

Hillside Fellowship Church
April 18, 2021

Pastor Dave Tooker
Some More Tools for your Survival Kit
Daniel 2:1-49

[Worship]

Pastor Dave: And Father, thank you for that. That truth, that reality that you have been and you are and forever will be faithful, that you truly are sovereign over us. You're sovereign over all things. You're in control of who's in control. And so, I pray that you would give us that peace and that rest of knowing that you're working out all things.

Would you give us the peace to follow you, the rest to follow and relax knowing that you are good? And so today as we look at and read through Daniel 2, would you fill me with your truth, your goodness and your love for these people, that our hearts might be aligned with you recognizing you really are good? You've given us everything we need to know pertaining to life and godliness. And so would you allow those truths to sink in and transform us to look more like your Son Jesus Christ? It's in his name, I pray. Amen.

Welcome. I've met a number of first-timers. Really glad you're here. My name's Dave. This is Hillside Fellowship. I'm just going to use this as a foot rest.

[Chuckling.]

That's so much better.

[Laughter]

This is Hillside Fellowship. So glad you're here. If this is your first time, we believe Jesus changes everything. That's not just a tagline. That's truth. We read the Bible, read clear to the end and it ends up Jesus totally crushes it. He rocks it. And so we're looking forward to that. Until then, we just continue to proclaim that Jesus changes

everything.

He changed me. My name's Dave. I'm a recovering addict and alcoholic, saved by grace. So if he can save me, he can save anyone. There's hope for everybody. So I'm so glad you're here this morning.

We've been walking through the book of Daniel. And so, if you'll open up your Bibles, we're going to be in Daniel chapter 2 today. I'm going to read the first 13 verses. It's going to take about a minute, 57 seconds. So stick with me, because I know I only get you for about 27 seconds. So you're going to have to discipline yourself.

This is going to set up the whole context for the sermon today. So it's narrative. It's Old Testament. It's Daniel and this explains the story. So in Daniel chapter 2, God says, Daniel writes this: "Now in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams and his spirit was troubled and as sleep left him . . . " (Anybody been there? Couldn't sleep?). " . . . The king gave orders for the magicians and the conjurers and the sorcerers and the Chaldeans to tell the king his dreams.

So they came in and they stood before the king and the king said to him, 'I had a dream and my spirit is anxious to understand the dream.' Well then the Chaldeans spoke to the king and said in Aramaic, and said, 'Oh king, live forever. Tell the dream to your servants and we'll declare the interpretation to you.' Well the king replied to the Chaldeans, 'The command from me is firm. If you do not make known to me the dream and its interpretation, you'll be torn limb from limb, and your houses will be made a rubbish heap.

6 But if you declare the dream and its interpretation, you'll receive from me gifts and a reward and great honor. Therefore, declare to me the dream and its interpretation. Well, they answered a second time and said, 'Let the king tell the dream to his servants and we'll declare the interpretation.' And the king replied, 'I know for certain that you're bargaining for time. In as much as you have seen that the command from me is firm; that if you do not make the dream known to me, there's only one decree for you. For you have agreed together

to speak lying and corrupt words before me until the situation has changed. Therefore, tell me the dream that I may know that you can declare to me its interpretation.'

The Chaldeans answered the king and said, 'There is not a man on earth who could declare the matter for the king. In as much as no great king or ruler has ever asked anything like this of any magician, conjurer or Chaldean. Moreover, the thing that the king demands is difficult. There is no one else who could declare it to the king except gods, who's dwelling place is not with mortal flesh.'

Because of this, the king became indignant, very furious, and gave orders to destroy all the wise men of Babylon. So the decree went forth that the wise men should be slain and they looked for Daniel and his friends to kill them."

Let me give you a big theological picture. If you sat down and took 42 and a half hours and read straight through the Bible, one of the things you'd walk away with is this: That God gives incredible clarity for us. He tells us where we came from, where we're going, why we're here, what the problem in this world is, and what the solution is. Incredible clarity. This is why God would say, his word is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path. He gives incredible clarity.

