God's Warning about **PRIDE**

Daniel 4:1-37

4-11-2021

INTRODUCTION: Verses 1 - 29.

***Pride must be defeated in the Christian's life!**

How? By understanding three truths about pride.

I. PRIDE CAN BE DEFEATED BY UNDERSTANDING THE MARKS OF PRIDE (v. 30)

A. PRIDE OF SELF-ACHIEVEMENT (V. 30a)

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1. Eternality of God - God is everlasting

2. Sovereignty of God (v. 35)

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A. PRIDE OF (V. 30a)

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II. PRIDE CAN BE DEFEATED BY UNDERSTANDING THE FOR PRIDE (v. 31-33)

A. LOSS OF (v. 31)

B. LOSS OF (v.32-33a)

C. LOSS OF (v. 33b)

III. PRIDE CAN BE DEFEATED BY UNDERSTANDING THE FROM PRIDE (v. 34-37)

A. TO THE SAVIOR (V. 34)

B. _____ THE SAVIOR (v. 34b-35)

1. _____ of God - God is everlasting

2. _____ of God (v. 35)

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INTRODUCTION: Verses 1 - 29.

Today I'd like to warn you about your worst enemy. An enemy you often forget about or overlook. This enemy secretly lurks within the shadows trying to conceal his identity from your notice and from the attention of others.

Your worst enemy is not the murderer, the school bully, the person who gossips about you. He is a deadly foe who often carries out his evil work totally unnoticed by you in your day to day affairs.

And yet when he is around, others sense his presence (though they may not always put their finger on it); for he leaves behind a cold, dark sensation as well as an odorous stench.

This enemy lives in you, and his name is PRIDE!

Open - Dan. 4.

Nebuchadnezzar's testimonial of a judgment while at rest and flourishing. He had a dream of a tree.

King Nebuchadnezzar can be historically proven to have been one of the most influential rulers in history. God allowed this king to destroy Assyria and later Judah. God allowed Nebuchadnezzar to have an overwhelming empire!

But Nebuchadnezzar failed to give God the glory and credit. Even after the miraculous interpretation of his horrifying dream in chapter 2, after God had freed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego from the fiery furnace in chapter 3, and even after the warning of judgment to fall upon him if he failed to give glory to God for the kingdom which he had in chapter 4 (verses 17 and 25) -- Nebuchadnezzar did not give the glory to God. He was proud.

***Pride must be defeated in the Christian's life!**

How? By understanding three truths about pride.

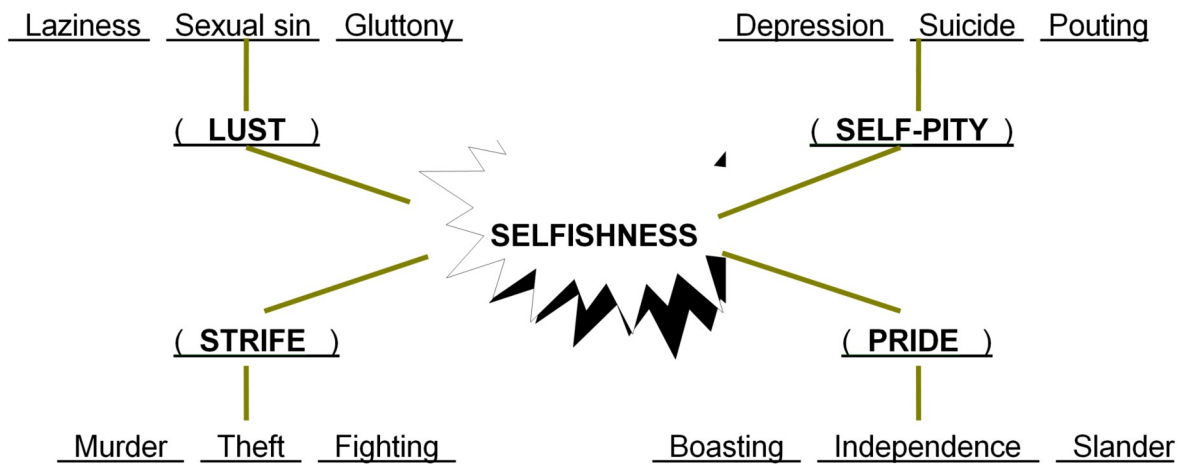
I. PRIDE CAN BE DEFEATED BY UNDERSTANDING THE MARKS OF PRIDE (v. 30)

