

COMMUNITY GROUPS

living out the gospel with
one another in our homes

Date: 2/23/23

Sermon: Worship is Protest

Text: Daniel 3

Speaker: Ted Rastatter

Questions: Will Massaro

Sermon Summary and Text Overview

In chapter three of Daniel, King Nebuchadnezzar creates a golden statue of himself so that all of the nations under his control can worship the statue and himself. Daniel's three friends, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, refuse to worship this statue. The king throws the three men into a furnace. The three men not only live, but a fourth man (Jesus or the Angel of God) remains in the fire with them until they are removed from the fire. The story ends with the king praises the God of these men, Yahweh.

Pastor Ted preached this passage with a focus on Worship as Protest. These men chose to protest what they were told to worship because they knew they should only worship the one true God. Ted started his sermon with the reminder that Daniel is applicable to us today because mankind is just as evil today as back then, and the base level of human after the fall of adam is hostility towards God. Therefore, we must apply this passage to our own lives and decide what/who we will worship. We must worship God alone. Ted said worship is protest when we: 1. Flee idolatry. 2. Fear the Lord. 3. Fellowship in the Fire.

Questions

Read the book of First John. As helpful as Daniel 3 is to read, it is possible that everyone in your group has read and heard the story of the Firey Furnace. That story is still profitable of course, but for this discussion on idolatry, I recommend reading as much of 1 John as you can as a group. It should take less than 15 minutes.

1. Ted said, "You're biggest problem is the idolatry in your heart". What is idolatry and how does it appear every day in your own heart? Give some personal examples.

2. Ted said, “It ticks people off when you don’t worship their idols”. What kind of external pressures do you face when you refuse to worship what the world worships?
3. Ted said, “The fellowship is often sweeter during the suffering”. How is it possible that our fellowship with God is better when bad things are happening? Give some person examples.

Reflection: John Piper wrote, “Many people “receive Christ” as a sin forgiver because they treasure being guilt-free, not because they treasure Christ. Many people receive him as rescuer from hell because they treasure being pain-free, not because they treasure Christ. Many people receive him as a healer because they treasure being disease-free, not because they treasure Christ. They receive him as a protector because they treasure being safe, not because they treasure Christ. They receive him as a prosperity giver because they treasure being wealthy, not because they treasure Christ. Many claim to receive Christ and to be a Christian. But they do not receive him as a treasure.”

To put it simply, if you received Christ simply for the gifts that he gives you, it is possible those gifts are idols in your life, and it is even possible that you have not received Christ at all. If anyone here simply “believes” the right things about Jesus so they can escape hell or get to heaven, or any of these others gifts, but you do not love Jesus or God, please repent, turn from your sins, and follow and love and treasure the God of the universe right now. Even if you do follow and love Jesus Christ. Repent and turn from any of the idolatry in your heart.

Spend some time in personal prayer. Afterwards, let anyone share if they feel comfortable.