Small theological picture. Sin always bring confusion, contention and conflict. Massive confusion. The world we live in is going to be trying to figure out for the next 50, 60, 70 years, man, why is anxiety on the rise? Why is the rate of suicide creeping down younger and younger into our children? Why this anxiety pandemic? Why all of this bad? Well sin brings confusion. I can tell you very simply from having experienced it.

When you tell a student or somebody in school, hey, you came from nowhere, you're a cosmic accident, and you're going nowhere, nihilism: when you're done you're done, there's nothing. And we can't really tell you any purpose that you have here, and the problem is typically other people. It's never anything you can control. It's other people or straws or plastic or -- that's the problem. The solution? We don't know. We'll throw some money at it. Five trillion here, six trillion

there. Maybe that'll solve the problem. Because spending money always makes things better. Amen?

[Chuckling.]

Don't say, amen.

[Laughter]

I caught some of you though. Sin brings massive confusion. If you're here and confused, I would love to sit down and say, man, look. Sin always brings confusion. Jesus Christ came, the Son of God, to be the way, the truth and the life. It's not that he makes life easier. In fact, following Jesus often makes it more difficult. But it does make it very clear.

You see, Jesus came into history to reveal a profound mystery to us. We can know God and have clarity even in this dark day. We're walking through Daniel. We started out the year in Proverbs. Proverbs is about wisdom. It gives us a pattern to wisdom. Daniel gives us a picture of how wisdom works in a wicked, dark day. You see, if you just give you the pattern and say, do these things, you're going to look out at the world around you. I took a survey last week. How many think things are going well in the world? Nobody raised their hand. I said, how many think things are wonky? Everybody raised their hand.

Daniel's going to give us a pattern and a picture to follow. I'm calling this *Waking up in Oz*. I said that last week and I don't think anyone else ever read the *Wizard of Oz*.

[Chuckling.]

And so, Dorothy wakes up and all of the rules had changed. That's a lot like what's happening in America. We wake up and all of a sudden, up is down, right is left, good and bad, bad is good. Everything's wonky. What I want to do for the next six weeks is just give you tools for your tool chest as you walk through this world. We're not the first ones to walk through post-modern, secular

humanist, moral relativism. Daniel was totally there and he crushed it. And I believe that as you practice these tools, as I practice these tools, we'll crush it as well. It is in no way game over just because maybe your party didn't win the election. It is in every way game on where Barna just came out and said, hey, guys, for the first time, there's fewer people following Jesus in America than ever.

For me that's like game on. That means I'm going to be surrounded by non-believers and that's really good news. We don't have to go across the seas anymore. We might just have to go across the street. And so, let me show you some more tools that you'll need. Remember last week? The tools? I gave you, perspective matters. Don't forget Daniel 1 and 2. Your perspective matters. God is in control of who's in control. No matter what's happening, God's going to use it. We just sang about it. Even what the enemy intends for evil, God somehow, he's a judo master. He uses the enemy's momentum against him and turns it to good. Imagine how frustrated the enemy must be.

Everything he does, God's like, watch this. Pfft. Switches it.

[Chuckling]

I would be frustrated. I'm sure the enemy is. That's probably where a lot of his evil comes from and he hasn't figured it out, because pride blinds you. Not only that, remember, people, community is not a luxury. It is a necessity. One of the things I've not done well at Hillside Fellowship, and we're beginning to shift and switch, is just taking time after we hear the word of God to respond. So we're actually going to sing more songs *after* the sermon than before. Because in a world where we run, run, run, and rush, I want you to rest and reflect. What has God said and how do I apply it so that we might apply it to community. Because community is not a luxury. It's a necessity.

And remember, he calls us to persevere. You don't follow Jesus because he makes it easier. You follow Jesus because he gives eternal life. So watch. I'm just going to give you three points in 19 minutes. We're going to have a lot of fun.

One, I'm going to walk you through and show you the tool of hopefulness. We've gotta be a hopeful people in a hopeless world. I'm going to show you a little bit about that tool. Show you where it shows up in Daniel's life. We're going to be a helpful people in a harmful world and we're go to be a humble people in a haughty world. And I'll show you in the life of Daniel. He just shows up and crushes it and we can crush it, too, as we abide in Christ and let him live through us.

