



LION HEART • Sleepless in Babylon • Week 2 • September 19 & 20

Daniel 2; John 14:1 & 27

These study guides are designed for individual or group study but highly encouraged to be experienced in community with a small group or other friends on the journey with Jesus.

Opening: Few virtues matter so much to the quality of our lives or our influence on others as COURAGE. We are looking at Daniel’s way of life for lessons of faith-fueled integrity, practiced with courage.

Setting: No matter where we live, or how old we are, or how “successful” we’ve been in certain arenas of life, stress over the future is a natural part of life. Worry is that background doubt, that unanswered (or unanswerable) question that robs our mind of focus and clarity.

- What worries you today? Journal or share your worry.
- Are you conscious of the issue? Is it specific or is there just an underlying malaise of “something’s not right” or “I don’t know how to control that”? Talk about it.

Present vs. Future—the Nebuchadnezzar approach: Read Daniel 2. Pastor Dan describes “600 years before the birth of Jesus, King Nebuchadnezzar presided over one of the greatest, most sophisticated empires the world has ever known”. And yet vs. 1 states his “mind turned to things to come”. Pastor Dan draws us to the conclusion that the king’s first step in response was to “worry alone”, to toss and turn with his trouble.

- Typically what is your first response to worry?
- How does that response effect what you are worrying about?

Step 2—Earthly wisdom: Daniel 2:2-3 defines the king’s second step to managing his worry. Pastor Dan makes the statement, “He was seeking half-heartedly help from people he doesn’t really trust.”

- What does a trusted conversation look like? What does it feel like?

Step 3--Reprisal: Read vs. 4-12. There is little as frustrating to the human psyche as feeling out of control—of not “knowing” what’s happening. King Nebuchadnezzar was accustomed to having things his way.

- Looking at the story so far, what is the point? Is there a lesson in the “harsh decree”?
- Journal or talk about what your “rage therapy” looks like. How do you counter that?

The Contrast: Nebuchadnezzar took three steps as a result of his worry about the future. Pastor Dan carefully leads us through vs. 14-48 describing “Dan’s Plan for Stress.” He spoke of six steps:

1. **Seek out a counsellor who can help define the problem** - he was willing to learn from another person. (vs. 14-16: He spoke with wisdom and tact.)



2. **Daniel shared the tension and feelings with faith-filled friends** —people who shared his bigger faith. (vs. 17-18)
 3. **Daniel asked his friends to pray** —he was looking for wisdom from a bigger source, from God, rather than just the minds of his friends.
 4. **Daniel trusted God to Act** - that source and looked for an answer to come to him.
 5. **Daniel responded to God’s leading when it came** - acted on the answer given— he went toward the problem with the answer. (vs. 24)
 6. **Daniel gave God the glory** - because God is the source of wisdom and healing. (vs. 19-23, 27-28)
- Which step in “Dan’s Plan for Stress” gives you the greatest trouble? How can you improve on that?
 - How are the different steps interrelated? What happens if you leave steps out?
 - Are you trying to handle worry and stress but skipping steps? Journal or talk about what you are discerning from this and how you can improve your process.

Humility begets Glory for God: One of our biggest hurdles may be looking “outside”. Asking a trusted friend is a step of humility. Looking for God’s idea is admitting our idea is not good enough. Asking another person to help us define our stress because they may have a clearer perspective is an admission of not knowing enough. Pastor Dan’s closing encouragement was “when the problem starts to give way ...indeed, even before you see the final result, do as Daniel did here: Give glory to God.”

- How well do you look outside of yourself for help? What holds you back? What encourages you outside of yourself?
- God takes joy in our dependence on Him. Read John 14:1 and talk about it in the context of your stress and worry.

Practice of the Week:

REFLECT: Read John 14:25-27 everyday, as you get up in the morning. Talk to God about Peace. Look for God’s peace in every worry that you carry into that day. Pray for God’s peace for any angst or stress that will come up in your day ahead. End with “Give us this day our daily bread”. God is the daily giver of good gifts—perhaps your Peace for each day is the greatest gift of all.