



I WILL
STAND

Daniel was able to stand. Everything about his environment, culture, and circumstances screamed for him to sit down... to conform... to sell-out. But he didn't. Despite insurmountable pressure, he declared with conviction "I Will Stand." Now, his story... his example... and his life are both compelling and convicting for us today.

In a world that is in such desperate need to see God... to hear God... to know God, how might we live as tangible expressions of who God is, today? Rather than being known for what we stand against, how might we help others see how amazing God is by our ability to say "I Will Stand."

-MICHAEL DAVIS

USING THIS GUIDE:

Group Leader Instructions: In preparation for each study, take a few moments to read through the instructions below.

BEFORE THE GROUP MEETING:

1. Spend some time in prayer before your group.
2. As you prepare for the study, read over the questions and think through how answering them for yourself could help you better walk with God.
3. Then, try developing two to three practical steps that would help members of your group also walk better with God. Avoid the temptation to simply recount information, but thoughtfully arm your group members with something tangible that they can do throughout the week.
4. In the closing moments of your preparation, ask the Lord to move mightily in your home or group setting. Without the Holy Spirit, we can do nothing, and we are utterly dependent upon Him showing up!

DURING THE GROUP MEETING:

1. Begin with prayer. Ask for the Spirit to be present during the group.
2. Attempt to summarize this week's message, in a few, succinct, thoughts.
(See summary below for an example)
3. Assign readers to read various Scripture texts (When applicable).
4. Walk your group through the discussion questions. (Don't feel like you have to cover every question. Some questions will naturally be more relevant to your group than others, and will naturally produce more fruitful discussion. Be sensitive to the flow of conversation and either redirect or dwell longer upon a topic when it is necessary).
5. In response to questions, share stories and personal examples of how this has played out in your life. What did you learn? How did it help you walk with God? What fresh stories of God's power, love, mercy, or grace do you now have because you trusted Him?
6. Draw others out to share their own personal stories. What did they learn? What would life look like if they were able to live out this week's truth consistently?
7. End in a time of prayer, thanking God for the truths that He has revealed, and for the people that He has brought to your group.

SERMON SUMMARY: WEEK 6: I WILL STAND IN HUMILITY

Series Purpose: Anyone can stand AGAINST something. In fact, many people see Christians as people who literally stand against everything! But, our hope in this series is not that people would see what we stand against, but to see whom we are standing FOR! Our hope is that God would use us to do immeasurably more in this land that He has called us to stand in. That when we stand up others would see the God that we are standing for.

This Week's Summary: In today's sermon, we shift to an entirely new scene in the book of Daniel where Daniel is not longer a young man and Nebuchadnezzar is no longer on the throne, but has been succeeded by Belshazzar, who was likely his grandson. Like his grandfather, Belshazzar knew some things about God. But, unlike Nebuchadnezzar, who repented, Belshazzar did not allow the things he was learning about God to shape the entirety of his person and character, so that his Kingdom was violently taken from him.

Today, we want to consider the question: how should what we know about God shape everything about us? All of us know something about God, even if that knowledge is new or limited. But, regardless of how much we know about Him all of us have a responsibility to let that information be shaping us and conforming us into the men or women God is calling us to be. Again, the question we need to sit with it this: how should what we know about God begin shaping everything about who we are?

The first way is that we need to stand in a posture of humility, since there is only one God. King Belshazzar knew some things about God, but since he refused to stand in humility towards God and since he used God's sacred things to mock Him, he was humbled and brought down low. And, this teaches us that God will humble all people so that all people will see that He alone is God. This also teaches us that we must use all the things God declares sacred to honor Him, which most of all means us. You see, if we are in Christ then He has declared us sacred, so honor God with all of your bodies, souls, and minds.

Second, we can begin standing in His Righteousness, for God is a gracious God. This

means that because of what Jesus Christ has done, we can now stand. When the scales of judgment were tipped against us, Jesus took upon Himself the judgment of God that we deserved and gave us infinite blessings we could never earn. And what we must wrestle with today is whose work are we resting in, Jesus' or ours?

Finally, the third way our knowledge of God shapes who we are happens when we stand faithful to God, since God is ALWAYS faithful to us! You see, in a world where human beings always let one another down, we serve a God who is always faithful and whose love is consistently and perfectly for our good. This not only allows us to rest, but it also allows us to be faithful to God where we are standing, even if we do not love the places we are called to stand. And when we do this well, God will use our faithfulness to show men and women who do not yet have faith, what it looks like to stand for God..

HOW IS WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT GOD SHAPING WHO WE ARE TODAY?

QUOTES TO CONSIDER:

"He offers us a model for not only surviving but actually thriving in the midst of a godless environment. He found a way, in a culture far more wicked than anything we face, to glorify and serve God with such integrity and power that kings, peasants, and an entire nation turned to acknowledge the splendor of the living God."

- LARRY OSBORNE

"Every Christian has a choice between being humble or being humbled."

- CHARLES SPURGEON

"You exist forever. You and God are both in the universe to stay—either as friends on His terms, or enemies. Which it will be is proven in this life. And this life is a vapor. Two seconds, and we will be gone."

- JOHN PIPER

VERSES FOR REFLECTION:

Daniel 5:22: "You knew all this, yet you have not humbled yourself."

Isaiah 49:11: "I will not let my reputation be tarnished, and I will not share my glory with idols!"

Daniel 5:6: "His knees knocked together in fear and his legs gave way beneath him."

1 Corinthians 6:19-20: "Don't you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body."

Colossians 3:17: "And whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through him to God the Father."

Daniel 5:30: "That very night Belshazzar, the Babylonian king, was killed."

Romans 3:23-25: "For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard. Yet God, with undeserved kindness, declares that we are righteous. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins. For God presented Jesus as the sacrifice for sin. People are made right with God when they believe that Jesus sacrificed his life, shedding his blood."

Daniel 5:13: So Daniel was brought in before the king. The king asked him, "Are you Daniel, one of the exiles brought from Judah by my predecessor, King Nebuchadnezzar?"

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. How should what we know about God shape everything about us?
2. What are some areas of your life that need to be reshaped in light of what you know about God?
3. What are some areas where God has already been reshaping you?
4. What do you think it means to use the things God has declared sacred to honor Him? How did Belshazzar miss this? How can we honor the things God has considered sacred?
5. What are some of the things in your life (Michael called these "cups") that God might be calling you to lay down in order to honor Him?
6. Michael said: God uses faithful people to help people without faith to see Him! Who are some people that you want to see God? How can you begin living out your life in such a way that they would see God?

POSSIBLE PRAYER TOPICS:

- Prayers for God to give us humility, righteousness, and faithfulness.
- Prayers for the people in our lives who still need to hear from God.
- Prayers for wisdom in our interactions with people who are far from God.

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All Scripture quotations from the NLT
Tyndale House Publishers,
Carol Stream, IL, 2013.