



Studies in COURAGE from the Book of Daniel  
The Courage to Believe in the Church

June 9, 2013

Daniel 7:15-28

Let's be reminded of where we left off last week, Daniel saw a vision of four beasts, then a vision of God judging each beast, then of Christ:

<sup>13</sup> "I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him.

<sup>14</sup> And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.

- So here we are, and Daniel is seeing some troubling and confusing things, so what does he do? He asks someone what it means...

<sup>15</sup> "As for me, Daniel, my spirit within me was anxious, and the visions of my head alarmed me. <sup>16</sup> I approached one of those who stood there and asked him the truth concerning all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of the things. <sup>17</sup> These four great beasts are four kings who shall arise out of the earth. <sup>18</sup> But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, forever and ever."

<sup>19</sup> "Then I desired to know the truth about the fourth beast, which was different from all the rest, exceedingly terrifying, with its teeth of iron and claws of bronze, and which devoured and broke in pieces and stamped what was left with its feet, <sup>20</sup> and about the ten horns that were on its head, and the other horn that came up and before which three of them fell, the horn that had eyes and a mouth that spoke great things, and that seemed greater than its companions. <sup>21</sup> As I looked, this horn made war with the saints and prevailed over them, <sup>22</sup> until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given for the saints of the Most High, and the time came when the saints possessed the kingdom."

### THE BIG IDEA:

**The authority that Christ has been given, is now given to the church.**

- There are a lot of details in this chapter, and I would hate for us to miss the big, comforting, wonderful truth screaming out from within the text
- In the vision, The Ancient of Days, who sits on his throne sovereignly in control of the kings of world history, gives his ABSOLUTE authority of heaven and earth to the son of man... and after that, the kingdom established by the son of man is given to the saints!
- The authority and dominion goes from God, to Christ, to the people of Christ!

<sup>23</sup> “Thus he said: ‘As for the fourth beast, there shall be a fourth kingdom on earth, which shall be different from all the kingdoms, and it shall devour the whole earth, and trample it down, and break it to pieces.

<sup>24</sup> As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings shall arise, and another shall arise after them; he shall be different from the former ones, and shall put down three kings.

<sup>25</sup> He shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High,

and shall think to change the times and the law; and they shall be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time.

<sup>26</sup> But the court shall sit in judgment, and his dominion shall be taken away, to be consumed and destroyed to the end.

<sup>27</sup> And the kingdom and the dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven

shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High;

his kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.’

<sup>28</sup> “Here is the end of the matter. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts greatly alarmed me, and my color changed, but I kept the matter in my heart.”

## In an age of skepticism, we should dare to believe that the church:

### 1. is never to be separated from Christ.

Acts 9:4-5 - ...he heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?” <sup>5</sup> And he said, “Who are you, Lord?” And he said, “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.

- Saul could have easily argued this point, “I wasn’t persecuting you, I am persecuting your followers, I am defending Judaism, I am persecuting heretics” – but Jesus doesn’t give him that option, he entwines himself with the church, if it was true Saul was persecuting Christians (and it was) than it is true he was persecuting Christ.

### 2. ought to be biblical and organized.

There is a lot of backlash these days to the church because it is “organized religion”

- to be clear, YES the church is the body of Christ (the people)... but it is more than JUST that, it is the body, gathering together corporately to do together what they can’t on their own.
- To be considered “the church” we must exhibit the new testament characteristics that describe a church: a place where: elders are selected biblically (leadership structure), church membership AND discipline is used, the sacraments are received, the word is preached by one gifted to teach, converts are baptized, Christians are growing into maturity.

### 3. is the ordained means by which Christ’s kingdom grows on the earth.

**Matthew 28:18-20** - Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

- All authority has been given to the Son of Man... sound familiar? – with his authority he sends out HIS SAINTS... sound familiar?

**Daniel 7:27** - <sup>27</sup> And the kingdom and the dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High; his kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.'

- Christ came to establish HIS church... to entrust them to spread HIS kingdom throughout the earth... and the authority given to him by the Ancient of Days, displayed in his earthly ministry and culminating on the cross has been given to his people to carry out our mission.
- So let's dare to believe in the church... believe that God's purposes on the earth are carried out by his church... and let's dare to BE that church.