

Standing Firm

Daniel

Sermon Based Small Groups

Introductions (pick one or two):

- 1) When was a time when you stood up for your faith?
- 2) Who do you know who would never back down from a fight?
- 3) When did you come to know Jesus Christ as your savior?

Getting into the Word:

In the first part of Daniel, the reader is told that Israel was conquered and taken captive by Babylon with the fore knowledge of God. According to historical references, the events described in Daniel took place around 605 B.C. This made Israel no longer a ruling nation but a people group under the reign of Babylon. In this captive, Babylon (as historically this nation did this with other people groups) tries to assimilate the Jewish people into their own culture, so that they would no longer be nation of Israel but would become Babylonians. To do this effectively, the Babylon's had to take all of their traditions and culture away (including religious practices). The first part of Daniel is about how the Jewish people resist this assimilation because of their devotion and commitment to God despite persecution. This history also illustrates God's faithfulness to his people and sovereignty of God over all nations and fake gods.

Scripture Questions:

In your discussion of the text and the sermon, please use the questions that are most helpful for you.

Read **Daniel 3:**

What was Daniel's intent in recording these events?

How does it fit into the book of Daniel (or the theme of Daniel) as a whole?

What do you think the King was trying to accomplish by having everyone worship the image when music played?

Why do you think the Chaldeans brought this to the king's attention?

How did the three men stand up for their faith in God?

What was the reaction of the people around them?

How do the men respond to the King about their God being able to deliver them from the furnace?

What was the effect on the men's confidence in God knowing that God might not intercede and save them?

How was the men's' faith and devotion to God not dependant on God rescuing of them?

What were the men willing to give up by serving and worshiping God?

What made the King so angry at these three men to go to such extremes?

What was the point in Daniel telling the reader how hot the furnace was when the men were thrown into it?

How was God with the men when they were in the furnace?

What comfort do you think the men received by having a God that would join them in the furnace?

What was unique about the way God saved the men?

How did the way that God rescued them show His power to all around?

In the rest of the Bible, God's servants (such as the prophets and apostles) who stood up for their faith are martyred by those around them. Why do you think God decided to save these three men from this death?

What was God proving through this rescue?

How does the King (after God rescues the men) submit and surrender to the fact that their God was more powerful than anything else?

How did the sermon aid you in understanding this text?

Discussion:

Please only use the questions in your discussion that help you to apply the main point of the text to your life.

What is one thing that you learned from the sermon?

What can we learn from the three men about "standing firm" in the faith?

When was a time that you prayed that God would rescue you or someone else from life's circumstances and He choose to intercede?

When have you stood up for your faith?

What was the response of those around you?

What would you tell someone who is in college that is being belittled during class for their belief in God as the Creator?

How would you tell them to stand firm in their faith?

How is having devotion to God in this culture a hard task?

In what ways do people try to bring things against us in a malicious way?

What difference does it make in our persecution that God (the Holy Spirit) is with us even when we are facing hot flames?

Why does this fact make such a difference?

What happens when God chooses not to intercede and save us from circumstances?

How can this affect our faith in Him?

How was the way God chose to save us from our sins unique?

What did God prove through rescuing us in this way?

What have you learned from this lesson?

Prayer:

"What do you need to strengthen in order to stand firm in your faith this week?" Pray for these requests.

For Further Study:

Daniel, Beth Moore (DVD study)

Don't Waste Your Life, John Piper

What Jesus Demands from the World, John Piper

Uprising, Erwin McManus

The Barbarian Way, Erwin McManus