

I'LL MEET YOU IN THE FURNACE

Daniel 3

I. DEATH OVER IDOLS

- A. *“Now if you are ready when you hear the sound of ... every kind of music, to fall down and worship the image which I have made, well and good; but if you do not worship, you shall immediately be cast into a burning fiery furnace...” (vs. 15)*
- B. What Would You Do?
 - 1. They were men of great promise. They had risen to positions of power.
 - 2. Every exit was closed. They felt the heat. They saw the fire.
- C. From a Miracle to a Divine Encounter.
 - 1. *“Did we not cast three men bound into the fire?” (vs. 24)*
 - 2. *“But I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they are not hurt, and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods.” (vs. 25)*

II. DELIVERANCE IN THE FURNACE

- A. *Then King Nebuchadnezzar came near to the door of the burning fiery furnace and said, “Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come forth, and come here!” (vs. 26)*
- B. The Point of the Story.
 - 1. What a sight that must have been!
 - 2. They wanted to be delivered *from* the furnace, but God delivered them *in* the furnace.
- C. The Rest of the Story.
 - 1. The king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.
 - 2. I wonder what the rest of their lives were like?
- D. Have You Been There?
 - 1. The primary goal of our lives is usually *furnace-avoidance*.
 - 2. How often has God said, “I won’t deliver you *from* the furnace, but I’ll be with you *in* the furnace?”

III. A DANGEROUS LIFE

- A. Facing the Furnace.
 - 1. Did someone put you down or fail to lift you up? Did you fail to get that promotion? Did an unexpected expense come up?
 - 2. How many heroes of our faith had easy lives?
 - 3. Consider Stephen and Paul, Corrie Ten Boom and Mother Teresa.
- B. This Is Your Day.
 - 1. I don’t know what furnace you’re facing, but I do know who will meet you there?
 - 2. “Fear not, though you pass through the flames they will not burn you, they will not destroy you.”

Prayer Concerns: *Burney Biesel, Jere Ford, Mac Kerr, Joe McDowell, Anne Miller, Rick Roberts, Mildred Sentell, Jennifer Tarpley, Joe Tidwell, Jr., Wanda Armstrong, Ray Billings, Gerald Borden, Sarah Clark, Richard Cole, Cledus Creel, E.H. Denman, Jr., Jimmy Eubanks, Nancy Gunnels, Fern Haslop, Dorothy Huffstutter, Jeff Joyner, Van Lynch, Dorothy Montgomery, Macy Morgan, Taylor Murray, Judy Owen, Patrick Ramage, Bob Sparks, Cathy Webb ...*

Christian Sympathy is extended to **Moody Sentell and family** in the death of his cousin, **Evon Sentell**, who died on June 28.

PASTORAL PRAYER

Eternal God, constant companion with us in every moment of life, we thank you for the texture of life, for the seasons that change, for the cycle of night and day. We need your presence with us because for us, too, the tides of the spirit rise and fall.

We ask your special closeness to us when life seems closed in around us, when every door seems shut, and life takes on a dullness that overwhelms us. We need your presence as one who opens doors and raises windows, and lets fresh air in when all is stale. If you do this by sending us someone in great need, let us minister to them. If you do it by sending us some new ideas, let us rearrange our minds to make room for them. But deliver us from dull minds and cynical spirits.

Father, there are those who need you special help today. Some pain, some need, has them boxed in. They feel like they have been thrown into a fiery furnace. May they feel your presence walking with them. Touch them with your spirit, and if we can find ways to be vessels of that spirit, then they may find hope through us, and we may find meaning through them. This is our prayer, through Christ, our Lord, who taught us to pray ...

THE LORD'S PRAYER: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

DANIEL 3:8-15

At that time certain Chaldeans came forward and maliciously accused the Jews. They said to King Nebuchadnezzar, "O king, live for ever! You, O king, have made a decree, that every man who hears the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, shall fall down and worship the golden image; and whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast into a burning fiery furnace. There are certain Jews whom you have appointed over the affairs of the province of Babylon: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. These men, O king, pay no heed to you; they do not serve your gods or worship the golden image which you have set up."

Then Nebuchadnezzar in furious rage commanded that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego be brought. Then they brought these men before the king. Nebuchadnezzar said to them, "Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the golden image which I have set up? Now if you are ready when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, to fall down and worship the image which I have made, well and good; but if you do not worship, you shall immediately be cast into a burning fiery furnace; and who is the god that will deliver you out of my hands?"

SERMON SCHEDULE

In the Sanctuary:

July 16	<i>Just Preaching</i>	Mark 6:1-13
July 23	<i>Give Me a Break</i>	Mark 6:30-34, 53-56
July 30	<i>Big Sea, Little Boat</i>	John 6:1-21

On the Radio (1450 AM):

July 16	<i>The Other Bible</i>	2 Peter 2:2
July 23	<i>Beginning Again</i>	Revelation 21:5
July 30	<i>On Being Alive</i>	Ephesians 2:1-10