Let me show you. 2:1-18. I already gave you the overview. King had a dream, troubled him. He calls in the conjurers, the sorcerers, the magicians and the Chaldeans. Chaldeans were just master astrologers. Chaldean numerology. So he calls in all of the bad dudes in the kingdom. They come in -- I want to show you what happens here. None of them could figure out the dream. Did you see what happened at the end? The king got ticked off and was like, kill everybody! Well, what did Daniel do wrong? What did Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego do wrong here?

Nothing. They weren't even there. Have you ever noticed, oftentimes, it's other other people's sin you get caught in the backwash and you get judged because of it? That's not a new concept. So Daniel is totally there. It's not even his fault, but the king is like, every conjurer, magician, magi and wise man has to die. Watch what Daniel does. I want you to know, the tool I want to give you today and hopefulness. Watch Daniel's response. He just found out he's about to die.

Verse 17-18. "So when Daniel found out he was about to die, Daniel went to his house and informed his friends; Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah about the matter." So he goes home to his roommates and says, hey, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, we're about to die. And probably not in a pleasant way. We're going to get torn limb from limb and they're going knock our apartment down. It's going to be a rubbish heap, which for the dudes, it probably already was.

[Laughter]

18. Now watch this. Here's their response. These four dudes. "He informed them about the matter so that they might request compassion from the God of heaven concerning this mystery so that Daniel and his friends would not be destroyed with the rest of the wisemen in Babylon."

First tool you're going to need -- things are going to proceed from bad to worse. This is just historically true. Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Medo Persia, Greece, Rome. You go through history. Same in America. Paul tells us, realize this. In the last day, difficult times are going to come. Things are going to proceed from bad to worse. Doesn't matter how dark it is, we are going to be a hopeful people. Totally hopeful people.

And now, here's why. I'll show you. Hope is not a flimsy emotion. I've told you this before. Hope is not optimism. Hope is not wishful thinking. Hope is not positive thinking. Hope is not disconnecting your brain from what's really going on in the world. The world's a mess. We still have to deal with reality. Bad things happen. Life changes in a day. So hope isn't positive, wishful thinking. Hope is the internal, settled conviction and confidence that Christ Jesus has crushed it, is crushing it, and will crush it. And we can trust because he promised he would show up. He showed up. He conquered death. He rose from the dead and he said he's coming back. Hope is a mathematical certainty.

It says, I know my king is coming back. He's going to take everything bad and sad and make it untrue for all eternity. So then you go to him and say, would you fill me with hope? Because things look really dark right now. They're about to tear me limb from limb. And that was not on my five year plan of good things to happen.

[Chuckling]

So would you help me? You see, hope knows a secret that most don't know. Hope knows that God has always looked like he's losing right up to the point he wins. Always. I don't know why he rolls like that, but it is how he rolls. Like, he's losing, he's losing, he's losing. The sea splits. They walk through and the enemy dies and we're like,

he won. How did he do that? I don't know. We had never seen the sea split. And then it just happened.

He's losing, he's losing, he's losing. The ground opens up, swallows the enemies and they're like, how did he do that? I don't know. He's losing, he's losing, he's losing, he's crucified, he's in the grave, he's lost. And then he rises again and wins. Hope knows God always looks like he's losing right up to the second that he wins.

Now, here's the beauty of it. Here's what I want you to see. One of the greatest tools is hope. It's like hydration. When you're working in Texas, you need hydration. So I got one of the tools. It doesn't really fit in the toolbox, but I got you a cup, because you're gonna need the tool of hopeful hydration in order to make it through the really difficult days that we're walking into.

You see, here's what you can know. No matter how bad it gets, here's what Daniel knew. He went to God and said, would you help me? I need help. Here's how your God always works. Anybody ever seen a cup like this, a glass like this? You know what this is called? It's odd. It's weird, isn't it? Nobody knows? Hope exists because it understands God knows kintsugi. It's a word. You can google it on your Google machine. Kintsugi. It's the Japanese art of kintsugi.

