

SEQUOIA NOTES

Today's Sequoia Message...

Devoted to the God who Speaks

With Ryan Dawson - Lead Pastor

February 8, 2026



Are you listening to God?

Daniel 5:2-4 (NLT) "While Belshazzar was drinking the wine, he gave orders to bring in the gold and silver cups that his predecessor Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the Temple in Jerusalem... They drank from them while praising their gods of gold, silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone."

Daniel 5:5 (NLT) "Suddenly, they saw the fingers of a human hand writing on the plaster wall of the king's palace."

Daniel 5:18, 20-23 (NLT) "Your Majesty, the Most High God gave sovereignty, majesty, glory, and honour to your predecessor, Nebuchadnezzar... ²⁰ But when his heart and mind were puffed up with arrogance, he was brought down from his royal throne and stripped of his glory... ²¹ until he learned that the Most High God rules over the kingdoms of the world and appoints anyone he desires to rule over them. ²² You are his successor, O Belshazzar, and you knew all this, yet you have not humbled yourself. For you have proudly defied the Lord of Heaven... ²³ You have not honoured the God who gives you the breath of life and controls your destiny!"

Daniel 5:27 (NLT) "You have been weighed on the balances and have not measured up."

Will we live for ourselves & build our kingdom?

Or will we seek God first & most, by responding in faith & obedience to His Word?

- **We are accountable for what we have been given.**

Daniel 5:22 (NLT) "You are his successor, O Belshazzar, and you knew all this, yet you have not humbled yourself. For you have proudly defied the Lord of Heaven..."

*"Inspiration isn't going to do it and information isn't going to do it. The only way human character is transformed with grace is by discipline and activity".
Dallas Willard*

- **We fail to worship God as we should.**

Daniel 5:22,23 (NLT) "For you have proudly defied the Lord of Heaven...you have not honoured the God who gives you the breath of life and controls your destiny!"

- **We have been weighed & been found wanting.**

Daniel 5:27 (NLT) "...you have been weighed on the balances and have not measured up."

Isaiah 64:6 (NLT) "We are all infected and impure with sin. When we display our righteous deeds, they are nothing but filthy rags."

- **The grace of Jesus fills up where we lack.**

Hebrews 1:1-3 (NLT) "Long ago God spoke many times and in many ways to our ancestors through the prophets. ² And now in these final days, **he has spoken to us** through his Son. God promised everything to the Son as an inheritance, and through the Son he created the universe. ³ The Son radiates God's own glory and expresses the very character of God, and he sustains everything by the mighty power of his command. When he had cleansed us from our sins, he sat down in the place of honour at the right hand of the majestic God in heaven."

John 1:14,16 (AMP) "And the Word (Christ) became flesh, and lived among us; and we [actually] saw His glory, glory as belongs to the [One and] only begotten Son of the Father, [the Son who is truly unique, the only One of His kind, who is] full of grace and truth (absolutely free of deception)... ¹⁶ For out of **His fullness** [the superabundance of His grace and truth] we have all received grace upon grace [spiritual blessing upon spiritual blessing, favour upon favour, and gift heaped upon gift].

Hebrews 10:19-23

Big Idea: Grace shifts the center of our lives—from our kingdom to God's.

- **Receive God's grace & choose to live for Christ.**

- **Hear & respond to God as He speaks to you.**

Hebrews 3:7-8, 12 (NLT) "Today when you hear his voice,⁸ don't harden your hearts as Israel did when they rebelled, when they tested me in the wilderness. ¹² Be careful then, dear brothers and sisters. Make sure that your own hearts are not evil and unbelieving, turning you away from the living God."

Practice: Scripture Journaling

The Translation of the Bible Scriptures used today is the NewLiving Translation (NLT) and Amplified Bible (AMP).



Sequoia Impact Communities are where we
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Family of Servants on Mission.

To get plugged in email:

impactcommunities@sequoiachurch.org

Devoted to the God who Speaks
#5 of 7 - February 8, 2026

Context

- 1) Daniel 5:22 says Belshazzar “knew all this” about Nebuchadnezzar’s humbling. Why do you think Scripture places such emphasis on what Belshazzar *already knew*? How does knowing God’s story increase our responsibility to respond?
- 2) The sacred cups from the Temple are used in a drunken party (Dan. 5:2–4). What does this act reveal about Belshazzar’s view of God, worship, and authority? Where do you see similar attitudes toward God in our culture today?

Observation

- 3) Compare Belshazzar’s response to God’s warning with Nebuchadnezzar’s earlier response in Daniel 4. What differences do you notice in posture, humility, and outcome?
- 4) In Daniel 5:5, God speaks through writing on a wall—public, undeniable, and disruptive. What stands out to you about *how* God chooses to get Belshazzar’s attention in this moment?

Meaning

- 5) “You have been weighed on the balances and have not measured up” (Dan. 5:27). Why is this such a devastating verdict if grace is absent? How do Isaiah 64:6 and Hebrews 1:1–3 help us understand our need for Jesus?
- 6) The Big Idea says: “Grace shifts the center of our lives—from our kingdom to God’s.” What does Daniel 5 teach us about the danger of living with *ourselves* at the center rather than God?

Application

- 7) Hebrews 3 warns us not to harden our hearts “today” when we hear God’s voice. What are some subtle ways we can *hear* God but still resist or delay obedience?
- 8) **The practice this week is Scripture Journaling** (Heb. 10:19–23 or John 1:14–16). Write the passage down & ask God to speak to you through His Holy Spirit. Read the passage 2X slowly. Notice which word or phrase “jumps out” at you. Ask God what he is saying through that phrase, & write down your thoughts. Respond in faith & obedience. Discuss what you hear with your group.
- 9) As you think about listening and responding to God, what might obedience look like for you right now—specifically, not just generally?



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