

READ: Daniel 1

3 King Nebuchadnezzar made an **image** of gold, whose height was sixty cubits and its breadth six cubits. He **set it up** on the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon. **2** Then King Nebuchadnezzar sent to gather the satraps, the prefects, and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the justices, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces to come to the dedication of the **image** that King Nebuchadnezzar had **set up**. **3** Then the satraps, the prefects, and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the justices, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces gathered for the dedication of the **image** that King Nebuchadnezzar had **set up**. And they stood before the **image** that Nebuchadnezzar had **set up**. **4** And the herald proclaimed aloud, “You are commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, **5** that when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, you are to fall down and worship the golden **image** that King Nebuchadnezzar has **set up**. **6** And whoever does not fall down and worship shall immediately be cast into a burning fiery furnace.” **7** Therefore, as soon as all the peoples heard the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, all the peoples, nations, and languages fell down and worshiped the golden **image** that King Nebuchadnezzar had **set up**.

8 Therefore at that time certain Chaldeans came forward and maliciously accused the Jews. **9** They declared to King Nebuchadnezzar, “O king, live forever! **10** You, O king, have made a decree, that every man who hears the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, shall fall down and worship the golden image. **11** And whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast into a burning fiery furnace. **12** There are certain Jews whom you have appointed over the affairs of the province of Babylon: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. These men, O king, pay no attention to you; they do not serve your gods or worship the golden **image** that you have **set up**.”

13 Then Nebuchadnezzar in furious rage commanded that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego be brought. So they brought these men before the king. **14** Nebuchadnezzar answered and said to them, “Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods

or worship the golden image that I have set up? **15** Now if you are ready when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, to fall down and worship the image that I have made, well and good. But if you do not worship, you shall immediately be cast into a burning fiery furnace. ***And who is the god who will deliver you out of my hands?***

16 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered and said to the king, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. **17** If this be so, 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. **18** But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up.”

19 Then Nebuchadnezzar was filled with fury, and the expression of his face was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. He ordered the furnace heated seven times more than it was usually heated. **20** And he ordered some of the mighty men of his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace. **21** Then these men were bound in their cloaks, their tunics, their hats, and their other garments, and they were thrown into the burning fiery furnace. **22** Because the king's order was urgent and the furnace overheated, the flame of the fire killed those men who took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. **23** And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell bound into the burning fiery furnace.

24 Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished and rose up in haste. He declared to his counselors, “Did we not cast three men bound into the fire?” They answered and said to the king, “True, O king.” **25** He answered and said, “But I see four men unbound, walking in the midst of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods.”

26 Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the door of the burning fiery furnace; he declared, “Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out, and come here!” Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out from the fire. **27** And the satraps, the prefects, the governors, and the king's counselors gathered together and saw that the fire had not had any power over the bodies of those men. The hair of their heads was not singed, their cloaks were not harmed, and no smell of fire had come upon them. **28** Nebuchadnezzar answered and said, “Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent

his angel and delivered his servants, who trusted in him, and set aside the king's command, and yielded up their bodies rather than serve and worship any god except their own God. **29** Therefore I make a decree: Any people, nation, or language that speaks anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego shall be torn limb from limb, and their houses laid in ruins, for there is no other god who is able to rescue in this way.” **30** Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the province of Babylon.

INTRO: Politics - 3rd way / Success-Career / Relationships-Friendships-Parenting

FCF: OUT OF STEP...GLORIOUSLY ODD...How? Given a Stark Example here...make it clear
Deeply held Gospel truth that captures & guides our affections enables Kingdom-shaping faithfulness.

1) Deeply held Gospel truth: *your processing/reaction to such circumstances reveals your starting point...your deeply held beliefs*

a) **God is Real** Which one is more “real”, more to be feared, more to be obeyed?

****SARCASM: “Image/Set-Up”..the King is Real but there is deeper reality**

b) **His Word is True** 1st commandment...no gods before me, no bowing down/worship - **“did God actually say?”**

c) **He is Good** If...if not - their definition of “good” is not dependent on how things go with them

d) **He loves you**

**How does this play out in your life? Lost friend, financial or health crisis?*

**How does this play out in our church? Unity/Diversity, homeless, truth*

**His word can be counted on...he means what he says”*

**What circumstances are you facing that tempts you to doubt God’s goodness?*

2) that captures & guides our affections:

Illustration - Getting Hot in Here....more than we know - we must be MOVED

a) **Irreligious Idolatry:** NEB - Security, Control, Success, Self - Anger, Murder, Reckless

b) **Religious Idolatry:** Chaldeans - Reputation, Status - Jealousy, Envy, Manipulation

Idols enslave - God frees; Idols punish - God forgives; Idols can’t rescue you in need

Shadrach - WHO IS LIKE GOD; Meshach - GOD IS GRACIOUS; Abednego - MY HELPER

3) enables Kingdom-shaping faithfulness: ENABLES...DOESN’T GUARANTEE

a) *Faith knows power of God, retains the freedom of God, holds the truth of God*

b) *The miracle of Danile 3 is faithfulness, not deliverance*

Conclusion

HEART IDOLS

20 piercing questions from Tim Keller. [Consider getting Keller's book, Counterfeit Gods: The Empty Promises of Money, Sex, and Power, and the Only Hope that Matters](#)

“Life only has meaning/I only have worth if...

1. I have power and influence over others.” (Power Idolatry)
2. I am loved and respected by _____.” (Approval Idolatry)
3. I have this kind of pleasure experience, a particular quality of life.”
(Comfort idolatry)
4. I am able to get mastery over my life in the area of _____.”
(Control idolatry)
5. people are dependent on me and need me.” (Helping Idolatry)

6. someone is there to protect me and keep me safe.” (Dependence idolatry)
7. I am completely free from obligations or responsibilities to take care of someone.” (Independence idolatry)
8. I am highly productive and getting a lot done.” (Work idolatry)
9. I am being recognized for my accomplishments, and I am excelling in my work.” (Achievement idolatry)
10. I have a certain level of wealth, financial freedom, and very nice possessions.” (Materialism idolatry)
11. I am adhering to my religion’s moral codes and accomplished in its activities.” (Religion idolatry)
12. This one person is in my life and happy to be there, and/or happy with me.” (Individual person idolatry)
13. I feel I am totally independent of organized religion and am living by a self-made morality.” (Irreligion idolatry)
14. My race and culture is ascendant and recognized as superior.” (Racial/cultural idolatry)
15. A particular social grouping or professional grouping or other group lets me in.” (Inner ring idolatry)
16. My children and/or my parents are happy and happy with me.” (Family idolatry)
17. Mr. or Ms. “Right” is in love with me.” (Relationship Idolatry)
18. I am hurting, in a problem; only then do I feel worthy of love or able to deal with guilt.” (Suffering idolatry)
19. my political or social cause is making progress and ascending in influence or power.” (Ideology idolatry)
20. I have a particular kind of look or body image.” (Image idolatry)