

# STANDING STRONG

Sunday, August 19, 2018  
10:30 AM

In Daniel Chapter 1 we talked about Eroding Foundations

In Chapter 2 we said we need to Look to God

In Chapter 3 we saw that Stand Strong mean's Not Bowing Down

This week we want to look at another important factor in Standing Stron

## Daniel 4 New International Version (NIV)

Nebuchadnezzar's Dream of a Tree

**4** King Nebuchadnezzar,

To the nations and peoples of every language, who live in all the earth:

May you prosper greatly!

**2** It is my pleasure to tell you about the miraculous signs and wonders that the Most High God has performed for me.

**3** How great are his signs,  
how mighty his wonders!

His kingdom is an eternal kingdom;

his dominion endures from generation to generation.

**4** I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at home in my palace, contented and prosperous. **5** I had a dream that made me afraid. As I was lying in bed, the images and visions that passed through my mind terrified me. **6** So I commanded that all the wise men of Babylon be brought before me to interpret the dream for me. **7** When the magicians, enchanters, astrologers and diviners came, I told them the dream, but they could not interpret it for me. **8** Finally, Daniel came into my presence and I told him the dream. (He is called Belteshazzar, after the name of my god, and the spirit of the holy gods is in him.)

**9** I said, "Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians, I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in you, and no mystery is too difficult for you. Here is my dream; interpret it for me.

**10** These are the visions I saw while lying in bed: I looked, and there before me stood a tree in the middle of the land. Its height was enormous. **11** The tree grew large and strong and its top touched the sky; it was visible to the ends of the earth. **12** Its leaves were beautiful, its fruit abundant, and on it was food for all. Under it the wild animals found shelter, and the birds lived in its branches; from it every creature was fed.

**13** “In the visions I saw while lying in bed, I looked, and there before me was a holy one, a messenger, [c] coming down from heaven. **14** He called in a loud voice: ‘Cut down the tree and trim off its branches; strip off its leaves and scatter its fruit. Let the animals flee from under it and the birds from its branches. **15** But let the stump and its roots, bound with iron and bronze, remain in the ground, in the grass of the field.

“Let him be drenched with the dew of heaven, and let him live with the animals among the plants of the earth. **16** Let his mind be changed from that of a man and let him be given the mind of an animal, till seven times pass by for him.

**17** “The decision is announced by messengers, the holy ones declare the verdict, so that the living may know that the Most High is sovereign over all kingdoms on earth and gives them to anyone he wishes and sets over them the lowliest of people.’

**18** “This is the dream that I, King Nebuchadnezzar, had. Now, Belteshazzar, tell me what it means, for none of the wise men in my kingdom can interpret it for me. But you can, because the spirit of the holy gods is in you.”

#### Daniel Interprets the Dream

**19** Then Daniel (also called Belteshazzar) was greatly perplexed for a time, and his thoughts terrified him. So the king said, “Belteshazzar, do not let the dream or its meaning alarm you.”

Belteshazzar answered, “My lord, if only the dream applied to your enemies and its meaning to your adversaries! **20** The tree you saw, which grew large and strong, with its top touching the sky, visible to the whole earth, **21** with beautiful leaves and abundant fruit, providing food for all, giving shelter to the wild animals, and having nesting places in its branches for the birds— **22** 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.

**23** “Your Majesty saw a holy one, a messenger, coming down from heaven and saying, ‘Cut down the tree and destroy it, but leave the stump, bound with iron and bronze, in the grass of the field, while its roots remain in the ground. Let him be drenched with the dew of heaven; let him live with the wild animals, until seven times pass by for him.’

**24** “This is the interpretation, Your Majesty, and this is the decree the Most High has issued against my lord the king: **25** You will be driven away from people and will live with the wild animals; you will eat grass like the ox and be drenched with the dew of heaven. Seven times will pass by for you until you acknowledge that the Most High is sovereign over all kingdoms on earth and gives them to anyone he wishes. **26** The command to leave the stump of the tree with its roots means that your kingdom will be restored to you when you acknowledge that Heaven rules. **27** 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.”

### The Dream Is Fulfilled

**28** All this happened to King Nebuchadnezzar. **29** Twelve months later, as the king was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon, **30** 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?”

**31** Even as the words were on his lips, a voice came from heaven, “This is what is decreed for you, King Nebuchadnezzar: Your royal authority has been taken from you. **32** You will be driven away from people and will live with the wild animals; you will eat grass like the ox. Seven times will pass by for you until you acknowledge that the Most High is sovereign over all kingdoms on earth and gives them to anyone he wishes.”

**33** 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.

**34** At the end of that time, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven, and my sanity was restored. 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.

**35** 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?”

**36** At the same time that my sanity was restored, my honor and splendor were returned to me for the glory of my kingdom. My advisers and nobles sought me out, and I was restored to my throne and became even greater than before. **37** 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 Chapter 4 is a perfect illustration of Proverbs 16:18

**Proverbs 16:18 (NIV)**

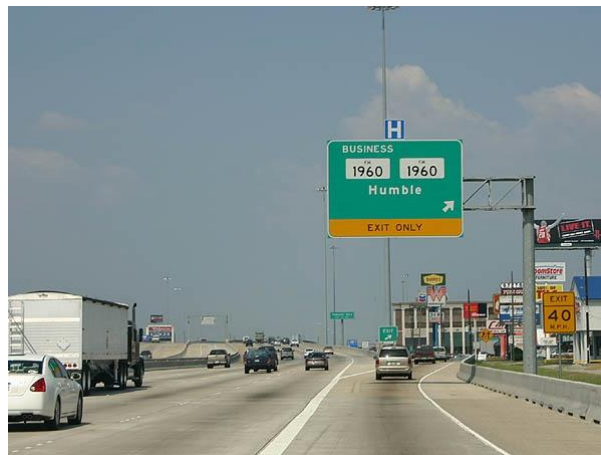
**18** Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall.