Here's what God does. It's amazing. God takes busted up, broken situations and he binds them up and makes them beautiful. You see, the art of kintsugi is, the Japanese would take a broken tea glass, like this. Things that Americans would typically throw away. Well, it's broken and it only cost two-fifty on Amazon. I'll just buy another one. Throw it away.

The Japanese take it and make an amalgam, a glue, and they put gold in that glue. And then they put it back together like this. So they'll take something broken and because of the way they bind it up, do you know that a broken kintsugi glass that has been put back together is actually worth more after it's been broken and put back together? This cup would only have cost me two-fifty on Amazon, but because it's kintsugi; 48 bucks. You bought it so . . .

[Laughter]

Sorry. I'm sorry. That's truth. It was with church funds.

[Laughter]

It's a line item I had for illustrations.

[Chuckling]

Here's the hope that I want you to know and have. It will hydrate your souls. You look around and like, this is horrible. Daniel looks. It's horrible. The whole thing is broken. It's dark out there. Nothing seems right. Jesus loves to take broken things, and because how he binds them back up, they're actually more valuable. You see, you were purchased not with gold and silver or perishable things, but with the blood of Jesus Christ. You are a piece of kintsugi. You are his artwork of beauty and your brokenness that you bring to him actually makes you more valuable, because his blood binds you up and makes you a beautiful piece of art that he says, look, it was broken and worthless before, but because of my blood that's been applied, ah, there's so much hope.

You bring ashes to him. That's all we bring. None of us are awesome. We all bring our brokenness and our ashes. What does he do? Beautifully binds it up. Makes it a piece of art. You see, you can be incredibly hopeful, and it will hydrate your soul in this dry world. You can know as you bring your brokenness and your ashes to Jesus, he'll bind you up and you will be a thing of beauty. You will be a witness or a testimony to what he can do in a broken life.

So number one, the tool you're going to need? A lot of hopefulness. A lot of helpfulness. Because if not, you're going to trend into helpless, hopelessness and you'll join the world in just being angry and bitter, upset, resentful.

Now, here's what helpfulness turns into. Now watch this. This is going to blow your mind. I got 11 minutes. Watch what happens next. It may not blow your mind. Blew my mind. Watch what

happens next. So they pray filled with hope. God, would you give compassion here? We don't want to be torn limb from limb. Would rather not have the house made a rubbish heap.

Verse 19. Look in your Bibles. "Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. Daniel blessed the God of heaven." So the mystery was revealed. Now watch what Daniel does. Verse 24. You're not going to believe this but it's true. "Therefore, Daniel went into Arioch. That's the guy the king appointed to kill everybody. It was the man the king appointed to destroy the wisemen of Babylon. He went and spoke to him as follows: He said -- watch this -- do not destroy who? Say it with your outdoor Texan voice. I know you can do better than that.

[Chuckling]

Do not destroy . . .

Congregation: The wisemen of Babylon.

Pastor Dave: A little janky, but I'll give you grace. It's the 9am service. And notice, it's in the emphatic. There's an actual --

Member: Exclamation point.

Pastor Dave: . . . exclamation point. Thanks, Lee. Don't destroy the wisemen of Babylon! Now when I'm reading through Daniel, each time I read through, this is not what I expect. What I expect to hear is, hey, king. I know the dream because I, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego are super duper awesome. Kill the bad guys. Did you hear who the wiseguys of Babylon were? Read back through chapter 2. Chapter 2, verse 2. Watch this.

Then the king gave orders to call the magicians -- these are the witches and warlocks -- the conjurers -- these deal with the dead -- the sorcerers and the Chaldeans -- the master astrologers. These are bad, bad dudes. All of these dudes are forbidden in the Old Testament during Daniel's time. You got to imagine Sauron and Cruella Daville get together and have a litter of Sith Lords. Like the

red ones with the -- and Darth Vader.

[Chuckling]

You guys get it. These are super bad guys. What does Daniel do? He shows up and says, don't kill them. Not what I expect. You see, most of us grew up with a duality, bipolarity. There's good guys and bad guys. We typically define the good guys and bad guys through political parties and say, they need to be defeated. Do away with that party or the other party. So we fight amongst each other because we're the good guys and they're the bad guys. That's just binary thought.

