

Sermon Series: Daniel: Christ Among the Exiles

Sermon Text: Daniel 3:1-30 Christ in the Fire

Because Christ is with us in life and death we can resist the idolatry of earthly power to worship God alone.

1) God sets up idolatrous governments to portray humanity's folly (3:1-7).

- a) God set up Nebuchadnezzar's reign (2:37-38)
- b) Nebuchadnezzar's idolatrous government (3:1-7)
 - i) Conquered and officials required to worship state-god
 - ii) Music used to promote idolatry of the state-god
 - iii) Failure to worship the state-god is treason, punishable by death
 - iv) Idolatrous people worship the state-god without hesitation
- c) **Application:**
 - i) Patriotism vs. Idolatry of government
 - ii) "Spiritual" America

2) God ordains trials for His servants to testify for Him against idolatrous governments (3:8-23).

- a) Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego accused of disloyalty to state-god/king (3:12)
- b) Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego tempted by threat of death (3:13-15)
- c) Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego choose martyrdom over disloyalty to God (3:16-18)
- d) Nebuchadnezzar executes the sentence of death against Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego (3:19-23)
- e) **Application:**
 - i) Pressure to conform to idolatries of state/culture
 - ii) Trust and Obey—there is a relationship
 - iii) Bearing witness (martyrdom)

3) God is with His servants in life and death (3:24-27).

- a) King Nebuchadnezzar's eyewitness of God's deliverance (3:24-25)
 - i) "But I see four men unbound, walking in the midst of the fire"
 - ii) "and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of God" (How do we translate this? cf. 7:13)
- b) Nebuchadnezzar's officials' eyewitness of God's deliverance (3:26-27)
- c) **Application:**
 - i) Christ takes on our mortal nature to deliver us from death.
 - ii) No promise of painless life; but all things are ruled by Christ for the Church (Eph. 1:22).

4) God glorifies Himself in the salvation of His servants (3:28-30).

- a) Nebuchadnezzar's praise of God's rescue of His servants (3:28)
 - i) Praise of God's saving power/will
 - ii) Praise of God's servants for trust and devotion
- b) Nebuchadnezzar's decree testifying of God's saving power (3:29)
- c) Nebuchadnezzar's promotion of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego (3:30)
- d) **Application:**
 - i) Salvation is chiefly for the glory of God (Isa. 43:7; Exod. 14:4, 17; John 12:27-28). That gives us great assurance.
 - ii) Nothing can separate us from Christ's love (Rom. 8:31-39).

Because Christ is with us in life and death we can resist the idolatry of earthly power to worship God alone.

Doxology: Shout for joy to God, all the earth; sing the glory of His Name; give to Him glorious praise! Say to God, "How awesome are Your deeds! So great is Your power that Your enemies come cringing to You. All the earth worships You and sings praises to You; they sing praises to Your Name!" (Psalm 66:1-4)