It is also a great reminder that Pride will take us down. Humility, on the other hand is the antidote to pride. Though it may seem counterintuitive, The way to real secret to standing strong is the proper exercise of humility in our lives. Nebuchadnezzar himself, not only illustrates this point but summarizes the lesson we should learn in the last verse of this chapter.

**Daniel 4:37 (NIV)**

**37** 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.

As we consider what Daniel 4 has to teach us about Standing Strong by walking in humility; let's focus on three different areas of our lives in which we need a greater perspective of Humility



1. **We need a greater perspective of Humility towards God**

Humility in our perspective towards God recognizes how small and insignificant we are compared to him

It acknowledges the complete sovereignty and supremacy of god

**Psalm 34:3 English Standard Version (ESV)**

**3** Oh, magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together!

### **Psalm 69:30 English Standard Version (ESV)**

**30** I will praise the name of God with a song; I will magnify him with thanksgiving.

In [Let Every Heart Prepare Him Room: Daily Family Devotions for Advent](#) by Nancy Guthrie, she says...

*The truth is, we can never fully take in or understand God's greatness. But we can magnify Him. We magnify God not by making Him bigger than He truly is, but by making Him greater in our thoughts, in our affections, in our memories, and in our expectations. We magnify Him by having higher, larger, and truer thoughts of Him. We magnify Him by praising Him and telling others about His greatness so they can have bigger thoughts about Him, too.*

Giving glory to God for what he has accomplished

\*The farmer and the preacher

Talking about God more than we talk about ourselves

## **2. We need a greater perspective of Humility towards Ourselves**

If having a greater perspective of humility towards God means making him bigger than having a greater perspective of humility towards ourselves means making ourselves smaller and of less importance

### **Romans 12:3 (NIV)**

**3** For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you.

### **Matthew 23:11-12 (ESV)**

**11** The greatest among you shall be your servant. **12** Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.

### **Mark 9:33-35 (ESV)**

**33** And they came to Capernaum. And when he was in the house he asked them, "What were you discussing on the way?" **34** But they kept silent, for on the way they had argued with one another about who was the greatest. **35** And he sat down and called the twelve. And he said to them, "If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all."

This is true when it comes to our assessment of our accomplishments and abilities. In [his sermon](#) at the Gospel Coalition, Matt Chandler made a statement that knocked me between the eyes: "When we take the talents God has given us to glorify Him with, and instead glorify ourselves, we are blaspheming."

*But then – one glimpse of the glory of King Jesus exposes all this absurdity for what it is. It's embarrassing, really. We act like gods, when in comparison to the glory of God, we are mere ants jockeying for prestige. We're like candles, boasting about our light, when in reality, we're outside in broad daylight. Jesus outshines us all. The only way to get over ourselves is to get into Christ.*

C.S. Lewis writes:

*The point is, God wants you to know Him: wants to give you Himself. And He and you are two things of such a kind that if you really get into any kind of touch with Him you will, in fact, be humble – delightedly humble, feeling the infinite relief of having for once got rid of all the silly nonsense about your own dignity which has made you restless and unhappy all your life. He is trying to make you humble in order to make this moment possible: trying to take off a lot of silly, ugly, fancy-dress in which we have all got ourselves up and are strutting about like the little idiots we are.*

### **Philippians 2:5-8 (NIV)**

**5** In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: **6** Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; **7** rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. **8** And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!

Our assessment of our righteousness and/or sinfulness

### **Luke 14:10 (NIV)**

**10** But when you are invited, take the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he will say to you, 'Friend, move up to a better place.' Then you will be honored in the presence of all the other guests.

Our plans and agendas and time frames

### **1 Peter 5:6-7 (NIV)**

**6** Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. **7** Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

Humility is waiting on God rather than trying to do things ourselves

Learn to laugh at ourselves

Terry Lindvall writes in [Surprised By Laughter: The Comic World of C.S. Lewis](#): *Laughter is a divine gift to the human who is humble. A proud man cannot laugh because he must watch his dignity; he cannot give himself over to the rocking and rolling of his belly. But a poor and happy man laughs heartily because he gives no serious attention to his ego....Only the truly humble belong to this kingdom of divine laughter...Humor and humility should keep good company. Self deprecating humor can be a healthy reminder that we are not the center of the universe, that humility is our proper posture before our fellow humans as well as before almighty God...*

### 3. We need a greater perspective of Humility towards Others

Humility here learns to see others as having great value and worth

#### **Philippians 2:3-4 (NIV)**

**3** Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, **4** not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

#### **Colossians 3:12-14 (NIV)**

**12** Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. **13** Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. **14** And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

As worthy of the benefit of the doubt

As needing forgiveness

As candidates for all that God has for us

\*This does not mean that there is not a time to walk away from relationships. I understand that there are situations and circumstances that are toxic, abusive and will not change. But even when we have to walk away from a particular relationship we should do so with great humility rather than with a pride that says I

am right and you are wrong. I am righteous and you are not. We can humbly leave people in God's hands knowing that He and He alone knows the true condition of their heart and whether or not they will ever change.