

REVERSE

Live Differently

STUDENT DEVOTIONAL

Greg Stier



DARE 2 SHARE

Reverse

Copyright © 2014 Dare 2 Share Ministries.
All rights reserved.

A D2S Publishing book
PO Box 745323
Arvada, CO 80006

All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2007 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked (NIV) are taken from the *Holy Bible*, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by Biblica, Inc™. Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or otherwise—without prior permission of the publisher.

Stier, Greg

Reverse: live differently

ISBN: 978-0-9725507-0-3

Library of Congress Control Number: 2013945832

Printed in the United States of America

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 / 14 13 12 11 10 09 08

Dedication

To every teenager who's ever strived and struggled to
live with a God-focus in a me-focused world.

Dare 2 Share Book Preview

Table of Contents

Reverse Living.....	v
---------------------	---

Week One: Relate Differently

Daniel: God's Man with a Mission	1
We're Not in Kansas Anymore.....	5
Cool in a Crisis	9
Wisdom and Influence	13
All-Encompassing Compassion	17
A God in Heaven	21
Big Dreams	25

Week Two: Think Differently

Idols Then and Now.....	29
Jealousy Unleashed	33
A Lethal Line in the Sand	37
How to Grow a Backbone	41
PU – Persecution University	45
Rescue!	49
Limb from Limb	53

Week Three: Act Differently

Pursue Excellence	57
Live with Integrity.....	61
Bold & Brave.....	65
Pray, Pray, Pray, Three Times a Day	69
Facing the Darkest Night.....	73
Total Trust.....	77
The God Who Rescues	81





Reverse Living: Intense, Deep, Vibrant, Risky, Rewarding, Immense

Just look at the world around you and at the secret interior life inside you and you'll see it's true: life can get intense. Relationally intense, in terms of how you interact with others. Inside-your-head intense as you think about and process things. How-to-live-your-life intense when it comes to your choices and actions.

But in the midst of the intensity of life, God has plans for you. In fact, He has BIG plans for you—He longs for a deep, rich, vibrant relationship between you and Him, and He is calling you to the most important job on the planet, bringing His hope and truth to those around you.

In a nutshell, you could summarize His desires for you like this: To know Him and make Him known.

God's desires for you as His follower stand in dramatic opposition to how the world around you is living life. Our world is largely me-focused, rather than God-focused. That's why I call living with a God-focus living in "reverse." It's a totally different way to live—deep, wild, intense, exciting, risky and immensely satisfying—because it's living in tune with the way God designed us to live, in relationship with Him.

We see this kind of reverse living on full display in one of my favorite Old Testament books of the Bible: Daniel. Daniel and his friends were totally tuned into the one, true God they loved, trusted and served. And because of that God-focus, they related differently, thought differently and acted differently than the world around them. While still teenagers, they exhibited immense courage as they were swept up in the ravages of war. And as they continued to keep their focus on God, they lived godly lives of excellence and integrity; lives that changed the course of history across kingdoms and centuries.

In these next three weeks of daily devos, we'll be looking at three themes from three compelling, courageous stories out of the book of Daniel.

Week 1: **Relate Differently.** Daniel's interpretation of the king's dream (Daniel 2)

Week 2: **Think Differently.** Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the fiery furnace (Daniel 3)

Week 3: **Act Differently.** Daniel in the lion's den (Daniel 6)

Each of these stories gives us a brutally honest window into what bravely living in reverse looked like for Daniel & Co. as they sought to know God and make Him known, facing down extreme danger

and persecution while their very lives hung in the balance.

But these three stories are more than interesting, entertaining reading. They provide amazingly powerful, relevant insights for you as you seek to live in reverse today in the very place God has planted you—in the midst of the good, the bad and the ugly intensity of life right now.

Of course, living in reverse will look distinctly different in each person's life. How you personally live it out will be as unique as your fingerprints, your personality, your passions and your circumstances. That's why this devo is packed full of opportunities for you to apply what you're learning personally, day by day. Here's a quick roadmap of how the typical devo is structured:

Read – Identifies the Bible passage for the day.

