



Harmonychurch.life

Each month we have a special memory verse and Life App. All of our stories revolve around those.

This month's Memory Verse is:

"Don't ever get tired of doing what is good."
2 Thessalonians 3:13

This month's life app is

Conviction
"Standing up for what's right even when others don't."

Our basic truth, that never changes is that

"I can trust God no matter what."

Each week, we have a different bottom line that goes with our story.

- 1) **"Jesus showed us how to stand up for what is right"**
- 2) **"When you know what God says, it can help you stand up for what's right."**
- 3) **When you stand for what's right, you stand up for others.**

This week's bottom line is;

"When you stand for what's right, others can see God."

Our story for this week is 'If You Can't Stand the Heat (The Fiery Furnace)'. (Daniel 3)

** Our story begins with three young men named Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. They were friends of Daniel, the guy we've been learning about the past couple of weeks. And like Daniel, they had been taken captive by King Nebuchadnezzar and now had jobs working for the king.

Now, King Nebuchadnezzar was a powerful ruler. He had a powerful army, he had control of a lot of land, and his kingdom was very rich. But then one day the king used his power to do something strange. He decided to build a statue. But that wasn't the weird part. This statue was huge! According to the book of Daniel, chapter 3, verse 1, it was 90 feet tall and 9 feet wide. Chances are that this statue could be seen for miles around. Oh, and one more thing: the statue was made of gold!

That's right. King Nebuchadnezzar built a *HUGE*, golden statue, and set it nearby, on the plain of Dura, so everyone could see it.

Then he sent messengers to gather up all the officials, governors, nobles, and other important people in the kingdom to gather on the plain of Dura in front of the statue.

After they had gathered, a messenger shouted out a commandment from the king. And here's where it gets weird. The people were told that when they heard music start to play, they had to bow down to the golden statue that the king had made. And anyone who refused to bow down would immediately be thrown into a fiery furnace. This was a pretty serious command from the king.

Now, there's nothing wrong with making a statue, or even making a big statue. But it is wrong to bow down and worship a statue like it's a god. Even if it is huge and gold, it is wrong to worship anyone or anything besides God. Well, pretty soon the music started playing.

And the people gathered around the statue bowed down just like the king commanded. They didn't want to be killed by being thrown into a furnace so they did what the king told them to do.

But three men knew better. They wouldn't be caught bowing down to some statue. They were none other than Daniel's friends, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. These men were Israelites who worshiped the one true God. They knew it was wrong to bow down and worship some lifeless hunk of metal, so they kept on standing.

Well, word soon reached the king that three men were not obeying his command to bow down. And King Nebuchadnezzar was furious. He had Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego brought before him and asked them if what he had heard was true. And he told them he would give them one more chance. When they heard the music, they'd better bow down. Let's read what he said to them in Daniel 3:15;

‘If you won't [bow], then you will be thrown at once into a blazing furnace.
Then what god will be able to save you from my power?’
(NirV)

The king was trying to scare them. He wanted them to be so afraid of his power that they would do whatever he wanted. But the king's plan didn't work. You see, these three men had conviction.

They knew that God didn't want them to bow down to a statue. They also knew that even though the king was threatening to kill them, God is bigger and more powerful than any king.

So, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego stepped up and said, ‘King Nebuchadnezzar, we don't need to talk about this anymore.’ Check out what they said in Daniel 3:17-18.

‘We might be thrown into the blazing furnace. But the God we serve is able to bring us out of it alive.
He will save us from your power. But we want you to know this, Your Majesty. Even if we knew that our God
wouldn't save us, we still wouldn't serve your gods. We wouldn't worship the gold statue you set up.’
(NirV)

In verses 19-25, the Bible says that when the king heard this, he became so angry that his face was twisted with rage! He gave an order to have the furnace heated not twice as hot, not four times as hot, but seven times hotter than normal! Then he had some of the strongest soldiers in his army tie up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and drag them away to the furnace. The heat was so intense that the soldiers were killed as they threw the three men into the furnace. And so, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were hurled into the flames.”

King Nebuchadnezzar had carried out his punishment, and he might have felt pretty proud of himself. He had shown his power by building his statue, and now he had shown his power by having these disobedient men put to death. But then the king noticed something.

“He saw something in the furnace that didn't make any sense. He asked his advisors,

‘Didn't we tie up three men? Didn't we throw three men into the fire?’
(Daniel 3:24, NirV)

And they answered yes. But then Nebuchadnezzar pointed and said,

'Look! I see four men walking around in the fire.'

(Daniel 3:25, NIRV)

Not three, but four. They weren't tied up either, and the flames weren't harming them. Plus, the fourth man looked different than the rest. He looked like someone who had been sent by God! The king got as close to the doors of the furnace as he could and he called out for Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. He called them servants of the Most High God and told them to come out of the furnace."

When they came out, the king and his advisers and officials and governors all crowded around the three men and saw that they were completely unharmed by the flames. Their hair hadn't been singed, their clothes hadn't been burned, and they didn't even smell like smoke! And then Nebuchadnezzar knew that their God was real. And he said this;

'May the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego be praised! He has sent his angel and saved his servants.

They trusted in him. They refused to obey my command. They were willing to give up their lives.

They would rather die than serve or worship any god except their own God.

No other god can save people this way.'

(Daniel 3:28-29, NIRV)

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were in a very tough situation. It would have been easy for them to just go along with the crowd and bow down to the statue like everyone else. If they had, then they wouldn't have gotten into trouble with the king and they wouldn't have been thrown into the furnace. But then we wouldn't know their story. And the people of Babylon wouldn't have seen God rescue them. Sometimes that's how it works for us, too. That's why our **Bottom Line** for today is;

"When we stand for what's right, others can see God."

Standing up and showing conviction takes courage! We will all have tough decisions to make. You'll have to choose between going along with the crowd by doing something wrong, or standing up for what is right and risk being made fun of. But remember **we can trust God no matter what**. He'll have our back when we choose to stand for what's right. And when we do that, we give people a chance to see how awesome God is!

That's why we need to keep doing the right thing, just like our memory verse says.

2 Thessalonians 3:13 says, 'Don't ever get tired of doing the right thing.' The decision to do the right thing won't always be easy, but like the three men in our story, you can be sure that God is with you and you won't have to face the tough times alone. God will be with you, and you'll be helping people see Him! Let's take another look at that **Bottom Line**;

"When we stand for what's right, others can see God."

When you stand up and show conviction, people will be able to see how great our God is.

Let's pray right now and ask God for help to show conviction?

PRAY

"Dear God, thank You so much for this great story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. They're such great examples of people who showed conviction. Please give us the strength and courage to do the same thing, to stand up for what is right. We love You and ask this in Jesus' name, amen."