

LEAD SHEET

Daniel Week 4

"Pride Comes Before a Fall"

March 3, 2013

This Month's Faith Skill Worship with Your Life

IF YOU WANT TO KNOW GOD BETTER, GIVE BACK TO HIM!

Scripture Memorization

*Pride goes before destruction,
and haughtiness before a fall. Proverbs 16:18*

General Discussion:

- What is something of which you are proud?
- Why are you proud of it?
- How can that kind of confidence be a good thing?
- How can pride turn into a bad thing?

The famous boxer Muhammad Ali is known for his confidence. He sometimes referred to himself as "Superman." Once, while on a plane, the flight attendant reminded him that he needed to buckle his seatbelt. Ali replied, "Superman don't need a seatbelt." The flight attendant wisely put Ali in his place. "He don't need an airplane, either," she replied.

Today, we're going to talk about Nebuchadnezzar's pride and how God put him in his place.

Read Daniel 4:1-8

1. At first glance, where does it seem like Nebuchadnezzar is in his walk with God? (*Perhaps turning to faith.*)
2. What are some of the things Nebuchadnezzar has seen God do already? (*Interpret dreams, save Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, etc.*)

Nebuchadnezzar had been changed since the fiery furnace incident, who wouldn't be? However, while he intellectually was convinced of Yahweh, he had never humbled himself as a servant of God. He still seemed to worship Babylonian gods, while at the same time he had made some steps in his walk with the true God. While he acknowledged the God of Daniel, he was not faithful to Him.

3. Why does Nebuchadnezzar bring in his wise men again? *(To have a dream interpreted.)*
4. Were they successful the first time? (No)
5. Why do you think he gave them another chance? *(We don't know, but we know that in doing this he disregards the power of the One True God.)*
6. Why do you think this chapter of Daniel is in the Bible, since Nebuchadnezzar, a pagan, wrote it? What do we gain from his perspective?

Read Daniel 4:9-18

1. What does Nebuchadnezzar do differently with his dream this time? *(He chooses to tell the dream instead of making Daniel figure it out.)*
2. Is his dream good news or bad news? Why? *(Bad news. Nebuchadnezzar would no longer think like a man, but rather have the mind of animal.)*
3. According to verse 18, how does Nebuchadnezzar know that Daniel can interpret the dream? *(“Because the spirit of the holy gods is in you.”)*

Read Daniel 4:19-27

1. Why would Daniel have difficulty telling Nebuchadnezzar the interpretation of this dream? *(Perhaps he feared for his life, or perhaps he just had an emotional connection to the king at this stage of life.)*
2. Do you think God allows bad things to happen to us to teach us lessons?
3. What is Daniel's advice to Nebuchadnezzar in verse 27? *(Repent of your sin, do what is right, be kind to the oppressed, etc.)*

Read Daniel 4:28-33

1. What does Nebuchadnezzar have pride concerning? (*His empire.*)
2. How does pride get in his way?
3. What happens to the king? (*He becomes like an ox, munching on grass with long fingernails and hair like a bird.*)
4. What do you think this was like for Nebuchadnezzar to experience?

Read Daniel 4:34-37

1. What does Nebuchadnezzar say in the last passage that makes you think he has repented? (*He exalts God; God can humble anyone, etc.*)
2. How do you think this would have sounded to followers of the One True God at the time, coming from their formerly pagan king?

MAKING IT REAL

We may not be in danger of grazing in the meadow like an ox or growing bird-like features, but make no mistake, God still humbles the proud among us.

Read Proverbs 16:18

The opposite of pride is humility. The Bible has a lot to say about humility.

Read Philippians 2:3-4

Read 1 Peter 5:5-6

Read James 4:10

1. What do these verses tell us about being humble? (*God favors the humble.*)
2. What do these verses say about pride? (*God opposes the proud.*)
3. Would you prefer that God favor you or oppose you?

Humility is the mark of a Christian. Since we have Christ, we don't have to prove to other people that we are better than they are, or that we can make a name for ourselves. Christ is our fullness, and we can depend on Him for that. While that should not lead us to laziness, it does give us peace in knowing that we do NOT have to be seen as important by the world to be important to God.

There is a fine line between pride and confidence. As Christians, we should be confident in our faith, in our salvation, in our prayers, etc. However, we should NOT become prideful in our attitude towards others. No matter how special you are, how good you are at what you do, or how important you think you are, that type of attitude does not witness well. We should use Jesus as our example, who did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made Himself nothing.

CLOSING PRAYER

Pray that an attitude of humility would take over your group