A SPIRIT OF EXCELLENCE

PART I

WHY SETTLE FOR AVERAGE

WHEN EXCELLENCE IS AN OPTION

Excellence

Very Good

Satisfactory

Average
It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom one hundred and twenty satraps, to be over the whole kingdom; and over these, three governors, of whom Daniel was one, that the satraps might give account to them, so that the king would suffer no loss. Then this Daniel distinguished himself above the governors and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king gave thought to setting him over the whole realm.
Introduction

In Daniel 6... Daniel is *Described* as having an *EXCELLENT SPIRIT* within him....

Daniel 6, *Describes* What Has Been *Demonstrated* Throughout The First 5 Chapters

Many people can *Describe* Excellence

Many people can *Define* Excellence

But Daniel Shows Us That *EXCELLENCE MUST BE DEMONSTRATED*

It’s Not Enough To *Define It... Describe It... Declare It...*

Do You Have *The Discipline To Demonstrate It* and *Display It*

Throughout This Study, We Will Outline Some Principles That Will Enable Us To

**DEVELOP A SPIRIT OF EXCELLENCE**
Outline Of The Study

➢ What Is Excellence
  ➢ Excellence Is A Choice
  ➢ Excellence Will Face Challenges
  ➢ Excellence Requires Courage
  ➢ Excellence Overcomes The Culture
    ➢ Excellence Is Contagious
  ➢ Excellence Requires Commitment
  ➢ Excellence Refuses To Compromise
    ➢ Excellence Is Continuous
  ➢ Excellence Must Be Cultivated
  ➢ Excellence Will Be Compensated
What Is Excellence?

Daniel 6:3 (NKJV)
3 Then this Daniel distinguished himself above the governors and satraps, because AN EXCELLENT SPIRIT was in him...

Excellence Is Not An Activity.... IT IS AN ATTITUDE
It is generated by a SPIRIT...

Many people are trying to be VERY ACTIVE TO GET ATTENTION

Excellence is released from the inside {He had it within him}

WHAT DISTINGUISHES MANY PEOPLE WHO ARE SUCCESSFUL IS NOT THEIR GIFTS, SCHOOLS, ABILITIES, OR FAMILY....

THEY HAVE A DIFFERENT SPIRIT...
THEY HAVE A DIFFERENT MINDSET
THEY HAVE A DIFFERENT ATTITUDE
What Is Excellence?

The Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, defines excellence as “the quality of being extremely good or outstanding”

*Excellence* is defined as “Highest Quality” ~ “Superior Standard” ~ “Extreme Quality”

Many people attribute excellence to the finished product/finished work but excellence flows from within *A PERSON*

*Luke 6:45 (NLT)*

45 A good person produces good things from the treasury of a good heart, and an evil person produces evil things from the treasury of an evil heart. WHAT YOU SAY FLOWS FROM WHAT IS IN YOUR HEART.

**EXCELLENCE IS GENERATED BY A SPIRIT WITHIN A PERSON**
Excellence Is A Choice

Daniel 1:8 (NIV)
8 But Daniel RESOLVED not to defile himself with the royal food and wine, and he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way.

We can CHOOSE EXCELLENCE or CHOOSE AVERAGE, GOOD OR MEDIOCRITY. IT IS UP TO YOU!!

When we CHOOSE EXCELLENCE, we are CHOOSING TO SET A DIFFERENT STANDARD

Why Don’t People Choose Excellence?
Myles Munroe says.... EXCELLENCE Will Cost You What Mediocrity will Save You Time... Money....Energy...Resources

I AM EXCELLENT.... Not Because I Have To Be.... But Because I CHOOSE TO BE

Excellence Is A Series Of Choices Over A Period Of Time
Excellence Will Face Challenges

Daniel 6:4 (NKJV)
4 So the governors and satraps sought to find some charge against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find no charge or fault, because he was faithful; nor was there any error or fault found in him.

Excellence Will Always Encounter Criticism, Charges, and Condemnation
There Will Be Those Who Feel They Deserve What You Have Because Of Their Entitlement
They Have More Talent... They Have More Tenure.....
These Are Challenges That Come From The Outside
{For some...this challenge has caused you to settle for average}

Excellence Will Always Be Challenged By Comfort and Complacency
Comfort is an enemy of progress; IT KILLS the need and intensive desire for change.
Comfort is a keeper of the status quo and an ally of complacency.

