



CELL GROUP MATERIAL

13 SEPTEMBER 2026

13 SEPTEMBER SERMON

Raising Winners: Still Standing

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Raising Winners: Still Standing | Based on Daniel 5

Overview

The sermon explores Daniel 5 and what it means to remain faithful when cultures shift, leaders change, and circumstances grow difficult. Daniel's "excellent spirit" was not a product of his environment. It was the result of deep consecration, courageous integrity, and an unwavering commitment to honour God above all else.

Key Takeaways

1. **Consecration outlasts culture.** What God sets apart for His purposes does not lose its value simply because the surrounding culture and times ignore or mock it. We are called to remain holy even when holiness is unpopular.
 2. **An excellent spirit is recognizable.** Daniel's wisdom, humility, courage, and consistency were so evident that even those outside his faith community knew where to find help in a crisis. Our character should speak before we do.
 3. **Integrity is non-negotiable.** Daniel refused the king's gifts before giving the interpretation. He would not allow reward to compromise the truth. Some things are not for sale.
 4. **Learned lessons are cheaper than lived ones.** God places examples before us so we do not have to pay full price for every lesson. A teachable heart looks at the experiences of others and adjusts accordingly.
 5. **Faithful endurance outlasts every kingdom.** Babylon fell, but Daniel was still standing. Faithfulness to God is not dependent on which administration, season, or circumstance surrounds us.
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Opening Question

Think of someone in your life, past or present, who you would describe as having a genuinely excellent character. What was it about them that stood out to you?

Discussion Questions

Section 1: When Culture or all around them compromise, winners remain consecrated

Daniel 5:1-4

1. Belshazzar deliberately used the temple vessels for a purpose they were never meant for. In what ways does today's culture pressure us to use what God has set apart, whether our time, bodies, gifts, or relationships, for purposes that dishonour Him?
 2. The sermon drew a distinction between asking "Can I get away with this?" and asking "Does this honour God?" How does the question we ask shape the decisions we make? Which question do you find yourself asking more often?
 3. What does it mean practically for you to live as someone who is "consecrated" or set apart for God's purposes in your everyday environment?
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Section 2: When crisis comes, winners bring clarity

Daniel 5:10-12

4. The queen described Daniel as someone with light, understanding, wisdom, and the ability to untie difficult knots. How does a person develop that kind of reputation? What habits or disciplines do you think contributed to Daniel being that person?
 5. Have you ever been in a situation where God used you, or someone else, to bring calm, direction, or hope when others were overwhelmed? What did that look like?
 6. Is there someone in your life right now who is in a season of crisis or confusion? What would it look like for you to be a source of clarity and hope for that person this week?
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Section 3: Winners cannot be bought

Daniel 5:13-17

7. Daniel told the king to keep his gifts and give his reward to another. He was willing to speak the truth without needing anything in return. What are the things in your

life, approval, status, comfort, financial reward, that most tempt you to soften or withhold the truth?

8. The sermon said, "If you desperately need somebody's approval, then that approval controls you." Do you agree with that? How have you seen this play out in your own life or in the lives of people around you?
 9. How do you distinguish between a blessing that comes from God and something that is being used to pull you away from Him?
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Section 4: Learning from others' lessons

Daniel 5:18-23

10. Daniel reminded Belshazzar that he had access to his grandfather's story and still refused to learn from it. The sermon pointed out that experience is one of the most expensive teachers. What is a lesson you have learned by watching someone else that spared you from a painful experience?
 11. What makes it difficult to receive correction or warning from Scripture or from other people? What conditions help you remain teachable?
 12. Is there a lesson God has been trying to teach you through the circumstances or people around you that you have been slow to receive? What would it take to open your heart to that lesson?
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Section 5: Still standing when kingdoms fall

Daniel 5:29-31, Daniel 6:1-3

13. Babylon fell, but Daniel was still standing and still excellent under the new administration. What do you think sustained Daniel through decades of changing circumstances, shifting leadership, and seasons of being overlooked or forgotten?
14. The sermon asked several honest questions: Can you still worship God when people disappoint you? Can you still trust Him when you are on the back burner? Can you still serve when others seem to do it better than you? Which of those questions hits closest to home for you right now?

15. What does faithfulness look like in your current season of life? What specific challenge to your faithfulness are you facing, and what would it look like to remain standing through it?
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Practical Applications

Choose one or more of the following to put into practice before your next gathering.

- **Consecration audit.** Identify one area of your life where cultural pressure has gradually moved you away from what God has called you to. Take one concrete step this week to realign that area with His purposes.
 - **Develop your excellent spirit.** Daniel's reputation was built over time through consistency. Identify one discipline, whether prayer, Scripture reading, serving others, or practicing integrity at work or school, that you will commit to this week as a step toward developing that kind of character.
 - **Speak truth with gentleness.** The sermon reminded us that how we say things matters as much as what we say. Identify someone in your life who needs to hear an honest and loving word. Pray for wisdom and courage, and take one step toward that conversation.
 - **Intercede for a Belshazzar.** Think of someone in your life who is moving in a direction that concerns you spiritually. Commit to praying specifically for that person every day this week before approaching them with any words.
 - **Examine your approval needs.** Reflect honestly on whose approval you are most tempted to seek. Bring that need before God in prayer and ask Him to help you find your security in His approval alone.
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Closing Reflection

The sermon closed with this challenge: winning is not just standing one time. It is the willingness to continue standing. Daniel's excellent spirit was not a flash of youthful zeal. It was a lifelong posture of consecration, humility, courage, and faithfulness to God regardless of what was happening around him.

As you close your time together, ask each person to answer this question:

What is one thing from this session that you want to carry with you into the coming week?

Closing Prayer

Close by praying together as a group. Ask God to cultivate an excellent spirit in each person present. Pray for those who are in seasons of being overlooked or forgotten. Pray for courage to speak truth, refuse compromise, and remain faithful through every changing season. Invite the Holy Spirit to do what only He can do in each heart.