

An Excellent Spirit

by Michael Howard

The sermon emphasizes the importance of developing an excellent spirit, which is characterized by obedience, excellence, and a passion for God's kingdom and glory.

Duration: 54:31

Scripture: Proverbs 3:5-6, Daniel 5:11, Matthew 6:33, Romans 12:1, 1 Corinthians 10:31, 2 Corinthians 5:10, Philippians 3:8

Topics: "Renewal"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of having a burning desire to do more than just passively observe one's circumstances. He references the story of Daniel in the Bible, who had an excellent spirit and remained faithful to God despite changing political administrations. The speaker also shares about the impact of a high school in Malawi that offers good education, highlighting the transformative power of education in a nation with a lack of resources. The sermon concludes with a reminder to prioritize glorifying God above all else and to remain steadfast in prayer.

Transcript

Hallelujah. It was an absolutely overwhelming opening of the academy in Malawi. And many of you have invested in that and after you see this I trust that you may add a little more to what you gave earlier on.

Because it's not just about the buildings. The buildings are there to house the students. And when you see these students, so far we have a hundred students in the academy.

We only opened at the end of January. We already have three hundred for the next semester in September. Half of them are boarders that they live there permanently.

But the most important thing about this academy, it is to raise a new generation of Malawian children who are going to change the destiny of the nation. We've just come out of, two years ago, ten years of an Islamic president who tried to Islamize the country. And when the Minister of Education for the whole of Malawi was sitting on the platform she was so absolutely overwhelmed she said, I cannot believe my government doesn't even know that this academy exists.

How did you people build it without our knowing? Well we were building during the years of Islam in Malawi and so we asked God to overshadow it and blind every eyes and that's exactly what he did. See God is so powerful. God is so incredible.

And I want you to see your investment in these young people, not in the buildings. The buildings are there because of the people. And we already have two young men in that academy who both say one day it is my vision and my ambition to be the president of Malawi.

Come on, you can get excited people. No, we encourage them in that. What a wonderful thing that one day there's going to be a man of God, born again, filled with the spirit, who's going to be leading the nation.

I had a Muslim who came, we don't take Muslims at the school, and I had a Muslim who came and because our fees are cheap and because the education is so good, he wanted his child to come. And he was arguing with me as to why his child shouldn't come to my academy. I said, well it's a Christian academy.

And he said, but my child has been to other religious institutions. And I just thought, yeah, they never got the gospel. So he said, so tell me what's the difference between you and these other institutions.

Really the inspiration of God came on me and I said, I'll tell you one thing, when your daughter leaves my school, she will be born again of the spirit of God, filled with the spirit of God, and baptized in water. He said, I don't want you in your academy then. And I said, neither do I want to.

Now you may think that's marginalizing people, but that's not our objective, beloved. I don't have to put up with the Muslims when they come in and they want to take over. That's not our vision.

Our vision is to raise a new generation. Yes, I know they need Jesus Christ as well, but that's not our purpose. Amen? Just in case somebody wonders why.

Our purpose is to raise a new generation, to lead the nation and to change, transform the face of Africa. And that's what's going to happen. And when you see this, I want you to see the passion, the spirit in these students.

Most of them came in as heathens. Most of them already are born again, filled with the spirit. And just a week ago Sunday, we baptized 35 students from the academy, because they've received Christ and they're so in love with Him.

Can we have that DVD please? Hallelujah. That's the glory of God. Really we cannot take any praise or honor or glory from it.

It was God that did it all. He inspired us. He called us to do it.

And the most wonderful thing, when God calls us to do something, it will never fail. We had invited the president of Malawi on two occasions to come and open that academy, but at the same time we had prayed that he wouldn't come, because we wanted the glory to go to Jesus. And you know when the president comes, they take over, it becomes political.

And so twice he turned us down. And when the minister of education came, she could only say, the president has missed it. And the following day after opening it, she phoned up the president and politely told him what an honor he had given her to come to this facility.

And she said to me on many occasions as she sat next to me on the platform, there is no facility in the entire nation like this. Everything that we have done, we did with a spirit of excellence. I think that's the

most important thing.