If you are COMFORTABLE with the past and you will keep repeating it...
YOU WILL MISS OUT ON THE BENEFITS OF EXCELLENCE...
These Are Challenges That Come From Within
Excellence Requires Courage

Because Of Their Spirit Of Excellence
❖ Daniel Faced The Lion’s Den
❖ Three Hebrew Boys Faced The Fiery Furnace

Their Convictions Would Not Allow Them To Compromise

Many People Have Settled For Average.... Because Of A Fear Of Being Disliked

2 Timothy 1:6-7 (NKJV)

6 Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you...
7 For God has not given us a SPIRIT OF FEAR, but of POWER AND OF LOVE AND OF A SOUND MIND.

Courage is defying the odds and going after what you Believe In.
COURAGE IS RISKY!

IT TAKES COURAGE TO GET OUT OF THE BOAT AND WALK ON WATER
Excellence Overcomes The Culture

Daniel Was Taken Into Captivity and Placed In A Corrupt Culture
He did not choose THE LOCATION…. He chose the attitude…the mindset… the spirit
He Refused To Conform To The Culture and Community

EXCELLENCE IS ABLE TO OVERCOME ANY ENVIRONMENT

CONFORMISTS/FOLLOWERS struggle in the ARENA OF EXCELLENCE...

Many people are like chameleons, they readily change to match the environment...
That Is ADAPTABILITY...That can be a Positive Trait

However, the one who DESIRES TO EXCEL should not only be adaptable
but must also have THE CAPACITY TO CREATE CHANGE as well.

They Change the Atmosphere, They Shift the Atmosphere, They Raise the Standard of the Atmosphere...

Romans 12:2 (NKJV)
2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind,
that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.
Excellence Is Contagious

Although The Book Is Entitled “Daniel”
Although The Main Character Is “Daniel”

There Are 3 Friends Who Demonstrate The Same Spirit of Excellence

Daniel Stood On His Convictions in Chapter 1
Daniel Stood On His Convictions in Chapter 2

In Chapter 3, We See Those Who Are Connected To Daniel Stand On Their Convictions

Daniel 3:16-18 (NKJV)
16 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego answered and said to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. 17 If that is the case, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king. 18 But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up."

ARE YOU CONNECTED WITH THOSE WHO CHALLENGE YOU TO BE EXCELLENT!!!
Excellence Is Continuous
Daniel 1:20-21 (NKJV)
20 And in all matters of wisdom and understanding about which the king examined them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers who were in all his realm.
21 Thus Daniel CONTINUED until the first year of King Cyrus.

In Chapter 1 ~ Daniel is under Nebuchadnezzar's Leadership
In Chapter 5 ~ Daniel is under Belshazzar’s Leadership
In Chapter 6 ~ Daniel is under Darius’ Leadership
In Chapter 10 ~ Daniel is under Cyrus’ Leadership

Regardless of the Administration in Charge ~ His Spirit Of Excellence Was Continuous
Excellence Excels Regardless of Administration

Many People Can Be Excellent For Moments or Events
{Big Day vs. Everyday Mentality}

Excellence Is A Lifestyle
It is not something you do once or occasionally...
It is something you strive for in every area of your life.
Excellence eventually BECOMES WHO YOU ARE!
17 As for these four young men, God gave them knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams. 18 Now at the end of the days, when the king had said that they should be brought in, the chief of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. 19 Then the king interviewed them, and among them all none was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; therefore they served before the king. 20 And in all matters of wisdom and understanding about which the king examined them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers who were in all his realm.

Many People Think Excellence Is A Product of Being Gifted ~ There Are A Lot Of People With Gifts/Abilities In the Book of Daniel, There were many who did what Daniel did... BUT NOT LIKE DANIEL DID IT!

His Level Of Excellence Was Cultivated and Developed

• Training {Education}
• Trials {Lions Den}
• Trust {God Provided}

SINCE GOD BLESSED ME WITH A GIFT/TALENT/ABILITY ~ Why Not Maximize It In An Excellent Way
Excellence Will Be Compensated

Daniel 2:48-49 (NKJV)

48 Then the king promoted Daniel and gave him many great gifts; and he made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief administrator over all the wise men of Babylon.

49 Also Daniel petitioned the king, and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego over the affairs of the province of Babylon; but Daniel sat in the gate of the king.

Daniel 3:29-30 (NKJV)

29 Therefore I make a decree that any people, nation, or language which speaks anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made an ash heap; because there is no other God who can deliver like this."

30 Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego in the province of Babylon.

Daniel 5:16 (NKJV)

16 And I have heard of you, that you can give interpretations and explain enigmas. Now if you can read the writing and make known to me its interpretation, you shall be clothed with purple and have a chain of gold around your neck and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom."

Daniel 6:28 (NKJV)

28 So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.
Conclusion

What’s Keeping You From Choosing Excellence?

Who Is Keeping You From Choosing Excellence?