

Thursday

Please read Daniel 4:34–37. How was Nebuchadnezzar restored to sanity?

Let's follow in Nebuchadnezzar's steps today. How will you . . .
... "raise your eyes towards heaven" today?

... "honor and glorify Him who lives forever"?

... acknowledge that "[God] does as He pleases"?

How can living Nebuchadnezzar's prayer help restore your emotional and spiritual sanity?

Thank God today for His power over all things. Thank Him that in all His great power He is still loving and merciful. Pray for the humility to acknowledge His power and the desire to lift your eyes to heaven.

Friday

Please read Ephesians 2:8–9. This verse strikes a great balance between our position before God and our personal ability to obtain any standing with God. According to these verses, how do you get right with God?

How do these verses remind you that you are not God? How does they encourage you?

Thank God today for His grace and salvation. Pray that you'll lean fully on His grace and not your actions and good deeds. Pray that His grace will make a difference in your heart and mind today.

Saturday

Please read Colossians 3:12. Spend time today praying through the "not-God" prayer at the end of the sermon notes. Also, please pray for the services this weekend. Pray that God will use the Hot Rods on the Green event to bring in people who don't normally attend church. Thank God today that you are "dearly loved" by Him.



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STAND STRONG

LIFE LESSONS FROM THE BOOK OF DANIEL

WEEK 4

Not God

JULY 2 & 3, 2011 • RENÉ SCHLAEPFER

The most important discovery in life:

ACT I: ALL IS WELL?

"I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at home in my palace, contented and **prosperous**. I had a dream . . ." *Daniel 4:3–4a NIV*

[Daniel said,] "Your Majesty, you are that tree! You have become great and strong; your greatness has grown until it reaches the sky, and your dominion extends to distant parts of the earth." *Daniel 4:20–22*

"You will be driven away from people and will live with the wild animals . . . **until you acknowledge that the Most High is sovereign** over all kingdoms on earth and gives them to anyone he wishes. . . your kingdom will be restored to you **when you acknowledge that Heaven rules.**" *Daniel 4:25–26*

"Therefore, Your Majesty, be pleased to accept my advice: **Renounce your sins by doing what is right**, and your wickedness by **being kind to the oppressed**. It may be that then your prosperity will continue." *Daniel 4:27*

ACT II: HITTING BOTTOM

Twelve months later, as the king was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon, he said, "Is not this the great Babylon **I have built** as the royal residence, **by my mighty power** and **for the glory of my majesty?**" *Daniel 4:29–30*

Immediately what had been said about Nebuchadnezzar was fulfilled. He was driven away from people and ate grass like the ox. His body was drenched with the dew of heaven until his hair grew like the feathers of an eagle and his nails like the claws of a bird. *Daniel 4:33*

over 

ACT III: RESTORED TO SANITY

“At the end of that time, I, Nebuchadnezzar, **raised my eyes toward heaven**, and my sanity was restored.” *Daniel 4:34b*

“Then I praised the Most High; I honored and glorified him who lives forever. **His dominion** is an eternal dominion; **his kingdom** endures from generation to generation. All the peoples of the earth are regarded as nothing. **He does as he pleases** with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back his hand or say to him: “What have you done?”” *Daniel 4:34–35*

“Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and exalt and glorify **the King of heaven**, because everything he does is right and all his ways are just. And those who walk in pride he is able to humble.” *Daniel 4:37*

The most important question in life:

?

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works, **so that no one can boast.** *Ephesians 2:8–9*

THE NOT-GOD PRAYER

“God, I want to confess. I am not God. I am not infinite. I am not holy. I’m a sinner. So I lift my eyes to the King of all.

I receive Your love and Your forgiveness as a gift of grace because of what Jesus did.

I want to make Jesus my Lord, and as best I can, follow Him for the rest of this life and then forever in the world to come.”

Acknowledgements

Many ideas and illustrations from today’s message were gleaned from “The Daniel Project: Week 4”, a sermon by John Ortberg, “It’s Not About Me” by Max Lucado, and “NotGod: A History of Alcoholics Anonymous” by Ernest Kurtz

Daily Meditations

Monday

Please read Psalm 95:3–7. The story of Nebuchadnezzar is stunning. The temptation to think that we are on equal footing with God is a sneaky one. When asked directly probably no one would say, “Yes, I think I’m on equal footing with God.” However our actions and thoughts betray us. When are you most likely to have a power-struggle with God?

What do these verses tell you about God’s power and position?

How have you recently be struck by the fact that you are not God? How does that realization tend to impact you? Does it comfort you? Discourage you? Frustrate you?

Thank God today for His great power and love. Thank Him for the reminder that you are not God. Ask Him to use this week to teach you about humility and comfort you with the truth that He is God and He loves you!

Tuesday

Please read Daniel 4:20–27. One of the consequences of thinking we are on equal footing with God is that we tend to give ourselves all the credit when things are going well – Nebuchadnezzar definitely falls into this trap. Think about your life right now. Ask God to show you where you’re taking the credit for yourself instead of giving glory to God and take a moment to write it down:

Please read Psalm 115:1. How can you use this verse to help you remember God’s role in your successes and triumphs? How can you apply it to your life right now?

Thank God today for the successes and triumphs He has given you. Ask Him to give you the courage and desire to give Him the glory and point yourself and others to Him.

Wednesday

Please read Daniel 4:29–33. Nebuchadnezzar hits bottom with a bang! We tend to associate “hitting bottom” with something an addict has to do before they can be helped. Truth is, if you continue to live like you’re on equal footing with God, you’ll hit bottom. How can hitting bottom be a mercy from God? How have you seen this in your own life or someone close to you?

Please read Psalm 40:1–3. What “slimy pit” do you feel like you’re in right now? What is God’s role in helping us out of the pit? What is our role? How does this help you today?

Thank God that He doesn’t leave you at the bottom of the pit. Pray for the patience to wait for Him to lift you up. Ask God to use your “pit” time to teach you about His grace and power. Pray for a friend who you know is hitting bottom. Pray that you’ll be an encouragement to them and be able to show them Jesus’ love and compassion.



Memory Verse

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast. *Ephesians 2:8–9*