What the Bible says is actually we're all bad guys and Jesus was the good guy. I don't know if you guys have ever read the Bible, but not one of us is the hero. Nobody here. Nobody in any church anywhere in the world today. We're not good guys. There's none righteous, no not . . .

Congregation: ... [indistinct] ...

Pastor Dave: Okay. Some of you read it. That's good.

[Chuckling]

And so Daniel shows up and he's like, w- w- w- wait. Don't kill 'em. I want to walk you through the bad guys' day. They go in. The king says, interpret the dream. Give me the dream and interpret the dream. You heard them arguing back and forth with the king. They couldn't do it. Then these guys go home. Imagine their conversations with their wives. They go home. Hey, Sweetie. How was your day?

Not good. Probably by tomorrow I'm going to be torn limb from limb.

Now for some of the wives, that's probably good news.

[Laughter]

And you know what I'm talking about. They're like, ho, it's about time.

[Laughter]

Because they were bad guys. But then the husband would have said, and they're going to make your nest a rubbish heap. And then the wives will be like, [higher voice] what are we going to do!? It's my nest!! All my pictures! Our photo albums!

Like they're gathering up stuff. They didn't have photo albums back then. It wasn't invented. But they're gathering up their little chalk drawings of their kids.

[Laughter]

I mean, it's just a really tough day. Really tough day. Now imagine their heart's position towards Daniel when Daniel goes and stands before the king and says, don't kill them. Imagine the huge massive autobahn of a bridge that was built between Daniel and his God and these magicians and conjurers and sorcerers.

You see, we're to be a helpful people. Christians are in this world to be a helpful people. In fact, if there was a tool, we are going to be like protective eyewear. Like, in a world that can't see, perceive or understand the gospel. I got double glasses on.

[Chuckling]

In a world that cannot see, perceive or understand the good news of Jesus Christ, we show up as a protective shield. You see, that's not what most of us grew up with. We are like, they're the bad guys. Do away with them. And I get it. I don't have time for this. I understand the nation is in a period of grief and all of us are at different stages in that grieving process. Denial. We'll win next time. We'll get the next one. It'll all be okay.

Anger. I'm buying more guns. I get it. We're all in the grieving process watching our country morph into post-modern, moral relativism. But if you don't understand that we are here to be salt and

light, to be protection to help them see, perceive and understand the gospel, then you don't understand the gospel at all. You see, this is what Jesus did for us. He came to protect us, to bear the weight of sin.

We've thought for decades, you know what? If we just preach the gospel, people will understand it. The gospel is a lot like Blue Bell. You're all from Texas. You'll get this. If I was explaining -- we've got thousands of people watching online -- if I was explaining to somebody in New York or DC or California or Oregon, if I were describing the creaminess of Blue Bell and the texture of Blue Bell and the taste of Blue Bell, they would be like, well, it's ice cream. Ice cream's ice cream.

And as Texans, we're like, no. Ice cream and not ice cream. I'm talking about ice cream that's so good that when there's a listeriosis outbreak . . .

[Chuckling]

This is 2015. The president of Blue Bell just got indicted for covering it up. And Texans are like, it doesn't really matter. It's so . . .

[Laughter]

Genuinely. I was in H-E-B when they removed all Blue Bell from the aisles and there were people lined up staring at empty . . .

[Chuckling]

. . . and they asked the worker, where's the Blue Bell. And the worker said, I don't know if you've heard. There's listeriosis, so we've removed it all. People have died. And the lady said, only three.

[Laughter]

That's real. You see, that is ice cream so good that it can't just be explained. It has to be experienced. And when these magicians and sorcerers, when these magic workers, these demon worshippers

experienced the beauty of being loved through Daniel saying do not kill them, it changed everything. And I would tell you, we're not just to be a helpful people. We're to be a helpful people. Wherever you are, you are that -- not just that explanation, but -- the experience of the gospel. This is just what Aristotle said. He said it. It's so beautiful.

