



Summer

AT LIFEPOINT

WEEK OF JUNE 25, 2023

PURSUE EXCELLENCE - ALWAYS BRINGING OUR BEST (DAN 6, ROM 12)

Speaker: Pastor Elmer Cañas Jr.



icebreaker

What spice describes your personality?

Introduction

- When you come to the Lord, do you bring your junk or do you bring your best?
- How would you explain pursuing excellence for the Lord versus pursuing perfection to a non-believer?
- Matthew 5:13-16 tells us that we are the salt of the earth & the light of the world. We're called to be excellent in our walk, in our talk, in our work, in every facet of our lives. Take a look inward and ask yourself, "Are you that person Jesus is looking for?" Most of us might secretly say no, but why not?
- Paul said in Philippians 3:13-14, "...I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead..." Do you focus on the past, or do you look forward to what lies ahead? Why do you suppose it's easier to focus on the past instead of our future we will have with God?
- Where does God see your excellence?

Choose Character Over Comfort

- Daniel developed a reputation as an honorable and ethical man. Even his enemies found him to be trustworthy! If you were in a situation like Daniel, would your enemies find you trustworthy like Daniel?
- What are you choosing in life: Character over comfort or comfort over character? Do you live by what you know is true and right - or are you letting the world squeeze you into its mold?
- What daily temptations do you have that make you choose comfort over character?

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- How would someone on the outside looking in know that you care about the Lord? What would inspire them?

Choose Discipline Over Disorder

- How do you view the word "discipline"? If you have a negative attitude towards it, why is that? What's God's definition of the word?
- What successes or challenges in your life can you attribute to having discipline or the lack thereof?
- Pastor Elmer said, "If you can be disciplined in prayer, you can be disciplined in just about anything else." How would a more disciplined prayer life help with this?
- Do you have discipline in other areas of your life (career, fitness goals, diet), but struggle to find discipline in your Christian life? Explain.

Choose Love Over Life

- In Malachi 1:6-14, the people of Israel intentionally ignored the best in their flock. They passed by their best and chose their sickly ones for sacrifice. When you give to God, do you choose the best you have, or do you look through the junk drawer for something you won't miss? How do you think God sees this?
- People saw that Daniel never stopped praying, despite the opposition he faced. What do people say you'll never stop doing?
- How do you want others to view your Christian walk/faith? How do you live a life of excellence in a mediocre world?
- Are you living as a citizen of Heaven, conducting yourself in a manner worthy of the Good News about Christ? What can you do to improve?
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act on it



ENCOURAGE

Pastor Elmer shared the quote, "Don't bring your junk, bring your best... Give God your best!" God is worthy of it! God calls us to make an eternal difference in the lives of people, so we must always be in pursuit of excellence. Excellence must become a rhythm in our lives. With all that we are, we must understand that EVERYTHING we do has an impact. We'll never be perfect in this life, but we are called to live in pursuit of excellence in a healthy way. Keep your integrity above your comfort, ask the Lord to help you bring discipline into your life where needed, and, above all else, let your love for the Lord lead you over anything else.



ASK

Are you giving God your absolute best? In life, are you choosing character over comfort or comfort over character? Where is God calling you to pursue excellence? What disciplines do you need to implement for either yourself or your family? What small thing in your Christian walk can you be faithful in this week?



CHALLENGE

Challenge your family and yourself to take a step toward pursuing excellence in the areas you haven't been giving your very best. Accountability is such a great help and a blessing. Write down what you're choosing to focus on and share it with your family or someone in your group. Have them check in on you in a week to see how it's going.

prayer

Lord, we thank You for being an excellent God. Thank You for always giving us Your Best though we don't deserve it. Help us be people who live in pursuit of excellence, not for us but for Your glory. Holy Spirit, lead us and empower us to choose excellence, not out of obligation but out of love for You. When we struggle, remind us that it's not about reaching perfection, it's about always bringing our best to The One who is The Best. Help us keep integrity in front of us at all times. Show us the areas where we need to bring discipline into lives to help bring order to disorder. And help us keep our love for You at the center of all we are and in all that we do. We want to stand firm. No matter where we are in our walk with You, keep letting Your Word work in our lives. Keep revealing Yourself to us in ways we've never seen before, in a way that makes us hunger to know You more. Thank You for this beautiful challenge. Amen.