

Let's Pray & get right to it

This **morning** – I just want to **walk** through
3 great events in the Bible - (2 OT & 1 NT)

We'll **start** - in **Dan Ch 3** - (after Isa, Jer, Lam, Eze)

Daniel 3:1 (NLT)

1 King Nebuchadnezzar made a gold statue ninety feet tall and nine feet wide and set it up on the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon.

Nebuchadnezzar was the **King** of Babylon
& this was a **Statue** of **Himself**

& then – **all** the people in **Babylon** (incl'd'g the **Jews**
who had been **taken** there in captivity)

were told in Daniel 3:5–6 (NLT)

*5 When you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes, and other musical instruments, **bow to the ground to worship King Nebuchadnezzar's gold statue.**
6 Anyone who refuses to obey will immediately be thrown into a blazing furnace.”*

Then – in **Vs's 8-12** some of the '**political** leaders' of **Babylon**
went to the King – & **told** him

Shadrach, Meshach & Abednego - **Refused** to follow
the **order** of the State – that **dictated** their right to **Worship**

& so – in **v.13** - the **Governor** – (*I mean the King*)
flew into a rage - & had these 3 brought to him

& then the **Governor** says to them- in **V.14** (*my paraphrase*):
“is it true that you have refused to worship in the way I have dictated that you must?”

Then the **governor** gives them **one** more **chance**
to **BOW** to his **dictates** regarding their **worship**

& **then** we see the **response** from these **God-Followers**

& this would be - the correct response

if a governor were to remove our rights
and dictate how WE should worship

Daniel 3:16–18 (NLT)

16 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego replied, “O [Governor] Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you.

17 If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God whom we serve is able to save us. He will rescue us from your power, Your Majesty.

18 But even if he doesn’t, we want to make it clear to you, Your Majesty, that we will never serve your gods or worship the gold statue you have set up.”

We **Kneel To**, we **Bow To**, & **We Worship**
ONE GOD ONLY

& it is not a **Political** or an Anarchist Organization

We **Kneel To**, **Bow To**, and **Worship**

The **Lord** of **Heaven & Earth**, **Jesus Christ** – **ALONE**

& **if** you **don't** know the **Story**

These **3 Hebrews** - **Were** thrown **into** the **Fire**

& **Jesus MET THEM** In the **Fire**

& **Jesus** carried them **safely THREW the Fire**

Which seems to be pretty **clear support** from **God**

For these 3 **God-Fearing Men**

Who **Humbly Refused** to **Obey**

the **Governments Dictates** - **regarding** their **Worship**

I'm **praying** you see a '**subtle**' connection

In these **3 events** today – ***Are you starting to see it?***

Next – turn over to **Dan Ch 6**

Some years later – There's a **New King** in charge

& **Daniel** holds a **Government Position**

& the **King respected** Daniel

But **others** in the gov't were **out** to **get Daniel** – **at ANY Cost**
(**sound like any government you know**)

So – the competing political party – Tricks the King
into issuing a royal decree - that can't be changed

& GUESS what the Royal Decree was about . . .
HOW people were allowed to Worship

Here are the CONNIVERS – CONVINCING the King

Daniel 6:7(b) (NLT)

7 We are all in agreement . . . that the king should make a law that will be strictly enforced. Give orders that for the next thirty days any person who prays to anyone, divine or human—except to you, Your Majesty—will be thrown into the den of lions.

Notice – this LAW – Dictated HOW people
were Allowed to Worship - for the next 30 days

It's almost like there was a Pandemic or something
that made the King feel - he could make such a law

& so – what did Daniel DO

When he heard about this law –
that Dictated - HOW he was allowed to worship

Daniel 6:10 (NLT)

10 But when Daniel learned that the law had been signed, he went home and knelt down as usual in his upstairs room,

with its windows open toward Jerusalem. He prayed three times a day, just as he had always done, giving thanks to his God.

& so – Daniel’s political opponents
(of course) were watching

& they ran merrily to the King - with this news

& Altho the King didn’t want to – he had no choice
but to throw Daniel into the Lion’s den

The King had been duped by these political snakes –

Aren’t you glad things like that
never happen in OUR political system

The King was actually pulling for Daniel

so after a night in the Lion’s Den
the King ran to the Den

& we read in - Daniel 6:20 (NLT)

20 When he got there, he called out in anguish, “Daniel, servant of the living God! Was your God, whom you serve so faithfully, able to rescue you from the lions?”

