

INTRO

- What does “the writing’s on the wall” mean?
- What is the difference between “humble yourself” and “be humbled”?

The book of Daniel encourages us to live faithfully to God within a culture that doesn’t. It also shows the downfall of pride in the human heart. This week, we look at another case of pride.

READ

Daniel 5:1-31

REFLECT & RESPOND

This story, which is similar to last week’s, contrasts a different response to God’s dealing with pride. (Read v22-24 to see one of the key differences) Belshazzar failed to learn from his predecessor’s mistakes and therefore failed to humble himself.

Qu: Do you think it is fair/just for God to judge people on the basis of whether or not they learn from other’s mistakes? Discuss why/why not.

3 takeaways from this story for us:

God Reigns.... therefore, take heart
 God Resists.... therefore, humble yourself
 God Rescues.... therefore, join him

1. GOD REIGNS—TAKE HEART

Daniel’s message is clear and repetitive: Despite appearances, God reigns over human empires and uses them according to his purposes to advance his kingdom. Therefore, we can take heart and have hope despite the circumstances.

Qu: What does it look like for us to have a real sense that God reigns over our personal lives?

Qu: How is the Crucifixion a good picture of God in control despite appearances?

2. GOD RESISTS—HUMBLE YOURSELF

God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble. (James 4:6)

Belshazzar is another vivid picture of the human heart that rejects God: Idolatry leads to pride which leads to sacrilege. Sacrilege is when we misuse or abuse that which is made for God’s glory.

Qu: How might pride affect the way we make decisions, judge what’s right/wrong, think about the future?

Qu: What does it mean to humble yourself?

‘Humble yourself’ means having the right view of yourself *in relation to God.*

Qu: why is it important to think of yourself in relation to God? How does the gospel help us in this regard?

3. GOD RESCUES—JOIN HIM

The hand that wrote judgement on the King’s wall would be the hand that took judgement on the cross for all.

God judges sin. But God also rescues us from sin. He rescues us because we are unable to rescue ourselves. And he rescues us so that we can be extensions of his rescue mission to others.

Qu: In what way/s can you be an extension of God’s mission to rescue others?

RESPOND & PRAY

- What was most encouraging/challenging from today’s discussion?
- How will you apply what you learnt to your life?
- Pray for one another and pray for those on your PEBCI card (I encourage you to get everyone to take it out and pray over it).