

**June 12th, 2022**

**MISSION:imPOSSIBLE: "In the Fire"**

Well let's jump in this morning. Over the last few weeks God has really laid on our hearts the sense of being on mission. Throughout the last month or so we have really just been locking in on what our mission is and what God is calling us to do.

A mission is defined as: an important assignment carried out for political, religious, or commercial purposes, typically involving travel.

An important assignment carried out for religious purposes. Today I want you to hear what is not only my mission but a mission I believe is for the church as a whole.

Amen! My mission is the youth! Teenagers, kids in middle school and high school. Pastor Jim mentioned last week in his closing that I'll be speaking this week and immediately after service I was talking with Dave Leslie, my brother from another mother. And Dave asked me to give him a little sneak peak at what I was preaching on, I said teenagers. And what did you say Dave? You said future! And I agree with you but I'm going to add to it. The one thing I say is that not only are our teenagers the future church but they are the here and now church. And what I mean by that is they are able to be a part of church and purpose now.

What do you mean by that Pastor Bailey? Great question church. I believe that teenagers can be used for God's kingdom now. They have a purpose here and now as teenagers that is going to further HIS kingdom. It's not something that they have to wait to do when they get older. God can use these teenagers to glorify the kingdom. Then obviously as they grow older they will then begin to lead the next generation of church!

If you want to open your bibles and turn to the book of Daniel, that's where we will be today, but we'll start off in Chapter 3. In this chapter we learn about three teens that are named: Hananiah, Mishael, Azariah. Some of you are like WHO... Never heard of those gents... but that's because we know them by their Babylonian names: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. And we know

they're younger because earlier in the book of Daniel they were described as "young men", putting them in an age range of 13-20...

*Daniel 3:7*

Therefore, as soon as they heard the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp and all kinds of music, all the nations and peoples of every language fell down and worshiped the image of gold that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

All people bowed to the statue. Regardless of race, nation, or language, they bowed and worshiped this idol.

EXCEPT, you guessed it! Our boys Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. These were the only three in the land that didn't bow. When they were turned in to King Nebby he tried to give them one more chance and asked if what he is hearing is true: to which the young men responded:

*Verse 16-18*

... "King Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to deliver us from it, and he will deliver us from Your Majesty's hand. But even if he does not, we want you to know, Your Majesty, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up."

God used them to send a message. And that message is he will never leave us, not even when things get HOT. Not when the furnace is cranked seven times hotter than normal. Not when you think the world is ending, or you're in the valley or in the lion's den. GOD IS IN THE FIRE WITH YOU! Says right here in Daniel 3.

God was able to use these teenagers to not only send a message of his faithfulness. But he used these teenagers to further his kingdom.

*Verse 28-29*

Then Nebuchadnezzar said, "Praise be to the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who has sent his angel and rescued his servants! They trusted in him and defied the king's command and were willing to give up their lives rather than serve or worship any god except their own God. Therefore I decree that the people of any nation or language who say anything against the God

of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego be cut into pieces and their houses be turned into piles of rubble, for no other god can save in this way.”

When we started this, it was whoever doesn't bow to this idol must pay the punishment. God used Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednegos obedience to change the narrative. Because now it's whoever speaks out against our God they will have to pay the price.

And all it took were teenagers that knew who they were, whose they were, and that they knew they had a purpose. With those three things that did the unthinkable. It was teenagers that led the charge. Teenagers that changed the trajectory. Teenagers that stood for Christ. They were willing to die for their faith

I truly believe that this generation is going to do BIG THINGS. They are going to lead a charge and a movement for the kingdom.

That is my mission and my heart that I want kids to know that they have a purpose NOW. GOD CAN USE THEM NOW!

You're only able to get behind the what if if you truly understand the why.

You see church, Youth isn't just a time on the weekday for your kid to play games and have fun. Youth is a beacon for kids to come to the House of God. We exist to have a space for kids to get away from the distractions of the world and to be in God's presence. We take the two hours we get a week and we just pour into them the entire time. Why? Because these teenagers need to know the three most important things: 1. They are loved, 2. They matter, and 3. They have purpose.

As we bring it all together I want you to know that God is in the fire with you. No matter what the circumstance. God is in the fire with you!!

How do I know? Well I know because first hand God has always been with me through it all. If you haven't already guessed who that student was, well let me tell you. I was that student and God NEVER left me. When I thought I was alone in the world GOD WAS THERE. When I was searching for the answer GOD WAS THERE. WHEN I DIDN'T FEEL LIKE I WAS ENOUGH..... GOD was there.

I didn't get to this point today by my own power. By myself. No way. I am only here today because God ordained it.

That is why I believe wholeheartedly in this youth group, not only because it is a part of my calling in life but because I am a product of this ministry and it is in my DNA!

That is why I get out of bed every morning. That is my why. I want to be the person that I needed as a teenager. I want teenagers to know their place in the kingdom. That they have people genuinely caring about them! That they have a purpose here and NOW. As long as there is breath in my lungs, I will be speaking life into the next generation.