

Faith Triumphs Over Fiery Trials

Daniel 3

Introduction

- Popular misconception – we can live the Christian life without conflict with the world
- Life of faith separate from our life in the world
- Faith more than mental agreement but the principle by which we guide our life decisions
- Faith is believing the Word of God to the point of obeying it and trusting in Him no matter what the earthly consequences ²

Introduction

- Instead of modifying our faith to adapt to government, school, work, family, friends and the world, we must believe and obey the Word of God that we may be saved and others may be influenced to know His will
- Threat to our faith has always been to compromise with those who challenge God's Word

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Introduction

- Explore what happens in Daniel 3 to remind us that challenges to faith are nothing new
- And, what God demands of us that we trust in Him during fiery trials to the point of obeying Him, no matter what may come in this life

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Faith Challenged

Dan 3:4 Then the herald loudly proclaimed: "To you the command is given, O peoples, nations and *men of every language*,

Dan 3:5 that at the moment you hear the sound of the horn, flute, lyre, trigon, psaltery, bagpipe and all kinds of music, you are to fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king has set up.

5

Faith Challenged

Dan 3:6 "But whoever does not fall down and worship shall immediately be cast into the midst of a furnace of blazing fire."

6

Faith Stated

Dan 3:14 Nebuchadnezzar responded and said to them, "Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the golden image that I have set up?"

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Faith Stated

Dan 3:15 "Now if you are ready, at the moment you hear the sound of the horn, flute, lyre, trigon, psaltery and bagpipe and all kinds of music, to fall down and worship the image that I have made, *very well*. But if you do not worship, you will immediately be cast into the midst of a furnace of blazing fire; and what god is there who can deliver you out of my hands?"

8

Faith Stated

Dan 3:16 Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego replied to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to give you an answer concerning this matter.

Dan 3:17 "If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire; and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king.

9

Faith Stated

Dan 3:18 "But *even* if *He* does not, let it be known to you, O king, that we are not going to serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up."

10

Faith Obeys Even In Trials

Dan 3:19 Then Nebuchadnezzar was filled with wrath, and his facial expression was altered toward Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego. He answered by giving orders to heat the furnace seven times more than it was usually heated.

Dan 3:20 He commanded certain valiant warriors who *were* in his army to tie up Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego in order to cast *them* into the furnace of blazing fire.¹¹

Faith Obeys Even In Trials

Dan 3:21 Then these men were tied up in their trousers, their coats, their caps and their *other* clothes, and were cast into the midst of the furnace of blazing fire.

Dan 3:22 For this reason, because the king's command *was* urgent and the furnace had been made extremely hot, the flame of the fire slew those men who carried up Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego.

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Faith Obeys Even In Trials

Dan 3:23 But these three men, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, fell into the midst of the furnace of blazing fire *still* tied up.

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God Rescues The Faithful

Dan 3:24 Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astounded and stood up in haste; he said to his high officials, "Was it not three men we cast bound into the midst of the fire?" They replied to the king, "Certainly, O king."

Dan 3:25 He said, "Look! I see four men loosed *and* walking *about* in the midst of the fire without harm, and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of *the* gods!"

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God Rescues The Faithful

Dan 3:26 Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the door of the furnace of blazing fire; he responded and said, "Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, come out, you servants of the Most High God, and come here!" Then Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego came out of the midst of the fire.

15

God Rescues The Faithful

Dan 3:27 The satraps, the prefects, the governors and the king's high officials gathered around *and* saw in regard to these men that the fire had no effect on the bodies of these men nor was the hair of their head singed, nor were their trousers damaged, nor had the smell of fire *even* come upon them.

16

God Glorified By The Faithful

Dan 3:28 Nebuchadnezzar responded and said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, who has sent His angel and delivered His servants who put their trust in Him, violating the king's command, and yielded up their bodies so as not to serve or worship any god except their own God.

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God Glorified By The Faithful

Dan 3:29 "Therefore I make a decree that any people, nation or tongue that speaks anything offensive against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego shall be torn limb from limb and their houses reduced to a rubbish heap, inasmuch as there is no other god who is able to deliver in this way."

Dan 3:30 Then the king caused Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego to prosper in the province of Babylon.

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Some Challenges That May Face Us Today

- Employer instructs us to lie on his behalf
- Doctors or nurses instructed to participate in abortion
- Teachers commanded to teach evolution making no reference to God as Creator of all
- Husband command wife not to worship
- A family member asks us to approve and/or participate in their sins

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How Should We Respond To These Challenges?

Rom 12:18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.

Rom 13:1 Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.

Rom 13:2 Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.

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How Should We Respond To These Challenges?

Act 5:27 When they had brought them, they stood them before the Council. The high priest questioned them,

Act 5:28 saying, "We gave you strict orders not to continue teaching in this name, and yet, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and intend to bring this man's blood upon us."

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How Should We Respond To These Challenges?

Act 5:29 But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men.

Act 5:40 They took his advice; and after calling the apostles in, they flogged them and ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and *then* released them.

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How Should We Respond To These Challenges?

Act 5:41 So they went on their way from the presence of the Council, rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for *His* name.

Act 5:42 And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they kept right on teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.

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How Should We Respond To These Challenges?

Rev 12:10 Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night.

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How Should We Respond To These Challenges?

Rev 12:11 "And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death.

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Faith challenged

Faith stated

Faith obeys even in trials

God rescues the faithful

God glorified by the faithful