And she said, Your Excellency, you really missed opening that academy. And just a week ago, Monday, I sent my administrator from Malawi up to the minister of education because she wanted the DVD. And she made him sit down with her for a whole hour and forty minutes and watch the entire opening all over again.

And spent three hours talking to him, wouldn't let anybody interrupt them. And said, I'm going to see the president in the morning and there are four things on my agenda to discuss with him. And the very first one is Kalibu Academy.

And she absolutely said from the first moment, my granddaughter is coming to this school next semester. Thank you. Glory to God.

Really, it's all about him. It's all about his power. It's all about his excellence.

If you have your Bibles, turn with me to the prophet Daniel in chapter five. Now you may wonder this morning why such a thing. And a high school in your town, a high school in your state, a high school in your nation isn't going to make much of a difference, especially if it offers bad education.

But in Africa, a high school that offers good education has the power to change a nation and the continent. Because there is such a lack of education. There is such a lack of everything.

We have the only high school in the nation of Malawi where every student has hands on at the computer. Otherwise it's all theory. And you know, to you, you may absolutely marvel when, you know, I was just staying with a family, a not very well to do family just over the last day or so, and I marveled that in every single room there was a personal laptop.

And this is western life. But in Africa, you know, all of my teachers, there isn't a single computer amongst twenty-five teachers. And I'd love to get them all a laptop computer.

Anybody want to donate one, I'd gladly receive it. But seriously, I'd love to have for every one of my teachers to have a laptop computer. And you know, in a nation where there is such abundance, these things are so lacking and where you can provide even the minimum.

We have the best library in the nation. I'm not satisfied. We only have twelve thousand volumes in the library, but it's the best library in the nation.

And you know, when I go into a public library in this country, in the smallest town, I look at my library and I'm embarrassed. I say, it's nothing. And, you know, we can't conceive how blessed we are when we live in it, we are raised up in it, and we don't see anything else.

But beloved, I want to tell you that the vast majority of the world has nothing to what you have. You know, we spend our lives grumbling and complaining. We spend our lives looking at ourselves and saying what we don't have, instead of looking at ourselves and seeing what we do have and how God has supremely blessed us.

See, Daniel could have gone into the captivity in Babylon, right? He was made a eunuch, right? He was one of the nobles, the leaders of Israel, taken into captivity, made a eunuch in the land of Babylon, like the rest of his fellow Israelites. And he could have thrown up his hands like many of them did, but he didn't. Why? Because inside of him, there was something that stirred, there was something that was on fire, there

was something that wanted to do more than just sit down, look at his circumstances, look at his situation and say, what's the point? Amen? Why? Because Daniel was of an excellent spirit.

Read with me. Verse 11, chapter 5, There is a man in thy kingdom, in whom is the spirit of the holy gods. And in the days of thy father, light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him.

Hallelujah. See, one of the most wonderful, exciting things, beloved, about this walk with God, is if God tells you to do it, and you embark on doing it, you can never fail. The reason why, and I've really looked at people's problems, the issues of Christians, the issues of life, and in our walk with God, I really have come to one conclusion.

I'm not talking about the unsaved now, I'm talking about the church, I'm talking about the believer, I'm talking about those who say they love God. There's only one thing that stops us from experiencing the fullness and the glory and the power and the excitement of God, and that is simply disobedience. Amen? If you have reached a walk, place of, in your life, of your walk with God, and you're at a plateau, I want to tell you it's for one reason and one reason only.

Somewhere, sometime, you said no to God, or you disobeyed. And until you are prepared to be obedient, you won't go up to the next level in God. And God is calling us all, all the time, all of us, to rise up to the next level, to come up to another level with Him.

Instead of looking around at our circumstances and saying, no God, no God, it can't be done. There were 15 nations represented on the opening night in Kalibu Academy. 15 nations.

Not all nations from Africa, but all over the world. And for a little country like the nation of Malawi that you really have to look for on the map of Africa, it's so small, what a significant thing. And you know, for the world it may have not been anything, but God had brought together a team of people for His kingdom and His glory.

