

# STAND

HOW TO THRIVE IN A CULTURE OF COMPROMISE



## STAND, PART 3: STANDING OUT

Have you ever been in a tough spot where you needed a friend, but they weren't there? Today, we're going to see why many times, the people we rely on the most sometimes aren't there. It's not just that they're fickle. Many times, God removes the strong people in our lives that we rely upon to see if we will step it up and stand out. Today, we're going to see what happens with three guys when their leader is nowhere to be found. Will they fold? Or will they step up?

**THE BIG IDEA:** Do what you ought to, even when it costs you. Follow God and leave the results up to Him.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. No one likes being seen as strange or an outsider. Talk about a time when you made someone feel this way. Discuss about a time where you felt this way.
2. [With your Bible or Bible App, read Daniel 3:1-7.](#)

*<sup>1</sup> 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. <sup>2</sup> Then he sent messages to the high officers, officials, governors, advisers, treasurers, judges, magistrates, and all the provincial officials to come to the dedication of the statue he had set up. <sup>3</sup> So all these officials came and stood before the statue King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. <sup>4</sup> Then a herald shouted out, "People of all races and nations and languages, listen to the king's command! <sup>5</sup> 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. <sup>6</sup> Anyone who refuses to obey will immediately be thrown into a blazing furnace." <sup>7</sup> So at the sound of the musical instruments, all the people, whatever their race or nation or language, bowed to the ground and worshiped the gold statue that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.*

[Daniel 3:1-7 \(NLT\)](#)

3. The three young Hebrew boys we read about in Daniel 3 were men of integrity; their convictions were rooted in a belief that God is more powerful than the King of Babylon. What do the following verses have to say about integrity?
  - 1 Kings 9:1-9
  - Psalm 25:20-21
  - Psalm 41:11-12
  - Proverbs 11:3
4. [With your Bible or Bible App, read Daniel 3:8-12.](#)

*<sup>8</sup> But some of the astrologers went to the king and informed on the Jews. <sup>9</sup> They said to King Nebuchadnezzar, "Long live the king! <sup>10</sup> You issued a decree requiring all the people to bow down and worship the gold statue when they hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes, and other musical instruments. <sup>11</sup> That decree also states that those who refuse to obey must be thrown into a blazing furnace. <sup>12</sup> But there are some Jews—Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego—whom you have put in charge of the province of Babylon. They pay no attention to you, Your Majesty. They refuse to serve your gods and do not worship the gold statue you have set up."*

[Daniel 3:8-12 \(NLT\)](#)

5. What motivated the astrologers to report the disobedience of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego?
6. What are some of the dangers of Christians standing up and standing out from the rest of the crowd?
7. Think of a person you have met who lives a life of integrity and stands out. What did he/she do that made them stand out?

8. [With your Bible or Bible App, read Daniel 3:13-15.](#)

*13 Then Nebuchadnezzar flew into a rage and ordered that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego be brought before him. When they were brought in, 14 Nebuchadnezzar said to them, "Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you refuse to serve my gods or to worship the gold statue I have set up? 15 I will give you one more chance to bow down and worship the statue I have made when you hear the sound of the musical instruments. But if you refuse, you will be thrown immediately into the blazing furnace. And then what god will be able to rescue you from my power?"* [Daniel 3:13-15 \(NLT\)](#)

9. Sometimes it takes great courage to hold to your convictions. Recall a time when you had to be courageous in your faith. What happened? What was the result?

10. [With your Bible or Bible App, read Daniel 3:16-18.](#)

*16 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego replied, "O 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."*

[Daniel 3:16-18 \(NLT\)](#)

11. What were these boys certain of in their response to Nebuchadnezzar's challenge, and what were they uncertain of?
12. Some Christians claim that pain or sickness or difficulty are always the result of sin or a lack of faith. How would you respond to that claim in light of Daniel 3:16-18?
13. If you had been one of the many Jews who had worshipped the image, how do you think the experience of these boys would have affected you?
14. All of us want God to come through miraculously for us like He did for Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Does God give us any guarantees which scenarios He will give us?
15. [With your Bible or Bible App, read Daniel 3:19-25.](#)

*19 Nebuchadnezzar was so furious with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego that his face became distorted with rage. He commanded that the furnace be heated seven times hotter than usual. 20 Then he ordered some of the strongest men of his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and throw them into the blazing furnace. 21 So they tied them up and threw them into the furnace, fully dressed in their pants, turbans, robes, and other garments. 22 And because the king, in his anger, had demanded such a hot fire in the furnace, the flames killed the soldiers as they threw the three men in. 23 So Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, securely tied, fell into the roaring flames. 24 But suddenly, Nebuchadnezzar jumped up in amazement and exclaimed to his advisers, "Didn't we tie up three men and throw them into the furnace?" "Yes, Your Majesty, we certainly did," they replied. 25 "Look!" Nebuchadnezzar shouted. "I see four men, unbound, walking around in the fire unharmed! And the fourth looks like a god!"* [Daniel 3:19-25 \(NLT\)](#)

16. List all of the prayers of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego up to this point that God hasn't answered favorably. If you were them, how strong would your faith in God be at this moment?
17. Describe a time you went through an experience of pain, suffering, or loss and how God came and walked with you through this furnace.
18. How has your faith grown deeper over the years through furnace times?
19. What furnace are you facing right now (or that you see on the horizon)? How can this group pray for you as you go through this difficult season?

## MOVING FORWARD

Chris talked about stepping up and taking a stand for God this weekend. Can you think of any Christians you've known who were especially good at taking a stand? How did people respond to them? How can you take more of a stand for God this week and stand out and be willing to be noticed for God?

## CHANGING YOUR MIND

*"Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine. "Do not be afraid, for I have ransomed you. I have called you by name; you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze. For I am the LORD, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.*

Isaiah 43:1-3