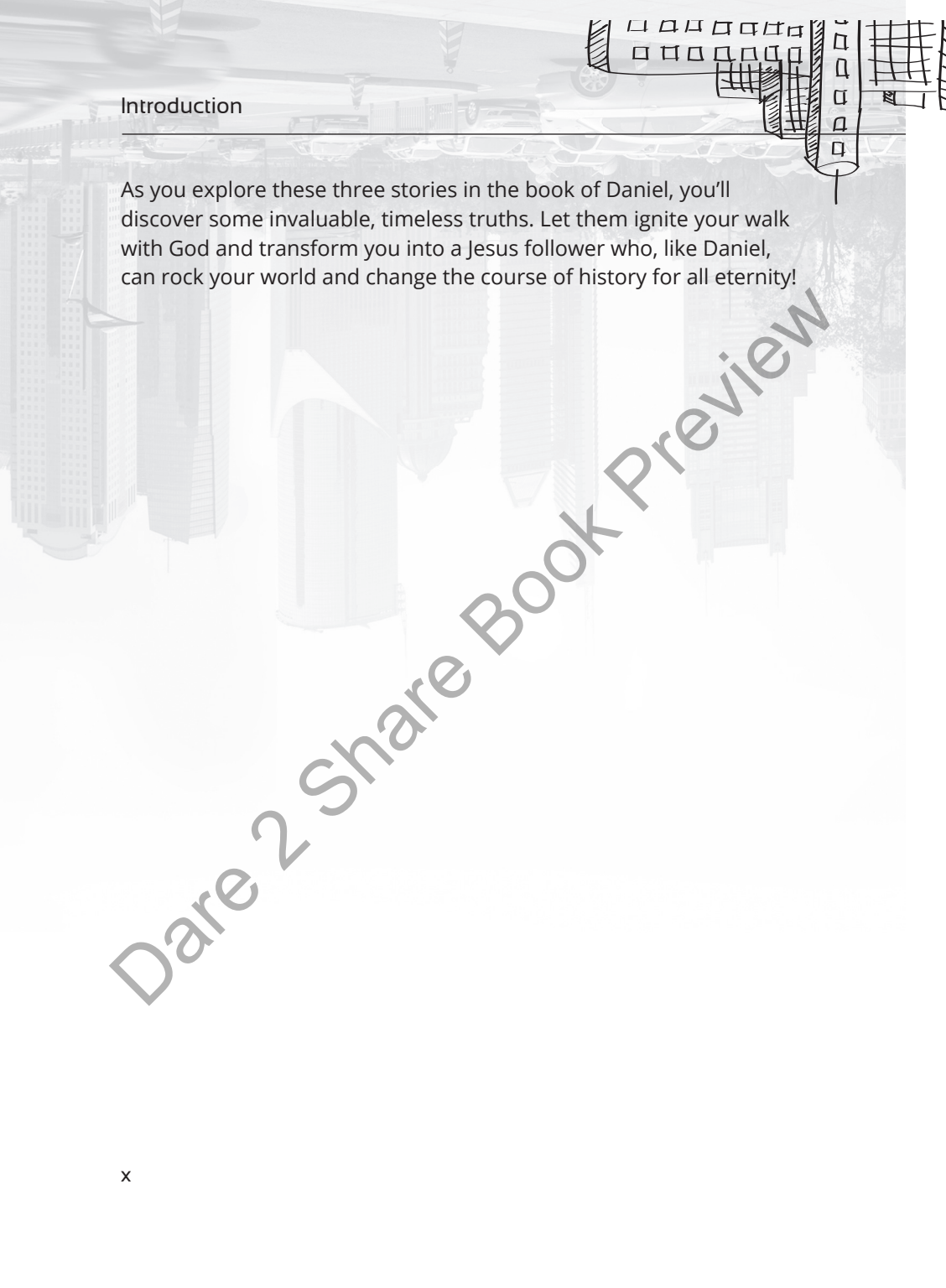
Recharge – Provides some context and a brief recap of the Bible passage.

Reflect – Unpacks how the timeless truth found in the passage is relevant to you personally.

Reverse – Presents a concrete, personal application that challenges you to live in reverse.

Remember – Recommends a tool or tip to help you share Jesus' message with others.