Why? Because God is looking for a people in this hour who have an excellent spirit, who are so filled with the Spirit of God, who are filled with the passion of God, who are filled with the love of God, to say, yes God, I can make an impact, I can bring change, just by living excellently for you. You don't have to be a school builder, you don't have to go out to India or China or Africa, but you can so live for Jesus Christ, right where you are, that your life will so shine, that you will impact people around you. There isn't anybody that comes to that academy, they cross that bridge where you saw the bus crossing, and they walk into the presence of God, everybody says it, what is so incredible about this school, what is so different, yes, because they come into the order, the government, the authority of Almighty God, and they can feel it in the atmosphere, because the presence of God pervades over that school.

Every day we have a time of worship and praise, every day we have a time of reading the Word, every day we have a time of prayer, and these students are going home and telling their parents, and I'm getting phone calls from right across the nation, what have you done to our children? Mothers, fathers phoning up saying, we cannot believe how our daughter, how our son has been transformed, what's going on in that school, they want to study, they want to learn, they want to pray, they want to be part of what God is doing. One mother phoned up and said, I can't believe what's happened to my son, he gets up every morning, makes his bed, cleans his room, he's never done that before. Send your kids to my school.

Hallelujah, what a God we serve, what an amazing God. The wisdom of the gods was found in him, whom the king Nebuchadnezzar, thy father, the king, I say thy father made master of the magicians, astrologers, chaldeans, and soothsayers, for as much as an excellent spirit and knowledge, and understanding, interpreting of dreams, and showing of hard sentences, and dissolving of doubts, were found in the same Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar, now let Daniel be called, and he will show you the interpretation. And then in chapter 6, verse 1, it pleased Darius to set over the kingdom a hundred and twenty princes, which should be over the whole kingdom, and over these three presidents, of whom Daniel was first, that the princes might give accounts unto them, and that the king should have no damage.

Then this Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes, because an excellent spirit was in him, and the king sought to set him over the whole realm, because an excellent spirit was found in him. Beloved, an excellent spirit is in you today, if you are born again of the Spirit of God, hallelujah, filled with the Holy Spirit, we have an excellent spirit. It's time that the excellent spirit within us was allowed to give voice.

It's time that we stop looking at our problems and our issues, and we allow the Spirit of God that is within us to be the director of our lives. An excellent spirit. Daniel survived four administrations.

Now, it's in political world, even today, if you succeed, if you're successful in one administration, you've made it. You know, every day you wake up, somebody's resigned from the cabinet, somebody's left government, somebody, you know, it's such a topsy-turvy world. And yet here was Daniel, whose one desire, one ambition, one purpose, one longing was to glorify God.

I will pray. I will pray morning, noon, and night. Nobody's going to stop me from praying.

It doesn't matter what decree, it doesn't matter what law, it doesn't matter what any man says. I'm going to do service unto my God first and foremost. Hallelujah.

That's what God wants from us. Dear beloved, in your society, in your nation, there's so many attractions. There's so many things that demand time, demand our attention.

There's so many things that are exciting. Who wants to come to church and play silly church games, when you've got all the computers in the world to play computer games? But what is it that we need to give? We need to give an excellent spirit. We need people to see that my life is so different.

The hallmark of our academy is love. The teachers certainly love the students. They'll do absolutely anything for them.

And I certainly love the teachers. And one of the things that we seriously believe in that academy is that there, and we tell the students all the time, there's no failure in this academy. See, so many people have got this mentality.

So many parents have this mentality that if my child is not going to be an academic, then they're a failure. That's not true. We only believe in change of direction.

Hallelujah. If you're not going to be an, and you know, we're realistic. Some students are just never going to be academicians.

But they've got a place. And it's our business, it is our duty to find their place. To let them be locked into what they're able to do, what they're equipped to do, what God has gifted them to do.

Because God has gifted and talented every single one of us. Hallelujah. We all have a great responsibility to God to exercise the gift and the talent and the ability that He's given us.

With a body. With a living body. A dynamic living organism.

And you know what my Bible says? The least member is the most important. Oh. The least member is the most important.