Nebuchadnezzar had a second frightening dream. Daniel interpreted it and gave the warning (verse 25).

Twelve months later Nebuchadnezzar marched on Egypt and it was actually God who allowed him to conquer and destroy it. He returned home overcome with glory and success and forget God's warning (Ezek. 30:24-26).

As he stood on the top terrace of his famous palace, it is recorded in verse 30 - [READ V. 30]

In this verse there are three marks of pride which can be summed up in one word - "Selfishness."



The middle letter in the word pride is "I"!

It is theologically correct to say that the essence of all sin is selfishness (and pride is a manifestation of selfishness; Pride is selfishness showing itself off).

In verse 30, Nebuchadnezzar is speaking to himself (pride starts in the heart. Jesus

said in Mark 7:21 & 22, "Out of the heart proceeds . . . pride.")

The first mark we must be aware of is:

A. PRIDE OF SELF-ACHIEVEMENT (V. 30a)

Nebuchadnezzar is saying, "This is what I did!" (he boasts of city and its huge walls, temples, hanging gardens, and majestic palace).

Nebuchadnezzar is comparable to the rich man in Luke 12 (read Luke 12:16-20a).

Humorous illustration of the pride of self-achievement: "A woodpecker was pecking away at the trunk of a tree when all of a sudden lightning struck it. Looking back to where the now toppled tree had stood, the proud bird exclaimed, "Look what I did!" (Knights Illustrations, p. 299).
--"I got an 'A' on the test - what did you get?"
--"I ran the 50-yard dash in __ seconds - what did you run it in?"
--"I received an award in ___ - did you receive any?"
--"I led __ people to the Lord this year - how many did you lead?"
--"My church is running __ in attendance - how is yours doing?"
Many preachers have said -- if not openly, then in their hearts -- "Is this not the church that I have built?" "Are these not the souls that I have won?"

Scholar: "Is this not the knowledge that I have acquired?"

Musician: "Is this not the talent that I alone possess?"

[Paul said, "I am what I am by the grace of God."]

B. PRIDE OF SELF-STRENGTH (V. 30b)

Nebuchadnezzar is saying, "This is how I did it."

Man with his fallen depraved nature will do anything but give glory to God.

The unsaved are too proud to trust God's strength for salvation. Even Christians try to live the Christian life by our own power and plan (we try to

do God's work, man's way!).

We are often confident in our muscle, talent, ability, knowledge, etc.

Example of Lucifer: "Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness" (Ezek. 28:17).

C. PRIDE OF SELF-GLORIFICATION (V. 30c)

(This is a mark that is not always openly boasted over)

You are saying, "This is why I did it" -- self-honor.

What an empty life it would be to live for self-recognition! We as human could never get enough, never be satisfied.

You are more like the devil when you are proud than any other time.

[READ Isaiah 14:13-14 - Lucifer's five "I wills"]

--I am worthy of honor; therefore I want it"
--I deserve the credit; therefore I want it"
--I deserve attention; therefore I want it"
--I deserve praise; therefore I want it"

ILLUS: Giving money so others notice
Acting intelligent so others notice
Acting wrongly/goofing off so others notice
Acting right so others notice

Both of the last two are wrong if you just want someone else (other than God) to notice.

Pride is stealing glory which belongs to God
(Ex: Herod Agrippa - Acts 12:23)

"A man was so humble, he wrong a book about it, called: Humility and How I Attained It

"Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory."

