

SERMON OUTLINE

SERMON TITLE: When Faith Is in the Fire

SERMON REFERENCE: Daniel 3:1-30

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #1651

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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) It takes courage to stand alone.
 - i) More and more, we're going to find that it is necessary to learn how to stand alone in this day and age in which we live.
 - ii) If it is necessary now as the days grow darker, then how much more necessary will it be for our children and grandchildren?
- b) We need to learn how to stand alone, but not out of stubbornness or arrogance or narrow-mindedness.
 - i) We need to learn how to stand up for Jesus and to stand on the principles of God's Word.
- c) Daniel 3:1-7
 - i) Those who grew up attending Sunday school recognize this account of three Hebrew children who were thrown into the fiery furnace.
 - ii) These three Jewish young men would not worship the image Nebuchadnezzar had set up and were thrown into the fiery furnace.
 - (1) They wouldn't budge, they wouldn't bow, and they would not burn.
 - iii) They came out of the fiery furnace.
 - iv) This account is not simply a record of what God has done, but it is a record of what God is doing.
 - (1) It's not merely a record of what God said but what He is saying.
 - (2) We may find ourselves very soon in a fiery furnace, some incendiary circumstance.
 - (a) And it will be necessary for us, like these young men of old, to stand alone.
- d) Nebuchadnezzar was a megalomaniac.
 - i) He was full of a sense of his own importance.
 - ii) So great was his ego and self-worship that he had an image made of himself and demanded that everyone bow down and worship that image.
 - iii) There were thousands who fell down in obeisance before that golden image.
 - (1) But there were three that day who would not bow; and they were, because they stood alone, thrown into a fiery furnace.
- e) The book of Daniel is a book of prophecy; and Nebuchadnezzar is a type, a picture, an illustration of the antichrist.
 - i) There is coming a man who will one day rule the world as Babylon was ruled by Nebuchadnezzar.
 - (1) He will be the devil's messiah.
 - (2) He is called in the Bible the Beast, the man of sin, the lawless one, the wicked one, and the antichrist.
 - ii) The antichrist will one day rule the world during a period the Bible calls the Great Tribulation.
 - iii) 1 John 2:18
 - (1) The more that we see the spirit of antichrist in the world, the more we realize that we're living in the last time.

- iv) Nebuchadnezzar is a picture of antichrist himself.
- f) Today's message will share three specific things as we learn how to stand alone and as we look at the story of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who refused to bow down to the king's image.

2) THE FURRY THEY FACED

- a) Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego faced extreme pressure.
- b) Nebuchadnezzar pictures and stands for the antichrist.
 - i) Nebuchadnezzar made an image of himself and told everyone to worship that image.
 - (1) Revelation 13:13-15
 - (a) This passage is speaking of the antichrist.
 - (2) Nebuchadnezzar made an image and told the people that they must worship it or be killed.
 - (3) The coming antichrist will make an image, even more incredible than the one Nebuchadnezzar made.
 - (a) If the people do not worship this image, then they will be killed.
 - ii) There is an interesting use of the number "six."
 - (1) Daniel 3:1
 - (a) Threescore is sixty.
 - (b) The breadth of the image was six cubits.
 - (2) Daniel 3:5
 - (a) There were six instruments listed in the orchestra.
 - (3) Revelation 13:18
 - (a) The number of the antichrist (the beast) is 666.
 - iii) Nebuchadnezzar was a picture, a prophecy and an illustration of the antichrist that will come.
 - iv) One day, the antichrist will come and set up an image.
 - (1) He will use the number 666 to cause universal worship.
- c) The spirit of antichrist is already in the world today.
 - i) If the people in the days of Nebuchadnezzar must stand alone, then we in this day must also stand alone.
 - ii) There will be incredible pressure.
- d) Nebuchadnezzar pressured the people to try to get them to conform, and we will face these same five pressures today:
 - i) Emotional enticement.
 - (1) Daniel 3:5
 - (a) The Babylonian orchestra began to play.
 - (b) There was incredible music.
 - (2) Music touches the emotions.
 - (3) Music is a gift from God, but the devil knows the power of music.
 - (a) He is using music today like never before to enforce his diabolical plans upon the world.
 - (b) Satan is a master musician.

- (i) The Bible speaks of him as having tabrets and pipes.
 - 1. Ezekiel 28:13
 - (ii) When he speaks, it's like majestic music.
 - (c) His music can be hideously beautiful, or it can have a demonic beat.
 - (i) There is horrible obscenity in much of today's music.
 - (4) Satan wants to capture a generation by music.
 - ii) Social inducement.
 - (1) Daniel 3:2-3
 - (a) Everyone was doing this.
 - (2) Daniel 3:4
 - (a) Everyone was expected to fall in line.
 - (3) If you do not do as you're told in this day and age, then you will be looked upon as an oddball.
 - (4) We're moving quickly to a one-world government.
 - (5) The America that we have known is being diluted and absorbed into globalism, which is spurred on by a global gullibility of those who will not stand alone or stand for what is right.
 - iii) Government enforcement.
 - (1) Daniel 3:6
 - (2) The government in that day and the government in our day was and is trying to squeeze everyone into a mold so that no one can stand for a particular thing.
 - (a) They will threaten to arrest or to take away a tax-exempt status because we are in the way of the progress of peace.
 - (3) John 16:2
 - iv) Spiritual defilement.
 - (1) The devil was behind all of this.
 - (a) Daniel 3:6
 - (b) The devil does not want casualties; he wants converts.
 - (2) The devil wants to be worshipped, and the antichrist that comes wants to be worshipped.
 - (a) Revelation 13:7-8
 - (i) "Given to him to make war with the saints and overcome them" refers to governmental enforcement.
 - v) All of these pressures are in the world everywhere today, and we're going to have to learn to stand against them.
- 3) THE FAITH THEY FOLLOWED (DANIEL 3:13-18)
 - a) Daniel 3:13-18
 - i) We see the spirit of antichrist in Nebuchadnezzar.
 - (1) He had contempt for God.
 - (a) Daniel 3:15
 - ii) "We are not careful to answer" means "we don't have to hesitate; we're not worried about it."