When I look at those women that so faithfully carried water. Twelve years. And sometimes up a slope that you wouldn't believe.

All day long. Can you imagine? How many people here would have the guts and the determination all day long, every day of your life, to get up and come to a building site and all you know you're going to do from seven thirty in the morning to five o'clock in the evening is carry a bucket of water on your head, up and down, up and down, fill it up, take it up. Day in and day out for twelve years.

Now all of those women have been elevated, promoted. Now they are my cleaner women. That's a promotion.

Cleaning the floors, washing the windows, making sure that that school sparkles every morning. You can come in, there's this army of women and now they don't come at seven thirty in the morning, they're there at six o'clock in the morning because school opens at seven and they have to have that school clean and tidy, sparkling before everybody comes. That's a spirit of excellence.

And I never hear those women complain. I have never heard a complaint out of those women ever. And the least little thing you do for them, it's like you've given them the crown jewels of Great Britain.

You say, well why? Because they're so excited about Jesus Christ. They're so in love with God. They're so passionate about being part of this vision.

They understand the vision. They understand the vision. And you look at them and you say, you know, if you were just walking along the school grounds and one of those women passed you, probably with her bucket on the head, you wouldn't think she was anything.

You'd just say, well that's just another village woman. Just another African village woman. But without that just another African village woman, that school would never have been built.

Come on. What a powerful thing. And we need to begin to see our lives as being so impactful.

Sometimes we say, well I'm just this or I'm just that or what can I do or I'm nobody. Beloved, God loves to take nobodies, specializes in taking nobodies and making them something when we surrender our everything for His kingdom and His glory. We were just simple Africans.

We came from a simple African village. But God promised, I will take you to the ends of the earth if you will obey me, if you will do what I want you to do. And I look at this congregation this morning.

There are many of you here that God can take to the ends of the earth. There are many of you that God won't take anyway. But there are many that He will.

And God doesn't need us to start debating with Him, discussing with Him, arguing with Him about anything concerning our lives. All God needs us to do is say, yes Lord, share am I. Send me. Use me.

Use me right where I am. God can never use us, beloved. You know people come to the mission field and we hear wonderful mission stories.

But God's using failed, flawed vessels as much on the mission field in Africa and India and China as He is here. And what does He want? He wants from us an excellent spirit. And God I'm so in love with you.

I'm so excited about you. I'm so passionate about you that I want the whole world to see and to know. So what we do, we need to do with the attitude and the spirit of excellence.

I heard the pastor mentioning this morning about the dirty dishes in the kitchen. That's serious for me. That's serious.

It's serious because it shows that there are people in the body of Christ that don't care. When I go to a public toilet, I absolutely freak out. I sometimes say, well what's the difference between here and a public toilet in Africa? And then I wonder, do people behave like this at home? Do people behave like this at home? What right do we have to go into a public place and behave any different than we would behave at home? But you see, beloved, what constrains us, what stops us from just being anyhow is an excellent spirit that rules inside of us that says, no, I won't put up with anything but the best.

No, I'm not going to do it. No, I won't leave the toilet in this mess. No, I won't leave the kitchen in this mess.

Why? Because there's an excellent spirit. It's not about my upbringing. It's not about where I come from, whether I had servants or I didn't have servants, whether we were well-to-do or we were not well-to-do.

It's all about what rules inside of me is the excellent spirit of God rule inside of me because if it does, beloved, the spirit of God that rules inside of me, the excellent spirit says, I won't do this. I won't put up with this. I won't have that.

And that's what we're investing into our students in Africa, that they've got to have an excellent spirit because in Africa, people are just careless and casual. Well, this is Africa. No, if you do something, fix it.

If you break something, mend it or at least support it. An excellent spirit was found in Daniel. It wasn't that God suddenly just decided, I'm going to bless Daniel.

I'm going to pour in my wisdom, my knowledge and my understanding. No, beloved, it began with a passion, a love for God, a thirsting for God and because of that, a desire to spend time in the presence of God, a desire to worship Him, to pray to Him, that God began to fill Daniel with wisdom, knowledge and understanding. We want wisdom, knowledge and understanding.

