



Daily Devotionals: The Test of Success | June 27, 2021

This summer, we're studying the book of Daniel together! During this six-week series, we'll learn how God uses the difficult and high-pressure situations of life to refine and shape us into the people he wants us to be. Together, we'll see that no matter the challenges we face or the fires we walk through, God is with us!

Be sure to prayerfully consider each day's Scripture, questions, and reflections. If you are a part of a life group, let these devotions stir your thinking and be the foundation for your group conversation.

As you come to each day's reflection, find time with God away from TV, your phone, or any other distractions. Find a quiet space— somewhere where you can quiet your soul and attend to your thoughts and feelings. You might want to get a journal to use throughout this series for sermon notes and as a landing place for your various ruminations.

Our prayer is that over the course of this series, these Bible verses and reflections will help you love God, love people, and make disciples!



Day 1

Check out our new podcast released each Monday, which will recap the Daniel series. This podcast is intended to flesh out the sermon and the text of Daniel in a new and fresh way. It will have a bit of teaching, a reading of Scripture, and end with some reflection questions. You can find it by searching “The Creek” wherever you get your podcasts!



Day 2

The Test of Success, Part 1 – Imaginative Prayer

One of the ways that Jesus followers have been engaging with the Scriptures is through a practice called Imaginative Prayer. In this discipline, readers of the text actually imagine themselves in its story, encountering what is being written through their senses and creativity. Here's how to engage with this week's text in this way:

- **Read Daniel 4:1-37.**

- Visualize what is happening in the story. Take some time to imagine what the scene was like. Listen to the words spoken in the text again as if you were one of the first to hear them.

- Now begin to imagine the scene as if you were right in the middle of it.
 - Who are you in the story?
 - What do you see?
 - What do you hear?
 - What do you smell?
 - What's your position?
 - Who else is there with you?
 - What are you feeling?
 - What's the mood of the crowd?
 - What is your response to all you experience?
 - What questions do you have?
 - What fears do you have?



- Prayerfully allow God to bring the story to life for you. The people we read about in Scripture were real people who walked the earth and had feelings and thoughts much like ours.
- Read **Daniel 4:1-37** once more, imagining yourself in the text. What are you noticing from your responses?
- As you listen again, notice how you sense God inviting you to respond. What are His invitations from this story for you today?



Day 3

- Re-read **Daniel 4:23-33**. In this passage, we read how Nebuchadnezzar was deposed from his kingdom because of his pride (and he even allowed his pride to continue *after* he found out what his newest dream meant!). When has there been a time in your life when your pride was exposed, but you perhaps dug your heels in deeper and continued living as you know you should not have?
- In your experience, what is the antidote to pride? How have you overcome instances of pride in your own life?
- In this text, Daniel plays the role of God's "word." He brings the will of God to light for the King and exposes his pride with it. In what ways recently has God's word exposed pride in your own heart?
- What places of pride do you need to confess right now to a trusted Christian brother or sister?



Day 4

The Test of Success, Part 2 – Imaginative Prayer

One of the ways that Jesus' followers have been engaging with the Scriptures is through a practice called Imaginative Prayer. In this discipline, readers of the text actually imagine themselves in its story, encountering what is being written through their senses and creativity. Here's how to engage with this week's text in this way:

- Read **Daniel 5:1-30**.

- Visualize what's happening in the story. Take some time to imagine what the scene was like. Listen to the words spoken in the text again as if you were one of the first witnesses of them.

- Now begin to imagine the scene as if you were right in the middle of it.
 - Who are you in the story?
 - What do you see?
 - What do you hear?
 - What do you smell?
 - What's your position?
 - Who else is there with you?
 - What are you feeling?
 - What's the mood of the crowd?
 - What is your response to all you experience?
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- Prayerfully allow God to bring the story to life for you. The people we read about in Scripture were real people who walked the earth and had feelings and thoughts much like ours.
- Read **Daniel 5:1-30** once more, imagining yourself in the text. What are you noticing from your responses?
- As you listen again, notice how you sense God inviting you to respond. What are His invitations from this story for you today?



Day 5

- Similar to the content on Days 2 and 3, yesterday's reading and today's questions also touch on the topic of pride. Go ahead and re-read **Daniel 5:18-30**. Why do you think God's Word includes two big chapters back-to-back here in Daniel that talk about pride?
- Imagine the writing on the wall being written for you to consider personally...
 - How would you feel hearing the word "Mene, mene" meaning "God has numbered the days of your reign and brought it to an end?"
 - How would you feel hearing the word "Tekel" meaning "You have been weighed on the scales and found wanting?"
 - How would you feel hearing the word "Peres" meaning "Your kingdom is divided and given" to someone else?
- How do Jesus and his sacrifice on the cross for your sins speak into the position you find yourself in after reflecting on what those three words written for you might mean?
- What are three new words being redeemed in Christ you think God writes over you now? What Scriptures correspond to this?
- Once finished, write a prayer to God expressing any reflections, praises, or struggles from today's/this week's reflections.