- b) The average carnal Christian would have told Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego to just go along to get along.
 - i) They would have said that it's better to compromise a little and live longer so that you can do more good than just simply to be stubborn and to stand up.
 - (1) After all, aren't Christians supposed to get along with everybody?
 - ii) But these men stood alone by the faith that they had.
- c) It was a settled faith.
 - i) Daniel 3:16
 - ii) They did not have to ponder it or have a committee meeting.
 - (1) They did not have to ask the king for some time to think about it.
 - iii) They had God's Word hidden down in their hearts, and they already knew what was right and what was wrong.
 - iv) Oftentimes, we spend too much time trying to decide what to do about this thing or that thing.
 - (1) One big decision will keep us from a lot of little decisions.
- d) It was a strong faith.
 - i) Daniel 3:17
 - (1) Our God is able.
 - (a) We need to believe this when we're asked, "Who is this God that shall deliver you?"
 - (i) Daniel 3:15
 - ii) Psalm 50:15
 - (1) This is the word of a Holy God.
 - (2) He will deliver us.
 - iii) He doesn't deliver us through the fire; He'll deliver us in the fire.
 - iv) Have faith in God; He cannot fail.
- e) It was a steadfast faith.
 - i) Daniel 3:18
 - (1) "If not" does not mean that God is not able to deliver us.
 - (a) They had no doubt about God's power.
 - (b) If, in God's sovereignty, they died in the flames, they still would not worship the image.
 - ii) Does your faith have an "if not" clause in it?
 - (1) If God doesn't deliver you, will you still serve Him?
 - iii) Hebrews 11:32-39
 - (1) If God doesn't give us what we want, then He'll give us something better.
 - (2) We sometimes think that if people just had enough faith, then they would be delivered.
 - (a) But those is this passage of Scripture who were not delivered in a way that we would call deliverance got an "A" on the report card of faith.

- iv) These three young Hebrew men knew that God was able to deliver them, but if He did not keep them out of the fiery furnace or keep them alive in the furnace, that was okay.
 - (1) They still would not bow.
 - v) It is one thing to have faith to escape, but do you have faith to endure?
 - (1) It's one thing to be sick and have faith to be healed, but it takes greater faith to be sick and not be healed and still praise God.
 - vi) Our God is able to deliver us; but if He doesn't deliver us, it's not because He can't.
 - (1) James was imprisoned by Herod and beheaded, but God delivered Peter out of prison.
 - (a) Acts 12:1-2
 - (b) Acts 12:7-10
 - vii) God is sovereign.
 - (1) God knows what is best.
 - (2) He may not always deliver us from our trials and tribulations.
 - (a) If He doesn't, we need to just stand by faith.
 - viii) Faith is not primarily receiving from God what we want but accepting from God what He gives.
- f) There is a God in Heaven who is going to take care of us in the fire and through the fire.
 - g) Romans 8:35-37
- 4) THE FELLOWSHIP THEY FOUND (DANIEL 3:19-25)
- a) Daniel 3:19-25
 - i) Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were bound and thrown into the fiery furnace.
 - ii) This furnace was heated seven times hotter than it had ever been heated.
 - (1) The men who threw them into the furnace were burned so badly that they did not survive.
 - iii) These three young men were walking around down in the fiery furnace.
 - iv) Nebuchadnezzar looked and saw four men walking in the fire, and the fourth was like the Son of God.
 - b) There was the cleansing of the saint.
 - i) The bonds, the ropes that were put on these three young men were all burned off.
 - (1) Daniel 3:25
 - ii) There was not even the smell of smoke in their clothes.
 - (1) Daniel 3:27
 - iii) The only thing the fire burned off of them was what the world had put on them.
 - iv) When we go through the fire, God is just cleansing us.
 - v) The times that we'll grow the most are the times when our faith is in the fire.

- c) There was the companionship of the Savior.
 - i) Jesus will never be closer to us than when we take a stand for Him.
 - (1) When we say that no matter what, we will stand for Jesus.
 - ii) If we want Jesus to be real to us, then we need to stop being a Sunday morning benchwarmer and stand up for the Lord Jesus Christ.
- d) There will be the conviction of the sinner.
 - i) Daniel 3:24-25
 - (1) Nebuchadnezzar was astonished that they were not burned up.
 - (a) Their God delivered them.
 - ii) The Babylonians worshipped the fire god.
 - (1) Nebuchadnezzar had to admit that his fire god was not like Jehovah.
 - (a) There is no god like our God.

5) CONCLUSION

- a) When will this world begin to have respect for the Lord Jesus Christ?
 - i) When we, by the grace of God, stand alone.
- b) We need to teach our children how to stand alone, for the spirit of antichrist is already in the world.
- c) You won't even begin to stand against the antichrist if you have don't have Christ in your heart.
 - i) Are you saved?
 - ii) You can't teach your children how to stand if you don't know Christ.
- d) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- e) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) Acts 16:31
 - v) John 3:16