We want those things. But Paul, the great apostle, had all of those things. Amen? I count them but done.

I count them but done for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord. Hallelujah. See, beloved, if you don't have an excellent spirit, this pathetic sojourn on this planet for every one of us is

preparing us for eternity.

Amen? Now, there is a reward system in God. You better believe me this morning. God has a reward system just like we have it on earth.

And there are going to be incredible rewards that God is going to dish out in that day. Every one of us is going to stand before the judgment seat of Jesus Christ. Hallelujah.

And we are going to be judged according to our works. When God fills us with abilities and talents and gifts and anointings and whatever else, beloved, we have a responsibility to exercise those things. Amen? Some of you here this morning, you are sitting on super talents.

You never used them. God is going to require an account from you one day. Everything that we have ever done in the kingdom of God is going to be put into God's crucible and He is going to apply His fire.

And everything that is me, if you stood before Jesus Christ, if Jesus Christ walked into this place this morning and you saw Him with your eyes and He said, what have you ever done for me? What have you ever done for me? Now, there are a lot of people doing a lot of things but it is not for Jesus. Amen? I see it all the time in the continent of Africa. There is a lot of people doing a lot of things.

There are a lot of people building orphanages. There are a lot of people feeding the hungry. There are a lot of people doing all kinds of things.

And in our natural emotional state, we look at that and we say, wow, good job! What a man of God! What a woman of God! Not necessarily. Not necessarily. Because what I do of myself, what I do because my emotions are wrapped up into it, no matter how good it may look, beloved, could well be a work of iniquity.

If God didn't tell me to do something, if God didn't tell me to build that school, no matter how good it looks, no matter how wonderful those students are, then it is a work of iniquity and one day, one day in God's judgment process, when He puts His fire to that school, it will be nothing but wood, hay and stubble and there will be nothing but ash left in the bottom of His crucible. Amen? But if God tells you to do it, and this is the most wonderful thing about God, if God tells you to do it, He is going to provide, He is going to empower, He is going to do everything that He said He would do for that to be accomplished. So you can't fail with God.

He is so wonderful. He is so incredible. The great British healing evangelist, Smith Wigglesworth, one day asked God, and a friend of mine who knew him very well told me the story, asked God, God who is your greatest servant in Great Britain today? And Smith Wigglesworth, in all of his humility thought God was going to say, why, of course it's you.

And God took him in the spirit up to Northern Scotland, to a little tiny hamlet out on the moors and there, took him down into that room and there was just one room, a fire hearth in one corner, a bed in the other corner, a few pots, kettle boiling on the fire, a wash basin with a jug and a little old lady on her knees praying. And God brought Smith Wigglesworth close in the spirit to her, and what was she praying? Oh God, bless Smith Wigglesworth, pour out your spirit upon Smith Wigglesworth. And God said, there's my greatest servant in Great Britain.

Come on people of God. See, God is incredible. His ways are not our ways.

When he judges, it's going to be so fine. It's going to be so excellent. Beloved, what God is wanting, he's wanting you to rise up above your circumstances, above your situation, above your problems, above the things in your life and say, God, you have filled me with your life, you have filled me with your power, you have filled me with your substance and I'm going to live for you, no matter what.

Everybody was against Daniel. Everybody was against Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. And yet here's this man of God with such an excellent spirit, a spirit, beloved, that either caused you to love him or hate him.

Yes? You can't be indifferent to an excellent spirit. You cannot be indifferent to somebody with an excellent spirit. You either love them or hate them.

You hate them because they rough you up the wrong way, because you're so opposed to what they're doing, or you love them because you see in them the excellence of Almighty God. We can't claim any praise, we can't claim anything. It's all about Him.

And here's Daniel with this excellent spirit, because of this excellent spirit of communion, of fellowship, of intimacy with Almighty God, God begins to whisper into his ears great things pertaining to the Kingdom of God. Come to the United States this year. You know what I'm seeing in your nation? I'm seeing anger.

