

**Welcome to the
Common Ground Café!**



Sunday, January 28, 2018

**Your Trial By Fire Is Coming
A Study of Daniel 3**

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Who is the first person(s) you would contact after getting bad news?

Why is it helpful to have family and friends around you when you go through hard times?

It's good to have someone with you as you go through hard times. In Daniel 3, we discover how God is present with us in our hard times. Let's begin today's study by understanding the difficult situation that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego found themselves in. Read Daniel 3:1 and 3:4-15.

Although this story can help you deal with *any* hardship, the story is primarily about the hardships that come from living as faithful strangers in this world. Answer the following questions:

- ❖ What does it mean to call Christians "faithful strangers"?
- ❖ Is this a good description of Christians? Why or why not?

In Daniel 3, hard times began for these 3 young men when Nebuchadnezzar demanded everyone give allegiance to a statue. Which of the following is the most likely reason he set up this statue?

- a desire to unify the nation
- personal insecurity
- he wanted to bully the people he had conquered
- other: _____

Could the following be modern-day "idols" that we're expected to give allegiance to? Explain your answer. (Be sensitive here and listen carefully to each other, because these are controversial topics.)

- ❖ "All religions are basically the same. It's intolerant and dangerous for you to say there's just one way to God."
- ❖ "A baby isn't a baby unless it's wanted. If you object to abortion and object to funding organizations that provide this service, you're being anti-woman."
- ❖ "Not only must you tolerate my sexual identity and behavior but you must endorse it gladly."

What are the consequences a Christian might face for refusing to give allegiance to these “idols”?

The most difficult place for me to maintain my Christian identity is:

- ...at home
- ...at school
- ...at work
- ...on social media
- ...in my club or personal interest groups
- ...among my non-Christian friends

Sometimes you’ll face hard times because of your Christian faith. Sometimes you’ll face hard times from just living in this fallen world. But no matter why you face hardship, the experience can be a stage to display three things. Use your sermon notes to complete the following points as we come to them.

God’s W _____

Read Daniel 3:16-18.

What were the 3 young men *sure* about? What were they *unsure* about?

When they said, “But if not,” was that a lack of faith? Why or why not?

Hard times hit things important to us, such as material possessions, health, or relationships. In what ways is God worth more to us than these things?

God’s P _____

Read Daniel 3:19-25.

Who or what was the fourth figure in the furnace?

Describe a time when you knew that Someone was with you in your furnace.

God's R_____

Read Daniel 3:26-27.

Bible scholar Tremper Longman said, "He saved them in the fire, not from the fire." What does this mean? How might that apply to a hardship you face?

True or False: The main lesson of Daniel 3 is that God always rescues those who stay faithful to him. (Explain your answer.)

True or False: Miraculous interventions like the one in Daniel 3 were just for Bible times and we shouldn't pray for or expect such dramatic rescues today. (Explain your answer.)

Even if God does not always rescue his people, if God has rescued you from a furnace, describe that time so the rest of the group can praise God with you.



Close with praise reports and prayer requests