

Daniel, the Man and the Message

When Government becomes God

Daniel 3, 6

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“Caesar often competes with God for our allegiance. Under ideal conditions, the responsibility of the state is to protect its citizens and to enact laws that will enable them to flourish. But the state often overreaches with laws that conflict with individual [and church] freedoms. **As a nation drifts from God**, pressure builds as the state encroaches on religious liberty and plays the role of God.”

Erwin Lutzer (emphasis added)

A true story of courage:

Some 15 years passed between Daniel chapters two and three. (Source: David Jeremiah)

King Nebuchadnezzar made a gold statue, 90 feet high and nine feet wide. He set it up on the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon. Daniel 3:1 HCSB

Why they didn't bow:

³“You shall have no other gods before Me.

⁴“You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. ⁵You shall not bow down to them or serve them... Exodus 20:3-5a

Application: There are times in life when you _____
_____. When you know something's right, do it.

¹⁶Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered and said to the king, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. ¹⁷If this be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king. ¹⁸But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up.”

Daniel 3:16-18

Two Questions

Question #1: Where did they find the courage?

It was a gutsy move to stand up to the king's mandate. Where did they find the courage?
Where do we find courage?

#1: They trusted in _____.
(Isaiah 43:1-3; Hebrews 13:5)

#2: They trusted in God's _____. (Hebrews 11)

What good comes from not being delivered?

Here is one answer: We don't just suffer for ourselves; we suffer for those who _____.

...and you will be dragged before governors and kings for My sake, **to bear witness** before them and the Gentiles. Matthew 10:18 (emphasis added)

Question #2: What lessons can we learn?

Lesson #1: _____.

Beloved do not be surprised at the fiery trial that comes upon you...1 Peter 4:12a

“True heroes calculate the long-range consequences, preferring to be honored in
heaven than on earth.”

Erwin Lutzer

Lesson #2: Stand, even when _____.

Some Christians wrongly prioritize God's commands from least to greatest. Don't make that mistake.

I know God commands me to _____, but...

Lesson #3: Do not underestimate _____.