I'm seeing real anger. I'm seeing Americans angry at Americans. I'm seeing anger to the extent that people don't know where they belong, what their purpose is, what their direction is.

That tells me a lot. Tells me that here's a nation that doesn't know where it's going, and I'll tell you why the nation doesn't know where it's going, because the church doesn't know where it's going. See, it doesn't matter what happens in the halls of government, beloved.

The government is on our shoulders. Come on. The government was on the shoulders of Jesus Christ.

That's what the Bible says. And because it was on His shoulders, it's on our shoulders. How can we rule and reign? God calls us to rule and reign in the earth.

He has taken us out of the kingdom of darkness, translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son, with all of the excellence of Jesus Christ, with all of the wisdom and the knowledge of Jesus Christ, so that we may rule and reign in every circumstance and every situation. But if we become part of the problem, we're not here to be part of the problem, we're here to be part of the solution. Amen? See, I don't care if you're a Democrat and I don't care if you're a Republican.

You know what? I really don't care about politics. What I care about is how passionate are you about Jesus Christ. Because it doesn't matter what political party you vote for, I don't give a hoot about that, beloved.

I care about whether Jesus Christ is reigning and ruling in your heart. And if Jesus Christ is ruling and reigning in your heart, He needs to rule and reign in all of your circumstances, wherever you go, you carry the authority of Almighty God, if you have the excellent spirit that God purposes us to have. And you become the solution to the problem, not the part of the problem.

There are here this morning families that are divided, families that are angry with one another, families full of unforgiveness. How many people here this morning are full of unforgiveness, bitterness, jealousy,

anger, hurt? Life didn't go the way you wanted it to go. Things didn't materialize as you expected them to materialize.

You know what happens? We begin to tabernacle around those issues. We begin to look at those problems in our lives or problems in lives of people around us. And instead of us being the solution to that problem, we become part of the problem.

Amen? When the mixed multitude that came out of the nation of Egypt got to grumbling and complaining, where was the rest of Israel to silence them and stop them? No, they became part of the problem. They engrossed themselves in exactly what they were doing instead of solving that issue. I was looking for a people this morning who have an excellent spirit.

God, I'm not going to be part of the problem anymore. And it doesn't matter whom I'm going to offend. I'm not going to be part of the problem.

See, you're going to offend somebody. We spend our lives trying to placate the world. We spend our lives trying to placate our families and make our families feel happy.

Amen? I remember when we first got saved. Now, we were fisher people. We loved fishing.

We used to say my mother was the worst. Give my mother a mud puddle and a fishing rod and she'd stand there all day even if there wasn't a fish in there. And every spare moment of time we had, we would be out fishing somewhere, anywhere.

Just find us some water and we'd fish. Then Jesus Christ came in. And when Jesus Christ came in, fishing started to go out.

Well, that became really offensive to my parents. It's like we've been a family that fished. Why do you want to change this? Why do you want to spoil it? Why? Well, at 14 years of age, to try and tell your mother, look, I've fallen in love with Jesus.

I'm more excited about Christ. That didn't comprehend. And so for a season, it was compromise, compromise.

And the more you compromise, the more miserable you were because there was a call of God. There was a drawing of God. Until finally, there was only one place I wanted to be on Sunday.

It was in the house of God, worshiping the Lord. Too bad, mom and dad. Fishing's over.

Fishing's over. I don't remember. Now there's nothing wrong with fishing.

But you know what? When God's got his hooks in you and God's got a greater calling in your life, fishing becomes a sin if it stops you from doing what God wants you to do, if it stops you from going higher in God, if it stops you from being what God wants you to be and having that excellent spirit that God wants you to have. So sometimes you're going to offend people by doing what God wants you to do. Too bad for people.

There's no way to make that offense nice. Just offend them. Hello? Just offend them.

There are young people who don't go on to serve God because they're afraid of what their parents are going to say. There are parents who don't want to offend their children and therefore don't serve God. I meet people all over your country who haven't done what God called them to do because they were afraid of offending somebody.

