



Daniel Week 4: Standing by Faith in the Fire

1. Consider again the letter to Diognetus, a tutor to Marcus Aurelius in 150 - 180 AD.

"Christians are indistinguishable from other men either by nationality, language or customs. They do not inhabit separate cities of their own, or speak a strange dialect, or follow some outlandish way of life. Their teaching is not based upon reveries inspired by the curiosity of men. Unlike some other people, they champion no purely human doctrine. With regard to dress, food and manner of life in general, they follow the customs of whatever city they happen to be living in, whether it is Greek or foreign. And yet there is something extraordinary about their lives. They live in their own countries as though they were only passing through. They play their full role as citizens, but labor under all the disabilities of foreigners. Any country can be their homeland, but for them their homeland, wherever it may be, is a foreign country."

How does this letter help you understand the Christian posture as an Exile?

2. What was something that tested your faith this week? It can be anything from serious to silly - just share a bit about what you've been facing since we last met.
3. Read Daniel **3:1-12**. Put yourself in the three boys shoes - here are three excuses they could have used to bow to the statue and save their lives: (1) We will fall down but not actually worship the idol. (2) We won't become idol worshipers but will worship it this one time, and then ask God for forgiveness. (3) The king has absolute power, and we must obey him. God will understand. **What other excuses do you think they could have made/you could make?**
4. **Our Faith will be Tested in Exile.** Read **Daniel 3:16-18, 1 Peter 1:6-7, and Eph. 6:13**. How do these verses help us know how to **Stand by Faith in the Fire**?
5. *Standing by Faith in the Fire* requires **obeying God rather than others**. The way we can be pressured to obey others is often more subtle in our day than it is in this story. Our affections and allegiances can be turned toward what the NT writers call "the world" (sex, work, money, politics, success, ambition, sports, etc.) more than Christ. What specifically in your life is God asking you to say no to, so that you can obey God first?
6. Pastor Dan said that Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego teach us that **Obedience is our responsibility, the Outcome is God's**, why is this so hard?
7. Is there something you know God wants you to do that you need to obey? What steps will you take this week?