

Will You Worship—Even If Things Don't Go Your Way?

Daniel 3:17-18 (NIV) says, “If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to deliver us from it, and he will deliver us from Your Majesty’s hand. But even if he does not, we want you to know, Your Majesty, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up.”

Like many of us, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego find themselves in a difficult circumstance. They are at a fork in the path, a crossroad. One path leads to the way of the world, and the other to the way of the kingdom of God.

Sometimes these two paths cross in dramatic fashion, showing extreme possibilities one way and the other. And sometimes the difference is more subtle—a quiet lie only you will know about, a twinge of arrogance that refuses to acknowledge the contribution of others.

The experience of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in this passage is a microcosm for what it means to be human. We tend to focus on the circumstance, the physical miracle that happens at the story’s end. But the real key is in their perspective along the way.

There is nothing wrong with hoping for better circumstances. We often pray for God to intervene. And He often does. Too often, we make the mistake of thinking God cannot do what we ask because He doesn’t always do so.

On the other hand, we can often make the mistake of thinking God will always do exactly as we hope.

For reasons only the God of eternity is privy to, He sometimes changes our circumstances and sometimes lets them be. On one occasion, a miracle happens. On another, it doesn’t.

The trio of furnace dwellers believe in a God who can perform physical miracles. But they do not believe they can dictate when and how He must.

Even if what they hope for doesn't happen, they will worship. And we are invited to do the same. Hope for better circumstances. Worship no matter what comes. Even if it frustrates us. Even if we do not understand. Even if sorrow and tragedy arrive. The real miracle is the availability of God, the invitation to trust Him. Even if things do not go our way, God is inviting us to worship Him.

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