Too bad about offending somebody when the excellent spirit of God is in you and calling you to rise up and be who God wants you to be and do what God wants you to do and go where God wants you to go, beloved. You are going to offend people. Hello? I've offended so many people over that school, I don't know who's left to offend.

You know what? I don't care. I haven't gone out of my way to offend anybody, but people get offended because you don't do it the way they want you to do it. You don't do it when they want you to do it.

I thought a year ago I was, we had almost completed the school and I was so happy I said, ah that's the end. And it became very clear and apparent and as I waited on God, God said, no, you've got to build dormitories. This is going to be a boarding school.

God, we don't have money to build dormitories. I said, build. It would have been so easy to sit down and say, I've had enough.

All these years of building here, all these years of building in Sudan, Lord, I've had enough. I'm not a builder. I had a contractor, came the day that I left to fly over here to the States.

I said, let me just see what this guy is going to charge me to build another section of buildings. So I called this contractor in and he looked over all these foundations and he said, uh, where's the plans? He said, oh, don't tell me they're up here. I said, that's right.

That's right. There are no plans. That's one of the benefits that we have in Africa.

When I walk in and I see something, I, okay, knock that wall out, put it over there. Stop that, do that. You know, we can do that in Africa.

We do have building plans, of course, but beloved, it doesn't matter who gets offended if we're doing what God has called us to do and we're doing it with an excellent spirit. Sometimes that excellent spirit will overcome, but not always. It will overcome the attitude of other people.

Amen? Here's Daniel, the slave from Egypt. He's a slave from Egypt. He's a slave from Israel.

This eunuch made of men brought into the palace. He didn't have some great agenda. He didn't have some great program.

He was just a lover and a worshipper of God. He was just excited about God. He could have sat down with the rest of his countrymen and said, oh, whoa, whoa, whoa, it's me.

We are captive in the land of Babylon. All I long for is to go back to the land of Israel. No, he heard God.

He heard God. It's going to be 70 years. Settle down.

Put your roots down. Build your businesses. Build your homes.

When God says something to us, we better believe what God says. How many times has God spoken to you in that fleeting moment when you least expect it and it goes past you and you say, ah, that was just my imagination. No, that was God.

But because you're not fine-tuned, beloved, you missed it. You missed Him. How many times we tell God, wait.

Not convenient for me right now. You may be cooking your husband's dinner. Let the old goat wait a while.

God moves on you while you're standing at the stove and says, I need you to pray right now. I need you to intercede right now. Yes, Lord, let me just finish this.

No, now. How many person has been sitting at their computer in the office and the Holy Spirit moves on you and says, I need you to pray right now. Yeah, but the boss needs this letter.

Too bad about the boss. I'm the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. I'll take care of the boss.

You see, that's the issue, beloved. He will take care of the boss. But we say no.

And so we systematically quench Him. An excellent spirit never quenches God. An excellent spirit never says no to God.

An excellent spirit. I can imagine how Daniel must have felt in the natural, brought into the presence of this mighty King. Falter once and your heads off.

Four administrations he passed through and ended up being the Prime Minister or the President, the leader under the King of every one of them. Why? Because an excellent spirit was found in him. He had the wisdom, the knowledge, the understanding, the passion of God.

That's what God wants each one of us to have. You don't have to leave here. You don't have to go to Africa or India or China or anywhere else.

But God wants you to have an excellent spirit where you are. When you walk into your office, people, what's the difference with you? What makes you different? Sir, what makes you different? What makes this school different? Everybody says, this is a city on a hill. What makes this school different? What makes this school different is not the excellent buildings, not the excellent gardens, not the excellent teachers.

The excellence of God is in the place. Because the excellence of God is in the place, everything else is excellent. That's how we need to be, beloved.

Let us pray. Father, you are so amazing, my God. You are so incredible.

Father, I know that you have been stirring people up, not just this morning, but for weeks, for months, some for years, to rise up to a new level, to a new place, to a new ministry. Maybe you say, I've never ministered, I've never done anything. That's not the criterion.

This morning God says to you, I want you to step up to another level, a new level, a higher level, a higher place in me. If that's you this morning, I want you to stand to your feet right where you are. You know God's been calling you.

