

Bible Study

Daniel Chapter 3

Opening Question:

1. What experience do you have with standing against a popular decision for moral reasons?
2. What things do society and culture pressure us to bow down to today?

Read Daniel 3:1-30

Discussion Questions

1. Observation & reflection
 - (a) What word or idea stands out to you, what did you struggle to understand?
 - (b) What is the theme of the passage?
2. What do you think motivated Nebuchadnezzar to build the image of gold?
 - (a) What would be the equivalent of being called together to worship a 90 foot statue in our world today?
3. Why do you think the sorcerers and enchanters reported the disobedience of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego to Nebuchadnezzar?
4. What strikes you about the interaction of the Hebrew boys and King Nebuchadnezzar?
 - (a) What temptations and choices do you think Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego faced when they were brought before the king?
 - (b) What do you make of their response?
 - i. What excuses could they have used for making a different decision?
 - ii) Why do you think they didn't?
 - (c) What do you make of Nebuchadnezzar's response?
5. The soldiers who threw the three Hebrew boys into the furnace were killed, but the three emerged untouched.
 - (a) Why didn't God rescue them before they went into the furnace?
 - (b) Who do you think was the fourth person in the furnace?
 - (c) How do you think walking in the furnace affected the faith of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego?
 - (d) God's deliverance of them was a great victory for the Jews in exile. If we have true faith in God, can we count on him to save us from horrible ordeals? (Isaiah 43:2, Hebrews 11:1)

6. What do you think of Nebuchadnezzar's commitment to the Lord (verses 28-29)?
7. How is the issue in chapter 3 similar to the problem Daniel and his three friends faced in chapter 1?
 - (a) How and why is their response different in chapter 3 than in chapter 1?
 - (b) How is their outcome different?
8. What is accomplished by the events of chapter 3? (For Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego? For the Jews in exile? For Nebuchadnezzar? For the enemies of the Hebrews? For us?)
9. Some Christians claim that pain or sickness or trial are always the result of sin or lack of faith. How would you respond to that claim in light of this passage?
10. How can making a firm stand for your faith affect those around you?

Thought Points

- Idolatry is blurring or obscuring the distinction between the creation and the living God who creates.
- Faith means obeying God regardless of our fears.
- Sometimes God does not perform the miracle you seek
- Times of adversity can be times of opportunity
- Satan will always try to lead people to worship false idols.
- We need to be ready to answer the questions before the circumstances around you pose them.
- Our allegiance is first to the Kingdom of Heaven, but held in tension with the fact that we are called to love this world and those who live in it.

Extra Reading

Exodus 20:23, Exodus 20:5, Isaiah 40:19-31, Isaiah 43:2, Proverbs 27:4, Psalm 33:18, Psalm 34:22, Matthew 4:9, Romans 1:21-28, Hebrews 11:1, Hebrews 11:34

Personal Reflection:

- In what ways are you tempted to compromise your faith in order to be accepted by others?
- As you look back over this chapter, what lessons about the risks and rewards of obedience are most significant to you personally?