We ask, why does the church not have more impact in our culture? It's really tough to have impact when there's no contact with the lost. And we've built bunkers and barriers to protect yourself. There's not going to be any impact if there's no contact. This is why Aristotle, on his work in Rhetoric. *The Art of Persuasion* is what it's called. 147 pages. You can read it quickly. He said, in order for there to be persuasion, which is different than argumentation, in order for there to be persuasion, there has to be the ethic of the life that's seen; the character of the person. The person that you're hoping to ... [indistinct] ... your character is different. There has to be pathos. They have to know you're compassionate about them.

That's what Daniel said. Don't kill them. And then there has to be a logic. The logos. Ethos, pathos, and logos. The content has to be there. The character, the compassion and the content. Look at Christ. That brings about life change. Under this, I would just write, the lost are not the problem. They're kind of the point. So when I have you come in and say, man, we just got to defeat this party or that party, put them down, destroy them, I'm just going to remind you. The lost aren't really the problem. They are the point. That's kind of why we're here, is it not?

Do you not remember when you you're lost? Do you not remember when you were trapped in darkness, held captive -- 2 Timothy chapter 2, verse 24, 25, 26, the Lord's bondservant must not be quarrelsome, argumentative. He's gotta be gentle. Patient when wronged. He goes on to say, the lost aren't our enemy. They're actually held captive by our enemy in order to do his will. You see, we've gotta have a perspective shift. When we're around the lost, they're not the enemy. They're not the problem. They are the point.

Now last minute, watch where we'll go from here. Verse 26 through 30. Not only is one of the big tools being hopeful, helpful, but we

gotta be humble. Watch what comes next. Watch Daniel's response. Daniel sings and celebrates and worships God because God gave him the dream and the interpretation. The king calls him in. Verse 26, 27, 28, 29 and 30. You've gotta see Daniel's response.

The king said to Daniel, who's name was Belteshazzar, are you able to make known to me the dream which I've seen and its interpretation. Verse 27, Daniel answered before the king and said, as for the mystery about which the king is inquired, neither wisemen, conjurers, magicians, nor diviners are able to declare it to the king. This is an impossible task, king. Verse 28. However, there is a God in heaven. Isn't that amazing? Nobody can do this. It's impossible, king.

However, there is a God in heaven, who reveals mysteries. And he has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will take place in the latter days. This was your dream and the visions in your mind while you were on your bed. Verse 29. As for you oh, king, while on your bed, your thoughts turned to what would take place in the future and he who reveals mysteries has made known to you what will take place. But as for me, verse 30, this mystery has not been revealed to me for any wisdom residing in me more than in any other living man.

You get what Daniel says here? King, there's a God in heaven. He gave me the mystery. Not because I'm anything special. No human being is the super hero. Jesus is the super hero. That's what Daniel is about to tell him. I don't have time, but if you go and draw a line over to verse 44 and 45, he says, what you need to know is there's a king coming. It's Jesus Christ and he's going to reign forever and ever and ever. He says, your dream was about Persia, Medo Persia, Persia, Greece, Rome being crushed, fallen. But there's a king and a kingdom coming that'll never, ever fail. It'll be an everlasting kingdom.

You see, we live in a haughty world. It's all about self. Look at me. Think about me. Talk about me. We're in a world that competes for attention. We all want to make it all about ourselves. In a haughty world, we are going to be a humble people. What this means? It means there's nothing special in me and at the same time, Christ

lives in me. So I'm profoundly special. I'm broken. But because of how he bound me up through his blood, I'm incredibly blessed. And therefore, we walk in humility.

You understand? We're just tools. There's nothing special about the tool. How many of you have tool kits, sewing kits at home? You've got tools that you use. You know there's nothing special about your tools. The special part is when the craftsman comes and grabs the tool and decides to use it. The tool is just a tool. The thing of the tool is, it's just supposed to be available. How many of you've gone to look for tools and the tool isn't there?

[Laughter and groaning]

Sorry, dad.

[Laughter]

That's a stuck point. We're working through it relationally. I spent most Saturdays growing up, he'd be like, where are my screwdrivers? And all three of us boys would be like, I don't know.

