



MOMENTUM BUILDER

Clayton King

“How can I be strong in the face of opposition?”

Clayton King challenges us from the consistent, unwavering commitment of Daniel that there is no better way to live than to give God complete access, surrendering your life to His control.

MESSAGE OPENER:

Take a moment and think about a physical scar that you have on your body. What immediately comes to mind when you locate and fix your attention on that scar?

If you're like most people, you are not thinking about the strange mark on your skin and wondering how in the world it got there. You are thinking of a story. It might be a funny story, it might be an awkward story—chances are, it's a story accompanied by pain.

If you're with a friend or in a group, take this chance to share your stories.

Is pain a common theme? Certainly the memories are vivid and descriptive. Likely a lesson was learned from your scar that caused you to be better, smarter, or stronger. Sometimes your greatest scars will tell your best stories.

The same is true as you face opposition in your daily pursuit of Jesus. The messes you find yourself in will become your greatest message and your greatest tests in life will result in a testimony to the greatness of God.

Or...you find yourself without a story, without a message, and without a testimony. If this is true, you are not facing opposition for the way you live for Jesus, meaning that you are probably wavering in your commitment to Him and afraid of what others will think of you or do to you.

God often places us in situations like Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego, and Daniel so that lost people can see His greatness and see the Gospel under pressure living through us. He allows us to be in challenging situations so we'll be forced to trust God and not ourselves.

READ: Daniel 6:1–28

WATCH: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FrEOYITmAL4>

KEY POINTS:

God doesn't give us an exemption from hard times, he gives us a companion through hard times. We assume that if we're living for Jesus that no bad thing will happen to us. We assume that if we're following Jesus as Lord and Savior that God will give us an exemption from difficult circumstances. Living for Jesus isn't easy. If it was, everyone would be doing it. If you are living for Jesus and you are NOT facing some kind of ridicule or persecution, or some kind of hardship, you're not doing it right.

Living for Jesus is costly.

"When Christ bid someone to come and follow Him, he bids them to come and die."

–Dietrich Bonhoeffer

If you want to be a witness in your school and stand out for Jesus in a culture that opposes Christ, start right now by distinguishing yourself as a person who is trustworthy and dependable. Show up early, stay late, serve others, and pursue purity. Daniel didn't waver from his commitments when a new law was made, he did exactly what he did before...he prayed, regardless of the cost.

You cannot be strong by yourself. Daniel couldn't defy a king and a nation by himself. Daniel had God. And you aren't strong enough to handle this broken, fallen, and cursed world. But God is in you and God is strong. Because Daniel was relentless in his worship of God, his pursuit of a relationship with God, and in refusing to bow down, an entire nation got to see his testimony.

CLOSING CHALLENGES:

If you want to be stronger...

- 1. It starts with a decision** before you find yourself in a difficult situation to stay consistent in your pursuit of honoring Jesus.
- 2. You must stand by your conviction** and not compromise to what is easy, to what our culture or your friends, think is best when God has put you in a position to display His greatness to a watching and curious world.
- 3. You must stay close to Jesus.** It's only through a deepening, intimate relationship with Jesus can you find the strength to stand in the face of opposition.
- 4. Stop being afraid** not being intimidated by the things that can never intimidate God. He created the air, he can tame the lions, he will stand with you in the fire, and will rescue you. And even if he doesn't, in this life, a far greater future awaits you.