brought in a bed, a man who was taken with the palsy." It's in two or three of the gospels. I know it's in Luke 5, and it doesn't say much about the friends after that point, but here are friends who are determined to take this man to Christ. Literally take him to Christ. And when the room is so full of people, they can't do it,

they get this idea, "I know, let's go up on the roof, make a hole in the roof and lower him through the ceiling."

Hank Smith: 02:18

We are getting him in. Yeah.

John Bytheway: 02:20

You can imagine the friend at that point, "I think I feel better." But they do that because they're so determined to get him an audience with the Savior, which they do. And this amazing thing happens. Go read the whole thing in Luke 5. But you're going where your friends are going, and so that's why it is so important. Hank, do you remember Sister Susan Tanner?

Hank Smith: 02:40

I do.

John Bytheway: 02:41

She had this great talk about this survey of the young women in the church and, "What are some of the reasons you go to seminary? Friends. What are some of the reasons you don't go? Friends. What do you think about during the day? Friends. Is there ever a time when you don't go to Young Women's? Why is that? No friends?" It was for every answer was about friends. And that's why it's so important. I'll tell you a funny story. Years ago, the New Era magazine called me and they said, I was so flattered at first. They said they were doing an issue about friendship and they said, "We just have this article we want you to write and we just thought of you right off. And the title would be, Why Don't I Have Any Friends? And you just came to mind. You were the first one."

Hank Smith: 03:26

Thank you so much.

John Bytheway: 03:27

So they did publish it. I did write it, but they changed the title. I Have No Friends by John Bytheway. You can go read that sad story on your Gospel Library app if you want. But I think the reason friends are so important is you're going where they're going. And Daniel had good friends. And that's what we learned from this chapter.

Hank Smith: 03:50

Yep. Years ago I did a talk on CD called I Love My Friends, and because I'd heard that phrase so much from my seminary students. "I like my family, but I love my friends." And I thought, "I'm going to use that. Do you really love your friends? Because what do good friends do?" You've told me this before, John. A good friend is someone who will help you live the gospel. And I noticed in these chapters of Daniel that they do things as a group, that so often when they're around each other it's, "We are not going to do this. We are not going to do that."

04:20 For example, when they want them to break their word of wisdom, it says, "They decided they would not do it together." And then when King Nebuchadnezzar is going to throw the three into the fiery furnace, they say, "Our God whom we serve will deliver us out of thy hand. But if not, we will not serve thy God." There's we's and us' and they's and thee's. There's not a lot of I's and him's. They do things as a group. There's a strength in that. It's easier to live the gospel when you've got three or four people around you who are also living the gospel, who will sometimes even speak up for you. If you're at a party and someone says, "Here's some alcohol," and your friend steps between you and the alcohol and says, "Oh, I'm so sorry. We don't drink."

John Bytheway: 05:01 We don't do that.

Hank Smith: 05:03 Yep. It's not, "I don't do that." What about you, friend I've known since second grade, do you drink? No, we don't drink. I think it's absolutely crucial to say, if you truly love your friends, do you help them live the gospel, and do your friends help you live the gospel? It is so critical. I remember once hearing President Hinckley say, remember President Hinckley, John? That hand going up and down? He's speaking to seminary teachers. He said, "Most of all, tell them to choose good friends." I thought he'd say, "Most of all, tell them to choose to go to the temple," or, "Most of all, tell them to choose to read their scriptures." But he didn't. He said, "Most of all, tell them to choose good friends." And I hope that message is coming through loud and clear on this little followHIM Favorites. That who you choose as your friends matters more than you can possibly imagine to your future.

John Bytheway: 05:53 I think that's why we love the Book of Daniel, and I hope young people will too, because these are young people. These are young men that help each other. And I don't want to take credit for a statement that I didn't make, but I've repeated a lot. It was Elder Robert D. Hales who said, "A true friend makes it easier to live the gospel of Jesus Christ by being around him or her. A friend will never ask you to choose between their way and the Lord's way." And I just love that a true friend makes it easier to live the gospel, not harder. Makes it easier. Daniel and his friends, they had strength in numbers because they were good influence on each other. Love it.

Hank Smith: 06:31 And if you're sitting here going, "Well, my friends don't make it easier for me to live the gospel," we're not condemning them. We're not saying, "Well, you can never speak to them again," or, "You have to get rid of them entirely or they're going to

outer darkness." That's not what we're saying at all. But if you're in a situation where your friends make it harder for you to live the gospel, I would say you've got to get out of that situation and you've got to find a different group of friends who are going to make it easier for you to live the gospel. It's an absolute must that you've got to decide that maybe they're not bad people, but it's not a good situation for you, and you're going to have to change your situation in order to have a better future. The future that you want, the future that you deserve.

- John Bytheway: 07:10 Love it. There's a proverb, we talked about Proverbs. "He who walketh with wise men shall be wise, but a companion of fools will be destroyed." I heard somebody say once, I thought it was a fascinating statement, "You are the average of the five people you spend the most time with." I mean, chew on that one for a while. The movies you watch, the music you listen to, the things that you do. And that's why I like hanging out with you, Hank.
- Hank Smith: 07:36 Yep. That's why I like chatting with you. I always leave saying, "You know what, I'm going to live the gospel. John makes it easy to live the gospel."
- John Bytheway: 07:43 Right back at you.
- Hank Smith: 07:44 Thank you for joining us on followHIM Favorites. We hope you'll join us next week, but find us on our full podcast this week. We're in the Book of Daniel with Dr. Lili Anderson. She does some great things with this chapter you're not going to want to miss. And then come back here next week and join us for another followHIM Favorites.