

# Faith through Fire

God calls us to confidently stand for our convictions by remaining committed to Him in the midst of opposition.



GOD'S STORY  
THE TRANSFORMATION FOR ADULT LIFEGROUPS

Daniel 3:1-30

August 23, 2020

(Daniel 3:1-7) <sup>1</sup> King Nebuchadnezzar made an image of gold, sixty cubits high and six cubits wide, and set it up on the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon. <sup>2</sup> He then summoned the satraps, prefects, governors, advisers, treasurers, judges, magistrates and all the other provincial officials to come to the dedication of the image he had set up. <sup>3</sup> So the satraps, prefects, governors, advisers, treasurers, judges, magistrates and all the other provincial officials assembled for the dedication of the image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up, and they stood before it. <sup>4</sup> Then the herald loudly proclaimed, "Nations and peoples of every language, this is what you are commanded to do: <sup>5</sup> As soon as you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipe and all kinds of music, you must fall down and worship the image of gold that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up. <sup>6</sup> Whoever does not fall down and worship will immediately be thrown into a blazing furnace." <sup>7</sup> Therefore, as soon as they heard the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp and all kinds of music, all the nations and peoples of every language fell down and worshiped the image of gold that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

(Daniel 3:8-18) <sup>8</sup> At this time some astrologers came forward and denounced the Jews. <sup>9</sup> They said to King Nebuchadnezzar, "May the king live forever! <sup>10</sup> Your Majesty has issued a decree that everyone who hears the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipe and all kinds of music must fall down and worship the image of gold, <sup>11</sup> and that whoever does not fall down and worship will be thrown into a blazing furnace. <sup>12</sup> 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, Your Majesty. They neither serve your gods nor worship the image of gold you have set up." <sup>13</sup> Furious with rage, Nebuchadnezzar summoned Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. So these men were brought before the king, <sup>14</sup> 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? <sup>15</sup> Now when you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipe 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?" <sup>16</sup> Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to him, "King Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. <sup>17</sup> If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to deliver us from it, and he will deliver us from Your Majesty's hand. <sup>18</sup> But even if he does not, we want you to know, Your Majesty, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up."

(Daniel 3:19-30) <sup>19</sup> 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 <sup>20</sup> and commanded some of the strongest soldiers in his army to tie up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and throw them into the blazing furnace. <sup>21</sup> So these men, wearing their robes, trousers, turbans and other clothes, were bound and thrown into the blazing furnace. <sup>22</sup> 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, <sup>23</sup> and these three men, firmly tied, fell into the blazing furnace. <sup>24</sup> 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, Your Majesty." <sup>25</sup> 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." <sup>26</sup> 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, <sup>27</sup> 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. <sup>28</sup> 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. <sup>29</sup> 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." <sup>30</sup> Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the province of Babylon.

## COMMUNITY – CONNECTING WITH ONE ANOTHER

- Would you say you are a confident person? Can you be confident and, at the same time, go with the flow? Explain.
- What is a topic about which you have strong convictions? Have you ever had an opportunity to act on those convictions? Explain.
- Are there ever situations where you start to waver in your convictions? Explain.

## CONTENT – EXPLORING GOD'S STORY

Have a volunteer read Daniel 3:1-7

- Who did Nebuchadnezzar call on to worship his statue? Why do you think he chose those people?
- What was their motivation for worshipping the golden image?
- What are some culturally accepted or politically driven issues where Christians today might feel pressured to go along with the crowd? What could be their motivation for doing so?

Have a volunteer read Daniel 3:8-18

- Why do you think the Chaldeans told Nebuchadnezzar about the Jews not following?
- Daniel 2:49 says, "Moreover, at Daniel's requests the king appointed Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego administrators over the province of Babylon, while Daniel himself remained at the royal court." Why were Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego called before the king? How could this have impacted their courage to stand for their convictions?
- Have you been in a similar situation in your career? What happened?
- How would you characterize the response of the 3 Hebrew friends in verses 16-18? What is the relationship between belief and conviction?
- Does conviction automatically result in confidence in the world and commitment to the Lord? Explain.
- How did Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego have courage when facing the furnace? What empowered them to stand with integrity?
- What does the statement, "But even if He does not rescue us" in verse 18 tell you about standing up for your Christian convictions?

Have a volunteer read Daniel 3:19-30

- What was Nebuchadnezzar's response to the confident commitment of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego? Do you think it was best for the three Jews that the king did not back off from his threat? Why or why not?
- How did God protect Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego? Why did He protect them?
- What truth can you apply to your own life from verse 25? How does this verse help you in your own threatening environments?

- What about when God doesn't intervene in the sense of a physical, earthly rescue? Knowing He doesn't always do that, why should you stand confidently in your convictions with commitment to the Lord?

### COMMISSION – ENGAGING IN GOD'S STORY

- To what things of the world are you most tempted to bow? Why? What steps can you take to develop confident conviction that stands firm in the midst of trials and testing?
- How can this group pray for you in your confidence, convictions, and commitment to the Lord?

**PRAYER:** Thank God for the example of believers who have gone before us, facing opposition with confidence, conviction, and commitment. Pray specifically for group members who face situations where they are tempted to compromise their convictions.

### CONTINUE TO JOURNEY THROUGH GOD'S STORY

Bible Reading Plan:

DAY 1 – Daniel 5-6  
 DAY 2 – Daniel 9-10, 12  
 DAY 3 – Ezra 1-2  
 DAY 4 – Ezra 3-4  
 DAY 5 – Ezra 5-6

KEY VERSE: Daniel 9:9-10

H.E.A.R. Method:

Highlight a verse or two.  
 Explain what the text means.  
 Apply the verse to your life.  
 Respond to God.

Our team has put together Bible study resources to encourage and inspire you as you engage in God's Story. Visit [chetscreek.com/gods-story](http://chetscreek.com/gods-story) for videos, study guides, and more.

#### OUR VISION

To be a church  
 for the unchurched,  
 here and around the world.

#### ADULT LIFEGROUPS

Gospel-centered communities that aim to KNOW  
 GOD together and BE CHANGED by Him in a  
 way that will CHANGE THE WORLD.