Then Daniel responds - & I want you to look very closely
at the last words Daniel says

Daniel 6:21–22 (NLT)

21 Daniel answered, “Long live the king!

22 My God sent his angel to shut the lions’ mouths so that they would not hurt me, for I have been found innocent in his sight. And I have not wronged you, Your Majesty.”

Wait a minute

Daniel had Disobeyed

a **written law** of the **Government** of the **Land**

& **yet** we **read** here,

Daniel was found innocent in God’s sight

& **not only** that – but **Daniel** was **able** to **say** to the **King**

And I have not wronged you, Your Majesty

How do we **balance this**

that **Daniel broke** the **law** – but was **not found WRONG**

in either **God’s sight** - or the **King’s sight**

Here’s what Warren Wiersbe says about this vs

This means that the king’s law about prayer was rejected in heaven and that Daniel was right in disobeying it. By suggesting such a law, the scheming officers disobeyed the true and living God and robbed Him of the glory He deserved.

Now – **listen** to me **please**

Daniel did **not organize** a **political anarchist movement**

& **start destroying people’s lives** and **property**

He didn't demand to defund or threaten to kill the police

& he didn't promise to burn the system down
if he didn't get what he wanted

Daniel CHOSE to quietly embrace his freedom to worship
that was given to him by GOD

& because of the way he went about it –
he was found innocent in the eyes of God - AND the King

But - let's not miss - one critical truth
We see in both of these events in Daniel

In both events these God-followers were WILLING

to quietly and humbly DIE
for their right to Worship God

They didn't confront the government –
they didn't attack the system –

But, with Quiet Resolve – & prepared to die

they refused to allow the STATE
to tell them how To Worship

& - in <u>BOTH cases</u> <u>God</u> was <u>WITH THEM</u> – <u>IN</u> the <u>Midst</u> of <u>it</u>

So – How bout some N.T truth?

Let's head over to - Acts Ch 4

As Acts Ch 4 Opens

Peter & John had just healed a man – AT the Temple
& now – they were teaching the people

& we pick up – in Acts 4:1–3 (NLT)

1 While Peter and John were speaking to the people, they were confronted by the priests, the captain of the Temple guard, and some of the Sadducees.

2 These leaders were very disturbed that Peter and John were teaching the people that through Jesus there is a resurrection of the dead.

3 They arrested them and, since it was already evening, put them in jail until morning.

In the following Vs's – the Sanhedrin Counsel
brought them in - to question them

& - The Jewish Sanhedrin Counsel HAD Civil & Criminal Jurisdiction – as well as Religious – at that time

& in V.7 - the Counsel Demanded

By what power, or in whose name, had the Apostles healed a man the previous day

& in V.10 – Filled with the Holy Spirit – Peter Responded

Acts 4:10 (NLT)

10 Let me clearly state to all of you and to all the people of Israel that he was healed by the powerful name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, the man you crucified but whom God raised from the dead.

& **Then** – **quite** a **dust-up** occurs within the **Sanhedrin Counsel**

& finally - Acts 4:18 says (NLT)

18 So they called the apostles back in and commanded them never again to speak or teach in the name of Jesus.

& **then** we **read** the **response** in

Acts 4:19-20 – Our Key Vs's (NLT)

19 But Peter and John replied, "Do you think God wants us to obey you rather than him?"

20 We cannot stop telling about everything we have seen and heard."

Then in **V.21** – the **counsel threatens** them **further**, but **lets them go**

& **then** the **believers PRAY** for **Courage** – **because** they **KNOW** - their **lives** are **on the line**

& then we read in Acts 4:31 (NLT)

31 After this prayer, the meeting place shook, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. Then they preached the word of God with boldness.

