

Word notes Sunday 09/10/2011 Michael Meeks
Daniel Chap 4: The Great Sin - Pride

Summary (read this bit out to remind cell members what was said on Sunday)

Key Text: Daniel 4

This chapter consists of a letter from King Nebuchadnezzar to all people of the world concerning his fate at the hands of God regarding his pride in achievements in building the greatest earthly kingdom described in the Bible but which is his only by the will of God. The letter details the dream God sent to King Nebuchadnezzar, the interpretation brought to him by Daniel, his unwillingness to act on Daniel's advice for a year and the madness he suffered at the hand of God as a result. It concludes with the king's sanity restored when he repents and gives the glory to God, the King of Heaven.

Pride – described by C S Lewis as “the great sin” is in essence the elevation of oneself over others – the idolatry of self. Not to be confused with that good feeling of a job well done or the joy at seeing children succeed etc. It is always with reference to others – if I'm the richest it's only because all others are poorer, if the most physically attractive is only because I deem others to be unattractive, the most powerful only because I have power over others. It is the opposite to the attitude of Jesus who was willing to become humble in order that others might be raised up.

Application (this is the bit where cell members get to participate. Lead discussions around these points)

1, Read Daniel 4:37

- a) What did it take for Nebuchadnezzar to see the truth, God's prophetic Word, clear teaching on it's meaning, a time of reflection, all of these or something else?
- b) Given what we know of Nebuchadnezzar why do you think it took such extreme measures?
- c) What warning does Nebuchadnezzar give to others who might fall into the trap of pride?

2, a) What does Romans 12:3 tell us about how to view ourselves?

b) How do we achieve this aim and what resources do we have to help us?

3, In Matthew 20:25-28 Jesus tells us exactly how to work this out in our everyday lives.

- a) How does this challenge you – at home, at work, at church?
- b) Is this a matter of “doing the right things”, of attitude to others or a combination of both?
- c) Depending on your answer what changes do you think are necessary in your attitudes or actions to fully follow Jesus in this?

Witness (this is the bit where the cell talks and prays about how to share the Good News)

Go around the group (or do this in threes) and ask each to share briefly to whom they are currently witnessing (actions and/or words) or praying for. What challenges do they face and how are they responding to those challenges. Pray for each in turn.