



WEEK THREE: WRITING ON THE WALL

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We've been going through the Bible book of Daniel. And we can automatically place ourselves in the roles of the heroes: Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. We think, "Am I courageous?" "Am I rebel-bedient?" But what if we are not the heroes? What if we are more like Belshazzar? Let's take time to really let God examine our hearts so that we are measured and found worthy because of Christ. As you study, ask Him to show you the "writing on the wall" in your own life.

Where Am I Today?

- 1) Do you have a bucket list? Name one thing you'd really like to do before you die.
- 2) Alternately, what is something you would move heaven and earth to accomplish if you knew you had only 28 days left on earth?

Into the Bible

- 3) **Read Daniel 5:1-4.** Belshazzar had it all: the kingdom, riches, power. But it brought about a huge sense of pride. It also insulated him from any real fear of God. Read the passages below. What are some of the things that can blind us to God and His ways and His will? What are some things we should count as valuable in our lives?



a. 1 John 2:15-16

b. 1 John 2:12-14

- 4) **Read Daniel 5:10-12, 17-28.** Note the two people who spoke into Belshazzar's life and what they can show us about speaking out. What specifically does Daniel's reply in verse 17 reveal to you? Also, share about a personal truth-teller in your life, who made clear what God was expecting from you.

How Does This Apply?

- 5) King David has an entire Psalm about the fact that "life is short." Life is uncertain. **Read Psalm 39** and ponder the number of your days. Now, **read James 4:13-14.** You may be 20 years old and indestructible, but it can be over for you tomorrow. You may be 50 and thinking you have at least 20 more good years ahead of you—but you are in exactly the same boat. Own this truth down deep in your soul: today might be my last day on earth. Am I living as if I was living my last 28 days?
- 6) In light of that truth, consider the weekend message, and that there are three good standards for measuring your life. If you have the courage to do it, pray the "search me" prayer from **Psalm 139:23-24.** Then jot down your own self-evaluation, empowered with God's Spirit, as He convicts and encourages you.



- a. Do I know Jesus as Lord and Savior? Am I trusting in my parents' faith or my own good works? Or do I know Him as the Forgiver and Leader of my life?
- b. I'm looking at my watch and calendar. How am I spending my time? I have looked at my work hours, my free time, my relationships, my hobbies and I feel as though I am:
- c. I'm checking my checkbook and wallet. How am I spending my resources? The money I have, the possessions I own, and the disposable income in my budget? Am I committed to the tithe and going beyond to generosity?
- 7) This weekend there was a difficult discussion of the consequences of rejecting God and denying Jesus as Lord and Savior. **Read Romans 1:18-25**. When we reject and rebuff and ignore—and tell God to leave us alone—we are separated. If we continue to do that, we are eternally separated from God and that is hell. What does this mean in your life? Does it scare you? Does it make you doubt God's love? Does it motivate you to love others well by sharing the Good News of Jesus' life and death for them?
- 8) Consider your life and relationships. For whom am I the truth-teller? Who is going to need my clear, direct, confident answer to a question of faith or morality? Am I prepared for this challenge? If not, what do I need to do to be ready to be used by God?



Digging Deeper: Going Further on Your Own

- 9) If you consider yourself a believer, you will one day be called upon to speak for God. One of the most incredible, courageous stories of being a truth-teller, and a mouthpiece for God, is told in 2 Samuel, chapter 12. In the previous chapter, we hear all the sordid details of David's lust and then affair with Bathsheba. We learn of her pregnancy and David's attempt to cover up their sin. When that doesn't work, he resorts to "conspiracy to murder" and he makes sure that the absent husband is killed.

The prophet Nathan was tasked by God with confronting King David. **Read 2 Samuel 12:1-14.** What are some lessons you learn from this conversation, about being the person who must go and share God's Word—or about being the one on the receiving end of Godly rebuke?

Things I notice about Nathan:

Things I notice about David: