

Proclaiming the Gospel

Message
of
Jesus Christ

For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness;
But unto us which are saved it is the power of God" (1 Cor. 1.18).

Edifying the Body of Christ (Eph. 4.10-16)

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The Wise Still Seek Him

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But If Not . . .

I am reminded of that great cloud of witnesses that has gone before us who stood firm in their faith in the Lord God of Israel – come what may. Their faith was not based upon whether the Lord God delivered them out of difficult circumstances. Their faith in the Lord God Almighty was not based upon their getting what they wanted. Their faith in God was rooted in their deep and abiding relationship with Him.

Hear a great prophet and his relationship with the Lord God; experience his faith in the Lord.

Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither *[shall]* fruit *[be]* in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and *[there shall be]* no herd in the stalls:

Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation (Hab 3.17, 18).

How many of us base our faith and trust in the Lord upon what we see? Upon what we get? Upon having a life that looks and feels wonderful in the world's eye. The great prophets understood that the Lord God was a loving God who desired that the souls of men be saved as He demanded they follow Him and none other – many times at a high cost; however, He gave His only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ, to die upon the Cross of Calvary for our sins that we might live with Him eternally. Jesus understands obedience, "And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil 2.8).

How many of us could face an actual burning fiery furnace knowing we were going to be thrown into it IF we did not deny the Lord God of Israel? How many of us would say, "Our God IS able to deliver us!" How many of us could say that with faith, nothing wavering? No, How many of us pray believing the Lord will heal us – nothing wavering? How many of us lay our troubles on the altar believing the Lord has gone before us in all things to bring us to where He wants, trusting Him with our lives – come what may?

Hear the three young Hebrews who say, "...our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace . . ." Notice their faith and trust is in the God they SERVE with their lives. Notice they could say this

The deep and abiding relationship of our abiding in the Lord Jesus Christ and He in us comes out of being in the written Word daily as well as the living Word. It is beholding His glory, having ears fine-tuned as an instrument to the hearing of His voice, and His voice alone, walking in obedience with joy, love, and gladness of heart – as did the three young Hebrews in the midst of being removed from their families, their homeland, and being placed in a strange land, **but – not without the God who is the only living God, who is the King of kings and Lord of lords, creator of heaven and earth.**

It was not a choice for them to choose another god to "get by" in this world so filled by the enemy. They knew and served the Lord God and knew that it was **HIS** way or no way. Joshua said it well, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." What will your decision be this day?

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Co-laborers together for Jesus Christ

Come apart and rest (Mark 6.31).

because they had been accustomed to walking with their God daily; it was a way of life since they were very young – no doubt. They were reared in the commandments and statutes of the Lord God, as were many in the Old Testament such as Joseph who was sold into slavery in his youth by his brothers and suffered greatly. He continued serving the Lord, that he knew back home, in the midst of great adversity in Egypt because he trusted in his God – come what may. Yes, the Lord God delivered Joseph, and the Pharaoh made him second in command of Egypt!!

There were others, but let us look more closely at the three young Hebrews in Daniel 3.17, 18. "...our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and **He will deliver us out of thine hand**, O king." You talk about assurance, confidence, trust, faith in the Lord God! Where is our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ? Where is our trust, our confidence in the Lord?

Hear them: "**BUT IF NOT . . .**" Hear them; hear their resolve . "... be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." This is faith beyond words, trust beyond belief, boldness, faithfulness, love, surrender.

What love! This is a love relationship that has experienced the glory of the Lord come down as did Isaiah (Isa 6.1-8). When one is in love with the Lord, has surrendered all to the King of kings, there are no options but to follow the one you love, the King of kings.

The earthly king whose visage changed against the three young Hebrews was oblivious to the power of the King of kings. He saw himself as the one with the power and commanded they be bound and thrown into the furnace that was made seven times hotter.

Notice that the three young Hebrews were neither fearful nor dismayed. They were strong and of a good courage. Notice what happens when they were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace: "...these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace" (Dan 3.23).

And the princes, governors, and captains, and the king's counsellors, being gathered together, saw these men, upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them.

*[Then] Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, Blessed *[be]* the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God (Dan 3.27, 28).*

There are many of Satan's followers who see their power as ultimate. Hear me well. Satan has no power over the followers of Jesus Christ. Only as God allowed was Satan able to touch Job and his possessions, but Satan could not take his life (Job 1; 2).

Where are you in your relationship with the Lord God? Can it be said of you, faith beyond words; trust beyond belief; boldness, faithfulness, love, surrender – to the King of kings?

You struggle to serve the Lord whom you do not know, with whom you have not spent time, nor have you been in His Word daily desiring to know Him. The world has led you to believe a goodly life is all you need. The world has taught that you are the center of your world.

The Word of God reveals to us the way of salvation, that Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. The Word of God reveals to us, "...there is no salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4.12). Jesus Christ is the only Name whereby we can be saved!

Salvation is the first step in getting to know Jesus Who is the King of kings, who has all power. It is in knowing Him and living for Him daily, walking with Him daily as He leads that we come to know Him and love Him. It is through His Word, reading the Bible daily that we know Him and learn to lean upon Him in all that comes our way.

Our standing for the Lord Jesus Christ comes out of conviction, having walked with the Lord Jesus Christ all through life, our love growing more deeply with each passing day, because our hearts have melded with the King of kings and Lord of lords – and continue melding more deeply with each day.

The three young Hebrews had been "transplanted" into the enemy's territory, surrounded by people who worshipped, and followed the practices of, false gods. They stood strong in their resolve to serve the true God to whom they had surrendered their lives. Their faith and trust came from a lived faith and trust that knew the commandments of God's Word, a life that knew times of prayer and worship throughout the day – every day. They were brought up in the "nurture and admonition of the Lord."

And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up (Dt 6.5-7).

Their refusal to bow to the image was a continuation of life as they experienced it back home in their families.