



UNWAVERING FAITH: WHEN THE HEAT IS ON – PASTOR ALTON TRIMBLE

Sunday, October 15, 2017

DANIEL 3:1-7 *“King Nebuchadnezzar made a giant gold image of himself ninety feet tall and nine feet wide and set it up on the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon. Then he gave this order to all his officials – to the princes, prefects, governors, advisors, treasurers, judges, magistrates, and other officials - to come to the official dedication of this statue that he had set up. When they all assembled, an announcer shouted out, ‘People of all races and nations and languages, this is the king’s command: Anytime you hear the royal orchestra start playing music you are all to immediately drop everything, fall to your knees, and bow and worship the image King Nebuchadnezzar. Anyone who does not fall down and worship will immediately be thrown into a giant blazing furnace.’ So as soon as they heard the music, everybody bowed down before the statue and worshipped the image of King Nebuchadnezzar.”*

FOUR (4) SIMILARITIES TO US TODAY

“The king made a giant gold image of himself to be worshiped”

1. The world creates larger-than-life images for me to worship.
2. I’m tempted to create a false image of myself to impress others.
3. If I reject the world’s idols & images, people will try to burn me.

DANIEL 3:8-12 *“But some Babylonian officials used the opportunity to denounce the Jews. They told the king... Oh Great King! We hope you live forever! BUT the Jewish officials that you put in charge of the province of Babylon - Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego – they have defied your decree. They have refused to serve your gods and they refused to bow down and worship your image that you set up. So they should be burned in the blazing furnace!”*

4. Doing the right thing always makes some people angry.

The reason Shadrach, Meshach, & Abednego refused to bow down:

- It would violate the FIRST TWO (2) of the TEN COMMANDMENTS!

EXODUS 20:3-5 *“You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. And you shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation.”*

DANIEL 3:13-15 *“Then Nebuchadnezzar flew into a rage and ordered that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego be brought to him. The king asked them, ‘Is it true that the 3 of you refuse to serve my gods or worship the gold statue I set up? I will give you one more chance. If you bow down and worship the statue all will be well. But if you refuse, you’ll be thrown immediately into the blazing furnace. What god will be able to rescue you from my power then?’”*

WHAT SHOULD I DO WHEN THE HEAT IS ON?

1. DON'T WORRY ABOUT DEFENDING MYSELF

DANIEL 3:16: “Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego replied, ‘O Nebuchadnezzar, we don’t need to defend ourselves in this matter.”

2. REMEMBER GOD HAS THE POWER TO SAVE ME

DANIEL 3:17a “IF we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we worship is ABLE to save us.”

3. BELIEVE GOD WILL SAVE ME

DANIEL 3:17b “And HE WILL save us from your power, O king.”

ISAIAH 43:2-3 “WHEN you go through deep waters and great trouble, I will be with you. WHEN you go through rivers of difficulty, you will not drown! WHEN you walk through the fire of oppression, you will not be burned up; the flames will not consume you! For I am the Lord, your God!” (NLT)

4. ANNOUNCE MY LOYALTY TO GOD NO MATTER WHAT

DANIEL 3:18 “BUT EVEN IF God DOESN'T save us, we will never serve your gods or worship the gold statue you set up.”

God saves, delivers and rescues – three (3) different ways:

1. Sometimes God saves us FROM the crisis.

- He helps us avoid the fire.

2. Sometimes God saves us THROUGH the crisis.

- We walk through the fire

3. Sometimes God saves us BY the crisis.

1 PETER 1:6-7 “...it may be necessary for you to be sad for a while because of the many trials you suffer. Their purpose is to prove that your faith is genuine. Even gold, which can be destroyed, is tested by fire; and so your faith, which is much more precious than gold, must also be tested, so that it may endure. Then you will receive praise and glory and honor on the Day when Jesus Christ is revealed.” (TEV)

DANIEL 3:19 “Nebuchadnezzar became so furious that his face distorted with rage, and he commanded that the furnace be heated seven times hotter than usual.”

DANIEL 3:20-23 “Then the king ordered some of his strongest soldiers to bind their hands and feet with ropes and throw them into the blazing furnace. So they tied them up and threw them into the furnace, fully clothed. But because the king, in his anger, had demanded such a hot fire - the flames leaped out and killed the soldiers as they threw the three men in! But securely tied up, they fell down into the blazing flames of the furnace. “

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I TRUST GOD IN THE FURNACE?

SIX (6) BENEFITS:

1. GOD WILL WALK THROUGH THE FIRE WITH ME!

DANIEL 3:24-25 “But suddenly, Nebuchadnezzar jumped up in amazement and asked his advisers, ‘Didn’t we tie up three men and throw them into the furnace?’ ‘Yes, we did.’ they said, ‘Well look now!’ he shouted. “You can see four men now, unbound, walking around freely in the fire, unharmed! And the fourth man looks like a son of the gods!”

- Jesus said “I will NEVER leave you, nor forsake you.”

MATTHEW 28:20 Jesus: “I will ALWAYS be with you, to the very end of the age.”

ISAIAH 43:2-3 “WHEN you go through deep waters and great trouble, I will be with you. WHEN you go through rivers of difficulty, you will not drown! WHEN you walk through the fire of oppression, you will not be burned up; the flames will not consume you! For I am the Lord, your God!”

2. GOD WILL BURN OFF EVERYTHING TYING ME DOWN!

QUESTION: What’s holding you back?

ISAIAH 48:10 “I have refined you but not in the way silver is refined. Rather, I have refined you in the furnace of suffering.” (NLT)

3. GOD WILL GIVE ME A NEW FREEDOM!

PSALM 66:12 “You let captors set foot on our neck; then we went through fire and water and you led us out to freedom!” (NAB)

4. GOD WILL MAKE SURE I COME OUT UNHARMED!

DANIEL 3:26-27 “Then Nebuchadnezzar came as close as he could to the door of the flaming furnace and shouted: ‘Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out! Come out at once!’ So the 3 men stepped out of the fire. Then the princes, prefects, governors, and advisers crowded around them and saw that the fire had not touched them. Not a hair on their heads was singed, and their clothing was not scorched. They didn't even smell of smoke!”

5. IT WILL BRING UNBELIEVERS TO GOD

DANIEL 3:28 “Then the king said, “Praise to the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego who sent his angel to rescue his servants. THEY TRUSTED IN HIM. They defied my command and were willing to die rather than serve or worship any god except their own God.”

DANIEL 3:29-30 “Therefore, I make this decree: If anyone says anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, they will be put to death, and their houses will be destroyed... There is no other god who can save anyone like this!” Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to even higher positions in the province of Babylon.”

6. GOD WILL REWARD MY FAITH IN HEAVEN!

1 CORINTHIANS 3:10b-15 “Each of us must be careful how we build (our lives), because Christ is the only solid foundation. Whatever we build on that foundation will be tested by fire ... If what we built is left standing, we will be rewarded! But if what we’ve built is burned up by the fire, we will lose our reward. Yet we will be saved, like someone escaping from flames.”