The Examples of Pride are numerous

--The desire to draw attention to ourselves
- Obsession with fitness
- Our hair styles (purple hair)
- Markings on the flesh (tattoos and body piercings)

--Showing off
- Our body
- Our intelligence
- Our "spirituality"/self-righteousness (praying/giving so others notice; showing off how much you know of the Bible)
- Our possessions (Ex: King Hezekiah) (our homes, cars, status, money; our ministry & church)

A proud person seeks the acclamation of men for their work
(Eph. 6:5-8 – "eye-service, as men-pleasers").

A proud person is in love with his own opinions
(he is not a good listener, but loves to talk) (Ja. 1:19).

--Seeking to be a "big shot" (the greatest) (Lk. 9:46) instead of a humble servant (Mt. 20:26-28)

--Atheism ("Pride leads to every other vice: it is the complete anti-God state of mind. . . . It is pride which has been the chief cause of misery in every nation and every family since the world began. Make no mistake about it: pride. . . is the Devil's most e3ffective and destructive tool." (C.S. Lewis, quoted in Not I But Christ, p. 27)

--Always having to be right (can't be corrected)

Pride keeps us from:

1. Admitting wrong, error (apologizing)
2. Learning from others (accepting constructive criticism)

--Always having to win (flesh-driving competition) (Prov. 13:10)
(ex. bragging rights in sports)

--Advancing our own agenda/"It's all about me"

--Consumed with comparison (Lk. 9:49-50) (Measuring themselves by themselves – 2 Cor. 10:12)

> The subtle and insidious pride of holiness ("Let all teachers of holiness, whether in the pulpit or on the platform, and all seekers after holiness, whether in the closet or the convention, take warning. There is no pride so dangerous, because none so subtle and insidious, as the pride of holiness. There grows up, all unconsciously, a hidden habit of soul, which feels complacency in its attainments, and cannot help seeing how far it is in advance of others. It can be recognized, not always in any special self-assertion or self-laudation, but simply in the absence of of that deep self-abasement which cannot but be the mark of the soul that has seen the glory of God (Job 42:5-6; Isaiah 6:5). It reveals itself, not only in words or thoughts, but in a tone, a way of speaking of others, in which those who have the gift of spiritual discernment cannot but recognize the power of self. Even the world with its keen eyes notices it, and points to it as a proof that the profession of a heavenly life does not bear any specially heavenly fruits. O brethren! Let us beware." (Andrew Murray, quoted in Not I But Christ, p. 42).

Because of the pride of self-strength, many young pastors start off with a bang and end up being shot down without a ministry. This is why God warns the pastor not to be "a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil" (I Tim. 3:6).

A proud person has a critical spirit (he can see the speck of dust in someone else's eye, but not the beam in his own eye – Mt. 7:1-5).

A proud person is generally divisive and shatters unity (Prov. 28:25)

A proud person never or rarely prays. If he does pray in public, he prayers long, elaborate prayers (Lk. 20:47) with fancy words and no sincerity from the heart. "They honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me."

A proud person does not express gratitutde (to God or others) He considers himself ultra-worthy of what he is given.

Pride keeps us from:

Seeking help from God (prayer) and others

A sign of pride is prayerlessness - You are saying I can handle my own life.

God can't use a person who is confident that he is sufficient in his own strength! ***"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against powers and principalities and rulers of darkness in high places."

II. PRIDE CAN BE DEFEATED BY UNDERSTANDING THE PENALTY FOR PRIDE (v. 31-33)

[NOTE: Nebuchadnezzar drops from first person to third during madness.]

Nebuchadnezzar's penalty came unexpectantly and suddenly - "While the word was in the king's mouth."

Matthew 16:25 - "For whosoever shall save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose . . ." The consequences for selfishness (pride) are always a loss.