You know God's been stirring you. You know God's been wooing you. You know God's been challenging you.

Some of you young people, God's been stirring you. Stand up. I want everybody just to lift their hands to the Lord.

Father, we offer ourselves to you, a living sacrifice, Lord. We offer ourselves to you, Lord, to take us to the next level that you have in us, no matter what the cost, no matter what the price. God, in a nation and in a world that is progressively getting worse and growing darker, Father, we want to be the light.

We want to impact people. This is your day of grace. This is your hour of grace, beloved.

This is God's hour of grace in your life. Don't listen to people who come with the idea that God is a beat-me-up God. God is a gracious God.

God is a loving God. God is a passionate God. God is here to heal you.

God is here to deliver you. God is here to make you whole. Father, I offer myself to you this morning.

Take me to the next level of relationship. Take me to the next level of ministry. Take me to the next level in you, God.

Give me that excellent spirit, Father God, that Daniel had. I'm asking you today, pour that excellent spirit into me. Change my life.

In many ways, I've been careless and casual in my thinking and my doing, but, Lord, I want you to change me today. I give you my life. Do whatever you want, Father God.

Whatever it takes, but make me a person of excellent spirit. In Jesus' name, amen. Alleluia, thine the glory.

Alleluia, amen. Alleluia, thine the glory. Revive us again.

Alleluia, thine the glory. Alleluia, amen. Alleluia, amen.

Alleluia, thine the glory. Revive us again. Father, this morning in the name of Jesus, we hear your voice.

We desire, oh God, God inside. We know what is right. We know what is good.

We know what that excellent way is. You've said you've shown us a more excellent way. God, if we've been around you at all, we already know what that excellent way is.

And, God, we do, just like Brother Michael has said, we get used to saying no to the excellent way. It's inconvenient. It's ill timed.

It's going to cost me in this area or that area. But, God, we do know what that is asking. We do know that voice.

We do know that direction. And, God, we're asking in the name of Jesus that you again would plead with our hearts and with our souls, oh God, that we would be found in you, following after you, doing your bidding, listening for your voice. But, God, also then pursuing after you with everything that we have and

everything that we are.

God, I thank you that your voice of the Spirit comes through different vessels. And, God, it speaks to us and convicts us and convinces us of sin and of righteousness and of judgment to come to say that there's a time coming when all this is going to be wound up and it's going to be added up and what's done for the kingdom is going to be what matters. And, God, every one of us that are here this morning, we know that.

But, God, help us to take stock again this morning. Help us to just look at the portfolio of the Spirit and say, what have I done and what have I invested and who have I been and what do I need to do? How do I make this come about? What is it you will do through me, Father, if I'll just obey you? And, God, I ask in the name of Jesus that you would take off all intimidation, that you would break the yokes, oh God, of intimidation and inhibition, the being afraid of people thing. And let us be people, oh God, called with purpose for your name.

And, God, knowing so surely that we have been called, that we'll not back down and we'll not step back, but we'll walk forward. Oh, God, we don't want to be brazen. We don't want to be something that is so callous that we don't show love.

But, God, that we really truly are people who are shown to be different because there is an excellent Spirit. I thank you for this word this morning, oh Father. I pray, Lord, God, let it lodge deeply in the heart of everyone who's here.

And, God, that we're not looking at each other to try to measure, but, God, that we constantly look at ourselves to say, develop in me, oh God, that Spirit. Develop it in me and let me be one with a passion for the Most High. Let it be this way, oh Father.

And, God, we give you all the glory, all the praise, all the honor. It is due your name. You are the chief.

You are the one who brings all good things about. Therefore, we simply humble ourselves before you and declare your majesty. Thank you for the Spirit that you bring that is excellent.

It is the perfection of our life, oh Father. And we bless you for that in the name of Jesus. Amen.

If you need prayer this morning for anything, we would love to pray with you. We ask that if you're sick or something, just come right to the front. We'd love to anoint you with oil and pray the prayer of faith.

But I trust that God is working in your heart and through this message He brings life to you. God bless you and thank you for being here this morning. Amen.

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