

Heroes of the Bible: The Fourth Man in the Furnace

Wylie United Methodist Church
Pastor Jeff Hatcher – July 19, 2009

Daniel 3:8-29

8 At this time some astrologers came forward and denounced the Jews. 9 They said to King Nebuchadnezzar, "O king, live forever! 10 You have issued a decree, O king, that everyone who hears the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes and all kinds of music must fall down and worship the image of gold, 11 and that whoever does not fall down and worship will be thrown into a blazing furnace. 12 But there are some Jews whom you have set over the affairs of the province of Babylon-Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego-who pay no attention to you, O king. They neither serve your gods nor worship the image of gold you have set up." 13 Furious with rage, Nebuchadnezzar summoned Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. So these men were brought before the king, 14 and Nebuchadnezzar said to them, "Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the image of gold I have set up? 15 Now when you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes and all kinds of music, if you are ready to fall down and worship the image I made, very good. But if you do not worship it, you will be thrown immediately into a blazing furnace. **Then what god will be able to rescue you from my hand?**" 16 Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. 17 If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, **the God we serve is able to save us** from it, and **he will rescue us from your hand**, O king. 18 **But even if he does not**, we want you to know, O king, that **we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up.**" 19 Then Nebuchadnezzar was furious with Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, and his attitude toward them changed. He ordered the furnace heated seven times hotter than usual 20 and commanded some of the strongest soldiers in his army to tie up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and throw them into the blazing furnace. 21 So these men, wearing their robes, trousers, turbans and other clothes, were bound and thrown into the blazing furnace. 22 The king's command was so urgent and the furnace so hot that the flames of the fire killed the soldiers who took up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, 23 and these three men, firmly tied, fell into the blazing furnace. 24 Then King Nebuchadnezzar leaped to his feet in amazement and asked his advisers, "Weren't there three men that we tied up and threw into the fire?" They replied, "Certainly, O king." 25 He said, "**Look! I see four men walking around in the fire, unbound and unharmed, and the fourth looks like a son of the gods.**" 26 Nebuchadnezzar then approached the opening of the blazing furnace and shouted, "Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out! Come here!" So Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego came out of the fire, 27 and the satraps, prefects, governors and royal advisers crowded around them. They saw that **the fire had not harmed their bodies, nor was a hair of their heads singed; their robes were not scorched, and there was no smell of fire on them.** 28 Then Nebuchadnezzar said, "Praise be to the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who has sent his angel and rescued his servants! **They trusted in him** and **defied the king's command** and were **willing to give up their lives rather than serve or worship any god except their own God.** 29 Therefore I decree that the people of any nation or language who say anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego be cut into pieces and their houses be turned into piles of rubble, for **no other god can save in this way.**"

WHAT DOES GOD DO WHEN YOU WALK IN FAITH?

- **HE SHOWS UP!**

v. 25 [Nebuchadnezzar] said, "**Look! I see four men walking around in the fire, unbound and unharmed, and the fourth looks like a son of the gods.**"

We are not always delivered from the fire, but rather through the fire.

WHAT DO OTHERS SEE WHEN YOU WALK IN FAITH?

28 Then Nebuchadnezzar said, "Praise be to the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who has sent his angel and rescued his servants! **They trusted in him** and **defied the king's command** and were **willing to give up their lives rather than serve or worship any god except their own God.**

A person...

1. **TRUSTING GOD IN SPITE OF CIRCUMSTANCES.**

"They trusted in him."

A person...

2. **THAT VALUES PLEASING GOD OVER PLEASING MAN.**

"[They] defied the king's command."

A person...

3. **SURRENDERED TO GOD.**

"[They] were willing to give up their lives."

Galatians 2:20

I have been crucified with Christ and **I no longer live**, but Christ lives in me.

Philippians 3:7-9

7 But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. 8 What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, **for whose sake I have lost all things.** I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ

A person...

4. **THAT WORSHIPS GOD INSTEAD OF "STUFF".**

"were willing to give up their lives rather than serve or worship any god except their own God."

WHAT ARE THE RESULTS OF WALKING IN FAITH?

1. **GOD IS GLORIFIED**

v. 28 Nebuchadnezzar said, "**Praise be to the God** of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego..."

2. **NON-BELIEVERS ARE DRAWN TO GOD**

v. 29 Therefore I decree that the people of any nation or language **who say anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego** be cut into pieces and their houses be turned into piles of rubble..."

3. **GOD'S POWER IS REVEALED**

v. 29 "... **no other god can save in this way.**"

WHAT "FIRES" ARE YOU FACING IN YOUR LIFE?

HOW WILL YOU RESPOND?