ILLUSTRATION:

According to LIFE Magazine, Muhammed Ali spoke of himself before his 1971 fight

with Joe Frazier thus:

There seems to be some confusion. We're gonna clear this confusion up on March 8. We're gonna decide once and for all who is king! There's not a man alive who can whup me. (He jabs the air with half a dozen blinding lefts.)

I'm too smart. (He taps his head.)
I'm too pretty. (He lifts his head high in profile, turning as a bust on a pedestal.)
I am the greatest. I AM the king! I should be a postage stamp – that's the only way I could get licked!

P.S. Ali lost to Frazier! (by A knock out)

(Greens Illustrations, p. 289)

A. LOSS OF POSSESSIONS (v. 31)

That which Nebuchadnezzar had striven for and boasted over and taken pride in was taken from him.

Nebuchadnezzar lost his kingdom.

What is it that you take pride in? What possessions? What Abilities? (Personal Illustration – Loss of typing skill)

(Prodigal Son - in hog pen, eating husk)

As believers we not only lose possessions on earth, but we lost possessions (rewards) in Heaven for works done out of selfishness.

B. LOSS OF POSITION

Nebuchadnezzar went from the king of men to the equivalent of a wild beast for 7 years.

READ verses 32 and 33a.

Nebuchadnezzar was no longer allowed to live in society. He no longer held the position of kingship.

The position of leadership had been transferred to another, possibly the humble man Daniel.

Leon Wood: "One aspect of God's sovereignty in the world, particularly pertinent in reference to Nebuchadnezzar is His superintendence over the election and appointments of national rulers. God permits only those to be placed in office whom He desires."

Nebuchadnezzar lost his position.

A leader who is egocentric has no right to hold the position of leadership.

And a pastor who is proud has no right to stand behind a pulpit.

A musician who is self-centered has no place performing music that is supposed to edify others.

C. LOSS OF PERSONAGE (v. 33b)

"He was driven . . ."

Supernatural judgment, miraculous.

Nebuchadnezzar, who was a man to be respected, was now lowered to such a base condition.

Nebuchadnezzar was humiliated - "God resisteth the proud" (James)

The king was removed from his peers and apparently lived in the woods with animals. He was now in a solitary condition - all alone!

The proud man always stands alone. Who wants fellowship with a boaster? Nebuchadnezzar lost fellowship. He lost normal rationality.

"He was wet with the dew of heaven" -- day and night under the stars, in the winds and the storms.

"Until his hairs were grown like eagle's feathers, and his nails like bird's claws." (v. 33b)

Wood: "In his madness, he may have resisted anyone trying to cut his hair

or trim his nails."

Loss of possessions - what you have
Loss of position - what you were
Loss of personage - how you are seen

ILLUSTRATION:
"A minister, a Boy Scout, and a computer expert were the only passengers on a small plane. The pilot came back to the cabin and said that the plane was going down but there were only three parachutes and four people. The pilot added, "I should have one of the parachutes because I have a wife and three small children." So he took one and jumped.

The Computer whiz said, "I should have one of the parachutes because I am the smartest man in the world and everyone needs me." So he took one and jumped.

The minister turned to the Boy Scout and with a sad smile said, "You are young and I have lived a rich life, so you take the remaining parachute, and I'll go down with the plane."

The Boy Scout said, "Relax, Reverend, the smartest man in the world just picked up my knapsack (back-pack) and jumped out!"
(Greens Illustrations, p. 289)

Prov. 11:2 - "When pride cometh, then cometh shame"

Prov. 13:10 - "Only by pride cometh contention"

Prov. 15:25 - "The Lord will destroy the house of the proud"

Prov. 16:18 - "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall"
I Jn. 2:16 - "The pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world

III. PRIDE CAN BE DEFEATED BY UNDERSTANDING THE RESTORATION FROM PRIDE (v. 34-37)

A. LOOKING UP TO THE SAVIOR (V. 34)

Notice the phrase order in verse 34 - First, Nebuchadnezzar looked up, then his understanding returned.