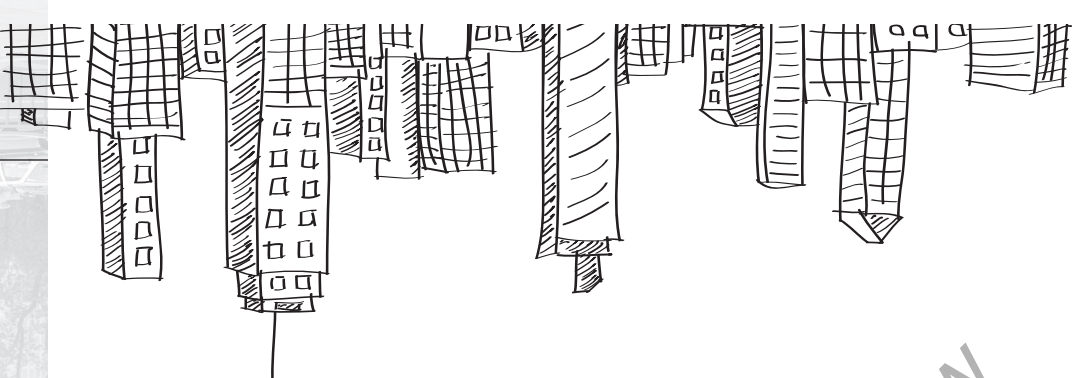
Renew – Provides a guided prayer as you seek God's help in applying what you've learned (if the devo for the day doesn't already include a prayer time).



Introduction

As you explore these three stories in the book of Daniel, you'll discover some invaluable, timeless truths. Let them ignite your walk with God and transform you into a Jesus follower who, like Daniel, can rock your world and change the course of history for all eternity!

Dare 2 Share Book Preview



#1 DANIEL: GOD'S MAN WITH A MISSION

Recharge

Besieged, beaten and destined for bondage. Daniel found himself swept up in a defeat of catastrophic proportions. Along with many of his Jewish countrymen, he was taken captive by the conquering Babylonian army in 605 B.C, while he was still a teenager.

Sucked into the upheaval of war, and hauled off to Babylon to become a servant to his new master, King Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel could have easily seen himself as just a young, helpless pawn in a power struggle between nations. But Daniel refused to wallow in distress and despair. The trials he faced were not a wedge that drove him away from God; instead, the Book of Daniel gives us a striking look into how his trials served as a wedge that pushed him even closer to God.

Daniel put his trust in the Almighty God who had uprooted him from his old life and transplanted him to a new one. He displayed an unshakeable confidence that God was large and in charge. He was

a young man with a mission and a message: to know God and make Him known.

The Book of Daniel is a mix of Daniel's personal story and his prophecies foretelling some critical aspects of God's unfolding plan across the sweep of history. Daniel's personal story is packed with exciting, dramatic incidents—like Daniel in the lion's den, and his three friends' heated encounter with a fiery furnace. But his prophecies are equally exciting and dramatic. They predicted four of the coming earthly kingdoms whose rise and fall would directly impact the nation of Israel, and also describe the coming eternal, heavenly kingdom to be established by Jesus the Messiah.

Reflect

The Bible tells us that life works best when it's lived out of a deep, intimate relationship with God. A give-and-take relationship that's so vibrant and powerful that it will carry you through thick and thin. God wants this kind of relationship with you so He can meet you in the midst of both the joy and the pain—no matter what. Even when life seems unfair or grows uncomfortable, He will walk beside you through it all as you connect with Him at that deep, personal level. He did that for Daniel, and He'll do it for you.

And you have something else in common with Daniel. No matter who you are or where you live, God has a mission and message for you too: to know Him and make Him known. Now it's time to unpack some of what that looks like...

Reverse

Right now, in the midst of whatever's going on in your life—good, bad or ugly, does God feel distant or close to you? Take a few minutes to write a note to God about how you're feeling. Then ask Him to help you go deeper with Him in the coming days.

DEAR GOD,

LATELY I'VE BEEN FEELING LIKE YOU AND I ARE...

Handwriting practice lines on a white sheet of paper. The lines are horizontal and evenly spaced. A large, diagonal watermark reading "Dare 2 Share Book Preview" is overlaid across the page.

Remember

Everyone is going through stuff. Think about a non-Christian friend who is stressed or struggling right now. Pray that you can find a way to encourage them today.

Renew

Father, I pray that in the days ahead You will help me learn how to connect with You on a deeper, more intimate level. I want a relationship with You that will carry me through good times and bad. Show me what living in reverse looks like for me, and give me the courage to live differently. In Jesus' name, amen.

