

'But If Not' Faith

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. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up. —**Daniel 3:17-18, KJV**

A sweet old lady stood up in a prayer meeting in Alabama, only to exhort: "Do you have the 'but if not' faith?"

It is absolutely true that we must be willing to serve God whether or not He blesses us. That was part of the reason for the Book of Job. Satan questioned whether Job, a wealthy man, would serve God if he wasn't blessed materially: "Does Job fear God for nothing?" (Job 1:9). Job's suffering soon followed—with God's permission and purpose. Job later said: "Though he slay me, yet will I hope in him; I will surely defend my ways to his face" (Job 13:15).

Likewise Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego—the three Hebrew young men living in Babylon—were commanded to worship King Nebuchadnezzar's image of gold under the threat of being thrown into a furnace. They wouldn't bend. They wouldn't bow. And they didn't burn. But they were willing to die. Nebuchadnezzar wanted to know why would people like these three men refuse to do a simple thing like falling down before his image of gold.

The "but if not" faith! God is able to bless us, but if not, we will not bow down to idols. God will bless us when we give, but if not, we will give anyway. God will bless us when we worship and praise Him, but if not, we will worship and praise Him anyway.

We must not only be willing to be vocal in our thanking God, but we must also do it all the time—whether we feel like it or not. Whether He blesses us or not.

Excerpted from *Just Say Thanks!* (Charisma House, 2005).