In Nebuchadnezzar's life, humility and a sense of dependence was necessary before restoration could be granted. Dependence is necessary for salvation!

Psalm 123:1-3

Pride is failure to recognize the truth

--the truth about me
(Ex: the tax collector vs. the Pharisee – Lk. 18:9-13)

--the truth about God (has a low view of God)

The essence of humility is truth (recognizing and acknowledging the
truth about God)

"Humility is not denying that you have talent or ability; it is acknowledging God as the source of your talent and ability." (Vincent Sawyer) And knowing that He gave it to you for His glory, not your own.

B. LIFTING UP THE SAVIOR (v. 34b-35)

In verse 34, Nebuchadnezzar lifts up the eternality of God. In v. 35, Nebuchadnezzar lifts up the sovereignty of God.

1. Eternality of God - God is everlasting

"I praised and honored Him that liveth forever"

"Whose dominion is an everlasting dominion"

"Whose kingdom is from generation to generation"

In v. 34, "Him that liveth forever" --- "Alam" is Aramaic and refers to all eternity.

This is in contrast to Nebuchadnezzar himself who would die someday! NOTE: Expression used in greeting the king (Dan. 2:4)

Jesus Christ is the "Alpha and Omega."

2. Sovereignty of God (v. 35)

"All the inhabitants" includes Nebuchadnezzar himself.

Nebuchadnezzar points out that "man is nothing" in comparison to God.

"He does His will" throughout the universe -- literally: "None can strike His hand." The thought is of striking god's hand with the intention of altering its operation.

Keil believes that the expression comes from the custom of "striking children on the hand in chastising them."

"To strike so as to prevent the hand's operation."

Nebuchadnezzar is saying, "If God does something or commands something, it is right, if only because He is the One who does it. Man is not to judge!"

Turn to Jeremiah 9:23 - 24.

Nebuchadnezzar saw himself as he really was!
Job – "I abhor myself in dust and ashes"
Isaiah - "Woe is me"
Peter - "Depart from me"
John - "Fell down as dead"

When we see God as He is, we see ourselves as we really are, and we have nothing in and of ourselves to boast about.

I Cor. 4:7 - "For who maketh thee to differ from another" All we have we have received of God!

This is not to say that we can walk about with the false appearance of humility, like a Pharisee. Or put ourselves down. One is not proud just because he has abilities or talents; one is proud when his attitude toward those abilities is self-centered.

> "Humility is not thinking less of yourself, but thinking of yourself less."
> (C.S. Lewis)

> "He must increase, I must decrease" (Jn. 3:30)

"It's not what you possess, but what possesses you."

Many take pride in their humility. Someone once said, "When you pray, always ask God for humility. But never thank Him for it!"

Nebuchadnezzar was rewarded (v. 36).
Nebuchadnezzar gives a warning (v. 37).

CONCLUSION:

Pride is one sin that we will have to battle all of our lives, so we must be constantly, consciously aware of it.

How? By
1. Knowing the marks
2. Knowing the penalty
3. Knowing the restoration (which is available - I Jn. 1:9 - "If we confess...")

Prov. 8:13 - "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil, pride and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate."

Christ: The ultimate example of humility (Philippians 2:5-10)

During William Carey's last illness in 1834, he was visited by the Scottish missionary Dr. Alexander Duff, who, in prayer with him, referred to him as "Dr. Carey." As Dr. Duff was leaving, the aged missionary said, "Dr. Duff, you have been speaking of 'Dr. Carey.' When I am gone, say nothing of 'Dr. Carey'; speak only about Dr. Carey's Savior."

Is that your request?

Christian - Have you been too proud to:

--Take a stand for Christ (at school or job)
--Get involved in your youth group at church
--Admit you were wrong
--Ask forgiveness
--Pray

Non-Christian - Have you been too proud to:

--Trust Christ as Savior (you think you are "good enough" because you think too much about yourself - you are proud)
(Pride sends more people to Hell than any other vice!)