



DANIEL

faithful in a foreign land

WEEK 3 - STEADFAST IN THE FIRE

OVERVIEW

One of the realities of living in a “foreign land” is that powers other than Christ will inevitably demand our allegiance. How should we respond when these powers expect us to bend the knee? As the story of Daniel in exile continues, the narrative turns to his three companions who face execution by fire if they refuse to bow down and worship a new statue set up by the Babylonian king. Faced with the prospect of their inevitable death, these brave young men willingly accept the consequences of refusing to worship anyone other than God. Their faithfulness is rewarded by God as they emerge from the furnace completely unscathed by the flames.

Although we face significantly different ‘powers’ in our world today than vain Babylonian kings, the temptation to submit to the corrupting forces of our world continues. What might we learn from the bravery of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego as we choose how to stay true to the values of our actual home? Perhaps, like these Israelite young men, our faithfulness can be a remarkable testimony to the power of our God to save.

So Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego stepped out of the fire... Not a hair on their heads was singed, and their clothing was not scorched. They didn't even smell of smoke!

Daniel 3:26-27

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever created a life map? Whether you have or have not, how could your map show God's formation over time, quietly preparing you for something you didn't see coming?
2. What could Ezekiel 11:16 mean for us today?
3. Read Daniel 3:1-12. Why do you think the astrologers tattled to the king about Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego not bowing down?
4. Read Daniel 3:13-18.
 - a. How would you describe the Jews' response when the king gave them one more chance to bow down?
 - b. How did God prepare Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego for the moment they would be thrown into the fire?
5. Read Daniel 3:19-30 and Isaiah 43:1-3. What do you think is the difference between being delivered FROM the fire and being delivered IN the fire? What does that mean in today's world?
6. Maron asked us to consider why God brought you to hear this message today:
 - a. Is He telling you to remain faithful, like Shadrach Meshach and Abednego?
 - b. Is He imploring you not to bow to the empire?
 - c. Not to conform to the world's ways, or worship what they worship, or surrender to their lifeless gods?
 - d. Is He calling you to be brave and remind you that He is with you in the fire?
7. What does it mean to worship at the altar of anger? (or pride, greed, lust, etc)
8. How does it make you feel to know that God isn't done with you yet? (See also Ephesians 2:10.)