

March 5, 2023

Pride, Daniel 4:24-37

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Introduction

- King Neb was the most powerful man in the known world at this time. He was the monarch over the world superpower.
 - So, he built a city for himself that became known as one of the wonder of the ancient world.
- He had power and affluence that few people in history have ever achieved... and yet his life still fell apart.
 - Could it be that what clouded his mind is in ours as well? Could the reason his life fell apart be the same reason for the brokenness in your life?
- In this series, we are looking at the things that cause brokenness in our lives and God's counterintuitive plan to heal them. When we surrender to him we find victory.
 - In the end, Neb praised God because he dealt with the cancer in his heart—pride.

The Heart of Pride

- There's a small, largely unknown branch of theology called "pet-ology."
 - The dog looks at his person and thinks... "He must be God." The cat looks at his person and thinks... "I must be God."
- **Point:** Points on spiritual pride.
 - First, pride has an *attitude of accomplishment*.
 - It looks at the good things in your life and says, "I did that. I accomplished it."
 - Look at Neb in [29-30](#).
 - Pride works like a good politician: All good things were done by me. Everything wrong was done by someone else.

- Second, pride has *an attitude of entitlement*.
 - If things are going well in your life you will say, “I deserve all of this.” If not, you’ll say, “I deserve better than this!”
- So, pride is like a kind of cosmic plagiarism.
- It doesn’t recognize God as the Author of life. Pride receives the things that are actually gifts and says, “I did that. I deserve that.”
 - Humility looks at everything and says, “I don’t deserve any of this. It’s all a gift!”
 - Someone might respond that this is a bleak and depressing outlook on life. What they don’t understand is that humility is that which *receives life as a gift*.
 - The attitude of “I don’t deserve happiness, I don’t deserve friends, I don’t deserve success, etc.” is a false humility. It’s a reverse pride.
 - That attitude is saying “I *should* earn those things and if I can’t then I don’t want them.”
 - Humility recognized the blessings of life and joyfully receives them.
- Pride is the attempt to take what God has given us and claim ownership of it.
 - How do you know if pride is really operating in your life? Let’s look at the symptoms.

The Destruction of Pride

- Neb had dreams of a great tree covering the earth and it was cut down. No one could interpret the dream for him until Daniel.
 - Daniel tells him that it’s a warning and he ought to repent (27).
 - Neb’s descent into madness shows us that pride defaces our humanity. In attempting to be more than a man, Neb becomes less than a man. How?
- **Point:** Points on the destruction of pride.
- First, pride *will rob you of sleep*.
 - Neb’s pride drove him to accomplish all that he had done. The battles, empire, and city were the food for his pride to feed on. And yet... he cannot sleep.

- No matter how prosperous you are it will never be enough to make you complete.
- Most people never really learn this lesson because they haven't achieved that much. Look at the people who make it to the top and you'll frequently find that they are despairing and troubled
- Second, pride makes you *like an animal unable to empathize with people*.
- We're never more in touch with our humanity than when we are connected to others and sympathized with others. Pride makes you so self-absorbed that you can't even notice people.
- Second, pride makes you *like an animal intimidated by people*.
- In his chapter on pride in *Mere Christianity*, Lewis says that pride will stay away from anything that is stronger, better, or shows that it isn't the center of the universe.
 - It's pride that makes you feel threatened by someone else's attractiveness, intelligence, success, etc.
- Lastly, pride *makes you incapable of joy*.
- It will suck the joy out of life. When you receive some good your attitude will be "It's about time" and if you receive hardship then you will be bitter.
 - "Pride destroys your ability to handle bad times, and it sucks the goodness and joy out of good times."

The Deliverance from Pride

- How can you be healed of the pride that causes brokenness? The world's solutions will only add to your pride.
 - The Bible tells us that there is only one solutions and it's when you surrender your pride to God.
- **Point:** Only God can heal your pride. You must surrender to him.
 - Neb thought he was the master of the universe and lost it all. The true Master of the universe came and *gave it all away*.

- APP: Two tests...
 - First, you look at your life and confess to God “everything you do is right” (37).
 - As Christians, we weep over pain and suffering, but we still know that the world is better than we deserve.
 - Second, you use your life to now be generous to others and serve others (27).
- Are you a self-made accident? Or are you a special creation made with purpose that owes everything to the Author?