

Living in a Pagan World

Part4

“The Natural Born Killer”

Review:

- We live in a pagan world.
 - It's not a surprise to God.

Philippians 3:18-20 (NIV)

For, as I have often told you before and now say again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things. But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ,

Where we left Nebuchadnezzar

Daniel 3:28 (NIV)

Then Nebuchadnezzar said, “Praise be to the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who has sent his angel and rescued his servants! They trusted in him and defied the king's command and were willing to give up their lives rather than serve or worship any god except their own God.

What do we learn about God in Daniel 4?

A. He warns over and over again.

Daniel 4:27 (NIV)

Therefore, O king, 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.”

Jeremiah 35:15 (NIV)

Again and again I sent all my servants the prophets to you. They said, “Each of you must turn from your wicked ways and reform your actions; do not follow other gods to serve them. Then you will live in the land I have given to you and your fathers.” But you have not paid attention or listened to me.

Ezekiel 33:10-11 (NIV)

“Son of man, say to the house of Israel, 'This is what you are saying: “Our offenses and sins weigh us down, and we are wasting away because of them. How then can we live?”' Say to them, 'As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign Lord, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn from their ways and live. Turn! Turn from your evil ways! Why will you die, O house of Israel?'

B. His discipline is motivated by love.

Proverbs 3:12 (NLT)

For the Lord corrects those he loves, just as a father corrects a child in whom he delights.

C. He acts in His own timing.

Psalms 73:2-3 (NLT)

But as for me, I almost lost my footing. My feet were slipping, and I was almost gone. For I envied the proud when I saw them prosper despite their wickedness.

Psalms 73:16-19 (NLT)

So I tried to understand why the wicked prosper. But what a difficult task it is! ¹⁷Then I went into your sanctuary, O God, and I finally understood the destiny of the wicked. ¹⁸Truly, you put them on a slippery path and send them sliding over the cliff to destruction. ¹⁹In an instant they are destroyed, completely swept away by terrors.

D. He saves those who will return to Him.

Daniel 4:36 (NLT)

“When my sanity returned to me, so did my honor and glory and kingdom. My advisers and nobles sought me out, and I was restored as head of my kingdom, with even greater honor than before.

What does God hate? Pride!!!

Daniel 4:29-30 (NLT)

Twelve months later he was taking a walk on the flat roof of the royal palace in Babylon. As he looked out across the city, he said, 'Look at this great city of Babylon! By my own mighty power, I have built this beautiful city as my royal residence to display my majestic splendor.'

James 4:6-7 (NLT)

But he gives us even more grace to stand against such evil desires. As the Scriptures say, “God opposes the proud but favors the humble.” So humble yourselves before God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

Forms of Pride:

- **Self-righteousness**

Isaiah 64:6 (NLT)

We are all infected and impure with sin. When we display our righteous deeds, they are nothing but filthy rags. Like autumn leaves, we wither and fall, and our sins sweep us away like the wind.

- **Self-confidence**

Proverbs 28:26 (NIV)

He who trusts in himself is a fool, but he who walks in wisdom is kept safe.

- **Self-exultation (False humility is a form of self-exultation)**

Matthew 23:12 (NIV)

For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.

- **Self-sufficiency (“I can do it myself”)**

Luke 13:34 (NLT)

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones God's messengers! How often I have wanted to gather your children together as a hen protects her chicks beneath her wings, but you wouldn't let me.

- **Taking credit for what God has done**

Deuteronomy 8:17-18 (NIV)

You may say to yourself, “My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.” But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your forefathers, as it is today.

- **Other forms include:**

- Self-pity (“I deserve better”) and self-centeredness (“It's all about me”)

Why does God hate and oppose pride?

A. It separates you from the Lord.

- You don't seek God. You think you don't need Him or need to be saved.

- It makes you your own god. You trust and rely on yourself.

B. It separates you from others.

- It causes broken relationships. Two selfish “I”-centered people will hurt one another, creating distance and mistrust.

1 John 1:6-7 (NIV)

If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

C. It causes great pain in your life and the lives of others. God loves you!

Proverbs 16:18 (NIV)

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

- For example: Sanity is lost when pride takes over. Sanity is regained when we see reality.

Daniel 4:34 (NIV)

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.

A heart of humility

- **We all struggle with sin and pride.**

- **When we see God for who He is, it changes the way we see ourselves. (See Isaiah 6)**

- **Confession and repentance leads to renewed right relationships.**

Romans 7:18-19 (NIV)

I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do this I keep on doing.

1 John 1:8-10 (NIV)

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. ⁹If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives.

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