

Making a stand - Facing the music.

Daniel 3: 1 – 30.

I was praying the other day and the account of the three friends in Daniel Chapter 3 came to mind. There are a few thoughts that may be useful for us all.

It is important to only fight what is a worthy cause.

Living in a land where they were exiles and their lives are of little value. Lives ended at the whim of not only the king, but also other lesser ranks. They were a people of slavery.

- ✚ Yet, we find in them a spirit of boldness and there are some valuable lessons to be learned.
- ✚ Nine truths we can learn from their stand against a heathen and tyrannical ruler.

In April 1940 Winston Churchill said;

“You may ask; me what is our policy, I say it is to wage war against a monstrous tyranny never surpassed in the dark and lamentable catalogue of human crime. You ask; what is our aim, I answer in one word, it is victory, victory at all costs, victory in spite of terrors however long and hard the road may be. With out victory there is no survival”.

There are times when: -

“We are constantly faced with great opportunities brilliantly disguised as unsolvable problems”.

Ray Bevin

“A great door of effective work has opened to me and there are many who oppose me”. 1 Corinthians 16:19

Opposition brings opportunity, if only we look for it and trust in God.

1. They find themselves in a situation that was not of their making. (v1)

They had not asked to be among the people of government, but were called to it and now it was causing them persecution (v2).

Sometimes we find ourselves in a right pickle and only because we have obeyed the will of God. Why has this happened to me?

I have found that God deliberately sets us up by making us work with people who we find difficult to get along with, or place us in impossible situations. The only way we can do it is to live in grace, humility and trust in God. Remember we are constantly faced with great opportunities brilliantly disguised as unsolvable problems.

When we look at both the word of God and the men and woman of other generations, then it is clear that it is a common happening.

Saul and David, Esau and Jacob, Paul and Barnabas, Euodia and Syntyche.

The early church was persecuted to add its spread across the world.

2. They refused to allow the desires and actions of others to control their worship and heart attitude. (V17).

- ✚ See this not in the light of those you are working with, but the spiritual forces who are seeking to undermine the work you are all doing.

✚ Bowing down to the golden image is giving in to the hurt and anger, the impossible situation and taking action, or reacting not as a man or woman of God, but as the powers of darkness are seeking to create.

3. They also refused to be controlled by the world around them (v17).

Just because others were worshiping the image did not mean they had too. How others react does not give us the excuses to do the same.

4. They realise the fire is not the issue, but the spirit behind it (v18).

See the big picture and see where the root of the difficulties lie. Who at the end of the day does not want this work to continue?

5. Realise you will be blamed for the hurt others suffer (v22).

When they were thrown into the fire, the soldiers were killed by the heat of the Furness. If they had bowed down like everyone else, then the soldiers would not have died. Because of your unwillingness to bow down to the work of the enemy you become the target.

6. Realise that release comes in the fire (v25).

When they were thrown into the fire they were instantly free from the ropes that tied them up. It's in the trials that we find the freedom from the personal restrictions that hold us back.

7. Recognise the presence of God in the fire (v25).

When they hit the flames, there was Jesus waiting for them.

8. Rejoice in the presence of God in the fire (v25/26).

Ps 34 *"I will bless the Lord at all times His praise will always be on my lips"*.

9. Restoration after the fire (v30).

Of relationship, position and authority, God seeks to honour the humble that put Him in the right place in their life.

Recap: -

- 1 Situations come that are not of our making, but God's placing.
- 2 Refuses to allow the actions of others to dictate your worship.
- 3 Refuse to allow the world to squeeze you into its mould.
- 4 Realise the big picture is the issue.
- 5 Realise you will be blamed for others' pain.
- 6 Release comes in the fire.
- 7 Recognise the presence of God in the fire.
- 8 Rejoice in the presence of God in the fire.
- 9 Restoration after the fire.

In adversity we usually want God to do a removing job, when He wants to do an improving job. To realise the worth of the anchor, we need to feel the storm.