

# Spirit-Filled Pastor: There Is Another in the Fire With You

In a recent sermon, I said that there is no hindrance too great, no battle too hard and no power too strong to overpower God. Nothing can thwart His plans.

We can take great comfort in that, but what do you do when you're going through the fire—through the trial? Hear the sermon "Another in the Fire" here.

We can actually learn a lot from the historical account in Daniel 3 of King Nebuchadnezzar, who made an image of gold and told the people to bow down to it. Whoever disobeyed was cast into the midst of a fiery furnace. Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego were accused of insurrection when they refused to follow the king's orders.

The first lesson here is that we must prepare for accusations. An accusation is a charge that you did something illegal or wrong. But the key question is always "What does God's Word say?" because *legal* is not always *lawful*. In other words, something can be legal according to the laws of a particular nation but in no way lawful according to God's Word. For example, we are starting to see headlines such as, "Scholars now say pedophilia is a sexual orientation that should be embraced." This is pure wickedness and evil that cannot be embraced: "Woe be to those who call evil good, and good evil" (Isa. 5:20a, MEV).

## Truth and Temper Tantrums

As a result of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego's disobedience, Nebuchadnezzar became furious and gave the command to throw them into the fire. A second lesson from this narrative is

that rage is often a demonic response when some don't get their way. No one can debate against the truth, so those who oppose you will get upset and throw a temper tantrum. Don't respond to them in anger, but gentleness: "A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger" (Prov. 15:1, NIV).

We need to stop trying to hide in a bubble and avoid controversy. Our faith will often be tested. You may not have chosen this battle, but this battle chose you. The direction of America today reminds us that we need to make a choice: Do I submit and capitulate (take a knee, so to speak), or do I firmly stand for what is right?

### **God Will Deliver Us**

When the three young men decided to rebel, they backed it with a powerful declaration: "Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king" (Dan. 3:17, MEV). But they didn't stop there; they had true faith by adding that even if God didn't deliver them, they would not obey the king. We must have the same mindset: God can deliver me, but even if He doesn't, I will not bow to evil agendas. Following God is not contingent on what's happening to me; it's based on who He is. Sometimes God removes you from the fire, and sometimes He walks through it with you—even to death. Trust God regardless of the outcome.

Then we read that Nebuchadnezzar was full of fury, and the expression on his face changed toward Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego. He spoke and commanded that they heat the furnace seven times more than it was usually heated (see verses 19-20). Another key lesson: The heat is often turned up to break you down. However, heat can be good if it removes impurities. When we pray, "Lord, help me develop patience and trust," (or whatever the struggle may be), often the heat is turned up so that a greater degree of brokenness occurs.

Humble yourself, trust God and move forward.

As these Hebrews surrendered to the will of God and trusted Him, God delivered them: “Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished; and rose in haste and spoke and said to his counselors, ‘Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?’ They answered and said to the king, ‘True, O king.’ He answered and said, ‘But I see four men loose and walking in the midst of the fire; and they are unharmed. And the form of the fourth is like the Son of God!’” (vv. 24-25).

### **Why You’re Still Standing**

Don’t miss this. I’m still standing—as are many of you—because there is another in the fire! People will ask, “How are you still standing in the midst of divorce, in the midst of unemployment, in the midst of financial collapse, health issues or persecution?” and we can answer, “Because there is another in the fire with me—the Son of God.” But keep in mind that the enemy of our souls will taunt us just as the king taunted the Hebrews: “And who is the god who will deliver you out of my hands?” (v. 15c). When this happens, first remind yourself of God’s promise in Isaiah 43:2a, “When you pass through waters, I will be with you,” and then pray, “My heart will not fear what God has defeated.”

Again, we must get to the point that we say, like Daniel’s friends, “My God will deliver me, but even if He doesn’t, I will not bow to the world’s system or succumb to fear and false narratives.” And then turn to Paul’s reminder: “I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me” (Gal. 2:20a).

If you do not have assurance, let me share a few key Scriptures for you: Romans 5:8 declares, “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost. He died for us, took our spot and paid the price of

our sin. Romans 10:9: “If you confess with your mouth Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.” You can take this promise to the bank: “For, ‘Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved’” (Rom. 10:13). {eoa}

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