Which means they DEFIED
the Civil & Criminal Jurisdiction of the time

Because the government (as it were) tried to stop them
from Preaching & teaching in the Name of Jesus

& the more they Preached and Taught
the more people came to Believe in Jesus

& then – we read in Acts 5:17–18 (NLT)

*17 The high priest and his officials, who were Sadducees,
were filled with jealousy.*

18 They arrested the apostles and put them in the public jail.

They were put in Jail

for Defying a Government Mandate
about Preaching in the Name of Jesus

The Question is – DID GOD - Support them

in their decision – to Continue to Preach Jesus
when the Government told them Not to

Well, let's see – (so the Apostles are in jail
for proclaiming the Gospel)

& then we read – in Acts 5:19–20 (NLT)

*19 But an angel of the Lord came at night, opened the gates
of the jail, and brought them out. Then he told them,*

20 “Go to the Temple and give the people this message of life!”

Well - That **SEEMS Pretty Supportive**
on **God’s Part, doesn’t** it

So – the **Apostles DO**
what the **Angel of the Lord** tells **them** to do

& **So** the **Sanhedrin arrests** them **again**

& says to them - In Acts 5:28 (NLT)

28 “We gave you strict orders never again to teach in this man’s name!” he said. “Instead, you have filled all Jerusalem with your teaching about him . . .

& then - Acts 5:29 (NLT)

29 But Peter and the apostles replied (to the governing authority), “We must obey God rather than any human authority.”

Again, **no protests** – **no riots** –
no abusing police officers or **burning businesses**

Just a **Humble, Gentle** response

“We must obey God rather than any human authority.”

& the **Apostles KNEW** what the **consequences**
of **that statement** would be

& they were ready to face those consequences
with Faith & Courage

& so – in Acts 5:33
the High Counsel decides to KILL the Apostles

& God uses One Pharisee to talk them out of it
(Paul's teacher – Gamaliel)

& in Acts 5:40–42 we read (NLT)

40 The others accepted his advice. (& instead) They called in the apostles and had them flogged (no small consequence). Then they ordered them never again to speak in the name of Jesus, and they let them go.

41 The apostles left the high council rejoicing that God had counted them worthy to suffer disgrace for the name of Jesus.

42 And every day, in the Temple and from house to house, they continued to teach and preach this message: “Jesus is the Messiah.”

Humbly – Respectfully – & Willing to Die

The Apostles continued to Teach & Preach
this message: “*Jesus is the Messiah.*”

I WANT to BE COUNTED – WITH THEM!!

So – **THREE Great Events** in the **Bible**
ALL with **the Same** (*not so subtle*) **Point**

BUT - maybe you're familiar with Rom Ch 13

or **maybe you've heard that Scripture Ref
thrown around during these times**

**Let's head over there (Rom 13) - & let's read the first 2 Vs's
just to get the context of the Ch**

Romans 13:1-2 (NLT)

1 Everyone must submit to governing authorities. For all authority comes from God, and those in positions of authority have been placed there by God.

2 So anyone who rebels against authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and they will be punished.

**How can we RECONCILE These Vs's (Rom 13)
with everything we've looked at so far?**

Please, Listen to me very carefully

**Everything we've read – prior to Romans 13
has had the SAME SUBJECT**

Which is – The Government Mandating – or Dictating

**How we CAN or CANNOT - Worship God
or PREACH - in the Name of Jesus**

**Guys - In ALL Matters – We are called to (& we must)
Respect the Law & the Governing Authorities**

**If we DO NOT – then Anarchy will be Result –
which is exactly what we are seeing in our country today**

**HOWEVER – there is a time – when we are called
to Respectfully & Humbly**

**LAY CLAIM to our “Right to Worship”
& to our “Right to Proclaim” the Name of Jesus**

**Let me read a quote
by a famous Bible Scholar - from 1989**

William MacDonald, Believer’s Bible Commentary

In every ordered society there must be authority and submission to that authority. Otherwise you have a state of anarchy . . . There is an exception, of course. A Christian is not required to obey if the government orders him to sin or to compromise his loyalty to Jesus Christ. No government has a right to command a person’s conscience. So there are times when a believer must, by obeying God, incur the wrath of man. In such cases he must be prepared to pay the penalty without undue complaint.

**Which is exactly what we’ve seen
in our 3 separate events this morning**

We Want to be counted among those
Who Respectfully & Humbly

**LAY CLAIM to our “Right to Worship”
& our “Right to Proclaim” the Name of Jesus**

& we want to humbly be prepared
to Pay the Penalty without undue complaint

We want to STAND UP for JESUS
In a World that is FALLING DOWN

Let's Pray