

Maple Springs Baptist Church

Series: Stand

Week 1: Stand Out

If you take a STAND for the right things in the right ways at the right time, for the right reason it can change course & direction of your life.

The flip side is also true: Compromise on the wrong things at the wrong times it can cost you way more than you can even imagine.

So, how do we take a stand for the things that matter most?

King Nebuchadnezzar (Babylon) destroys Jerusalem.

He destroys the Temple and to humiliate God's people he takes faith symbols from temple, to take away hope.

605 BC—He takes away the future by taking Best young future leaders—intentionally indoctrinate into Babylonian culture & train them to become future government leaders/advisors.

Daniel 1:3-5

This was a very intentional & strategic plan to indoctrinate them into the Babylonian culture. The king wanted them to **think** like Babylonians thought, **behave** like Babylonians behaved, and **believe** what Babylonians believed.

Satan's Full-scale attack: Seduces, lies, deceives.

It is completely impossible to be a Christian, and have any sense of spiritual success, & victory against the temptations and darkness of this world by going to church for 1-2 hours a week & expect to be growing and thriving spiritually.

You've got to make the presence of God a priority in your life, where you seek Him, where you depend on Him, where you're living and dwelling in His Word, where it's feeding you, renewing your mind; you're learning to walk by faith, and not by sight. You cannot be kind of a Christian, and have the life and victory that He wants you to have.

Ephesians 6:11, 13

Sometimes you have to take a stand for that which matters most, in the right way, at the right time, for the right reasons.

And if you are never standing out, and you're always blending in, then you are not truly committed to follow Jesus, because when you follow Him, you will be different; you will be set apart.

Daniel 1:6-7

They're going to change two things: change their diet, and they're going to change their names.

Stripped of identity. Crushed any sense of dignity.

Change names—because their original names were all tied to the worship of Yahweh, the One True God—All their new names were tied to the worship of Babylonian gods.

Change diet—Eat food prepared for king—meat and wine dedicated pagan gods. And this created a real problem for Daniel and his friends, because they wanted to honor and worship Yahweh, in every way possible. And to eat or drink anything dedicated to pagan gods would cross a line, in their minds, and be disrespectful to God.

Daniel 1:8

Didn't fight when their names were taken: An outward name does not define who I am in my heart.

Didn't defend his name—Daniel took a stand when God's name would be defamed.

Daniel made a Predetermined resolution. Before the temptation was ever there, he pre-decided what he would do, and what he would not do.

If you are going to stand out for God—make some decisions ahead of time. Daniel made a decision, before he was faced with a temptation, to do what is right.

For those that are followers of Christ, your success, in so many different spiritual avenues, will be determined by what you decide ahead of time.

If you're never standing out, and you're always blending in, then you are not fully following Christ.

What looks like one-time event to us was a decision to Stand Out daily. Day after day... They made one decision that set them apart, again and again and again. And if you're fully following Christ, you're going to find, the closer you get to Him, the more often you're going to be standing out, and you're not ashamed because of what He has done for you.

Daniel 1:12-15

Wasn't public show—Bold display!

Instead of making a public protest, Daniel honors authority & creates a plan. You can stand out, for the right things, in the right way, or you can stand out for the wrong things, in the wrong way.

Daniel 1:19 –God gave them knowledge and understanding. Better in school. Daniel could understand visions and dreams!

Think about this: Had they compromised, and not had the courage to stand out, nothing historic would have happened. Or—if they had stubbornly refused to eat—likely executed.

TRUTH: We don't stand out to make a statement; we stand out because God's called us to be different.