[Laughter]

But I knew I used the screwdriver as a nail out in the mud. I would just pound it in. Dad would be like, go find all my screwdrivers. I didn't have a metal detector. Do you how hard it is to find 30 screwdrivers that you pounded into the mud? Anyway. I don't know if it's the same for ladies. Maybe it's your bath bomb. Your kid used it for sidewalk chalk. Totally frustrating.

[Chuckling]

The thing about the tool is it just needs to be available. And you know this. If you go looking for your tool and it's not there -- you see? It takes different tools for different tasks. Not every tool is used for every task. This is a huge point. And if you don't get this, you're going to be frustrated, because you'll be sitting there saying, I don't seem to be used by God much. He's not using me for much. I see

him use other people. I don't seem to get used. I'm going to tell you, he uses different tools for different tasks. What he asks of you is just be available.

He used Daniel for this. Not anybody else. Just Daniel. What did he want from Daniel? Just be available. And some of you are like, I don't know how my tool would ever be used. There's some weird tools, right?

[Laughter]

If you went through my tool chest -- I just grabbed some of my tools at home -- one of the weird tools you'd find is this. It's called coyote urine.

[Laughter]

If you came to my house, you'd be like, dude. Why do you have coyote urine? And I would say, well, number one, it's 99% pure and it's awesome.

[Chuckling]

Why would I *not* have it? They sell it at Home Depot. If you didn't need it, why would they have it at Home Depot? Right, Johnny?

[Laughter]

And they sell it by the gallon. I thought I was doing well just to grab the little one. And if my neighbor ever comes over and says, hey, do you have any coyote urine, I will say, yes. But there are some weird tools. You go through your toolbox. There's some weird tools. God uses different tools for different tasks. What he asks of you is just to be available. If it doesn't appear to you that he's using you right now, it doesn't mean you're outside of his will. It doesn't mean that God doesn't see you or know about you or care about you. It literally takes different tools to accomplish different tasks. What he asks of you is just to be available. Follow him. Do what he says when he says it, where he says it.

I can guarantee you as you wake up in the morning and say, I'm here, if you want to use me today, I'm available. When the time is right, you'll see it. Just like Daniel. He'll say, man, it's time to be used. God will show up. He'll do it. You see, under this one, I would write, you're not an accident. You are on assignment. You may not understand the assignment. You may not get it. I'm sure Daniel didn't. His family was killed. He was carried off into captivity. But what you're going to see is over and over and over, king after king after king, Daniel was a weird tool but he was just available.

And he impacted kings and kingdoms. Not because there was anything special in him. He was just a tool. But he was available to be used by the craftsman. I'm out to time. I'll end with this. If you don't understand, I will tell you, this is just the gospel. If you don't understand this, it's just the gospel. God came and he met your brokenness and he bound it up with beauty. The blood of Christ. Kintsugi.

It is what Jesus gave to you and it is what he's asked you to give to others. Grace. When people come with their brokenness, you nod and say, I know one that can kintsugi the heck out of that junk. It's what Jesus does. I didn't understand it the first time I heard it. But it is what Jesus does and it is what he's given to you. He's incredibly helpful. You see, you didn't know how to dig out of the pit of sin. So Jesus jumped into the pit and gave his life for you. Incredibly helpful. He, in fact, stood in front of the wrath of God. He bore the wrath so that you might receive the gift of righteousness by grace through faith.

Incredibly humble. You see, Jesus said, I do nothing of my own accord. Only what I see the Father doing. I only say what the Father says. Incredibly humble. If you go and do likewise, I can guarantee you, you will be wise in a world that's gone wacky. Let's pray.

Father God, thank you so much for the time this morning just to look at simple truths from your word. And I pray, even in the silliness of just looking at tools and cups, I pray that you'd give our heart deep rest, knowing that you're at work, that you do things we can never

imagine and you do it for your glory. And so, when we face a world that truly is, it seems to be going downhill fast and faster every day, would you give us rest? Would you give us peace knowing that you're in control of who's in control?

As we rest in that, would you allow us to love one another fervently from the heart knowing that community is not a luxury? It's a necessity. Would you help us to persevere and be a hopeful, helpful, humble people that bring many people to Christ? I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.



[End]