

DISCUSSION NOTES

FEBRUARY 17, 2019

Start by praying and asking for God's help as you seek to grow as authentic followers of Jesus.

GETTING STARTED

1. Write an imaginary headline for a tabloid or online clickbait article that describes King Nebuchadnezer's descent into animal-like insanity (you may have to summarize what happened for those who are unfamiliar with what happens in Daniel 4).

LISTENING TO GOD'S WORD

2. Read Daniel 4:4-9. Make 5-7 quick observations. Who is present? What action takes place? What words or phrases stand out? Where is the tension? What is the big idea?
3. Read Daniel 4:20-26 for Daniel's interpretation of the dream. What purpose is given for the dream? What warning is given by the dream? What hope is offered in the dream?
4. Read Daniel 4:19 and 4:27. In these verses, where do we see Daniel's kindness and compassion and where do we see Daniel's courage and truth-telling? Why is this balance important for believers who seek to engage our world for good?
5. Read Daniel 4:28-33. How does Nebuchadnezer initially respond to Daniel's persuasive message? What happens to the king? Where do we see God's hand at work in what happens?

What lessons are being taught through these events? How do we need to learn these lessons too?

6. Read Daniel 4:34-37. How does the king's confession here seem different than his shallow confessions in 2:47 and 3:28-29? Do you think he was converted to true faith? Why or why not?

LIVING IT OUT

7. Where do we see the gospel proclaimed in this chapter? Where might we see signs of real gospel faith evident in King Nebuchadnezer's confession in verses 34-37?
8. In his actions and attitudes, how does Daniel display both compassion *and* boldness — at the same time — *both* conviction to stand for truth *and* courageous love to care for his unbelieving friend?

What is one thing you could do to live more like Daniel in your personal life?

9. Which side of engagement do you need more work on to effectively love those who to whom God has sent you?
 - (1) to offer a clear witness and bold truth
 - (2) to offer grace-filled friendship and compassionate presence

In other words, are you too confrontational or not confrontational enough?

10. Who do you know that God has sent you to as a godly friend and a personal witness? Can you name three people whom you believe God wants you to engage? Write their names here.
11. Spend the last 5-10 minutes praying specifically for those friends and for your hearts to engage them with conviction and courageous love. Pray that God would show you how to connect with them as a friend this week.