

What Will You Do When You Face the Fire?

by E.L. Bynum

The sermon challenges listeners to stand true in their faith and not compromise with the world's values and beliefs, even in the face of persecution or consequences.

Duration: 55:59

Scripture: Job 1:13

Topics: "Persecution"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the promise of God to never leave or forsake His people, even in the midst of trials and challenges. The preacher uses the story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the fiery furnace as an example of God's faithfulness. Despite being thrown into the fire, these three men were miraculously protected and unharmed because God was with them. The preacher encourages the audience to trust in God and remain faithful, knowing that He is able to work behind the scenes and bring glory to Himself in any situation.

Transcript

I think of these four young men, Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that were carried away captive in the days of their youth. I do not know exactly how old they were, but they were carried away, carried away from the temple, carried away from the place of worship, carried away from the familiar landmarks that they were used to, and made captives in a heathen kingdom, the kingdom of Babylon. And King Nebuchadnezzar was the king at that particular time.

And we find right in the first chapter that they were challenged by the king and his cohorts to partake of the king's meat and to drink the king's wine. And the meat had been sacrificed to idols, and the wine probably had also. And nevertheless, they would not drink it.

And they certainly were not arrogant about it. They were willing to set forth why they would not do it. And miraculously, they didn't have to face an absolute decision of life or death, although they got pretty close to it.

And they stood true. And I believe that when times are difficult, God's people have to stand true. And we're living in difficult times.

We're not living in the easiest of times. Of course, there never has really been an easy time for God's people, either in the Old Testament or the New Testament, or in the last 2,000 years of church history. There hasn't been an easy time.

There have been some times that were much more difficult than today. And there have been times when things were more conducive to Christian living and serving God than today. And then in chapter 2 of the book of Daniel, and I'm not going to preach the whole chapter, but in chapter 2, Nebuchadnezzar had a dream of an image.

Of course, he didn't know what his dream was. He was just troubled by it. And through the prophet Daniel, through this young man, it was revealed to him world history from the time of Nebuchadnezzar down to the present age.

There is an outline in this image of the various kingdoms that existed in those days. But when we come to chapter 3, we come to another time of real testing. We do not know where Daniel was at this time.

Perhaps he was sent on some errand by the king into a far province. Nevertheless, his three friends, his three Hebrew friends were there. And there was a great image built, an image of gold placed on the plains of Dura.

And it was required that for a certain length of time, that everyone would bow down before this image and worship it. And this was certainly a challenge to those who believed that there was one true God, not represented by an image, but the invisible God who made heaven and earth. And so they refused to bow down.

They were there when the music was played, the various musical instruments, and they were there to be made to worship this image. But they refused to do so. You know the world, the devil, wants us to conform to his system and do his will.

And it is not the will of God that we conform to this world. The Bible says that we are not to be conformed, but we are to be transformed. And we are to be a different people.

Now, if you will open your Bibles to Daniel chapter 3, and we're going to begin reading with verse 15. I'm not going to read the entire chapter because of the length, but here it says, now let's stand. If you don't mind, I'd like for you to stand for the reading of God's holy word.

Verse 15, Now if you be ready, at what time you hear the sound, the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and deucemer, and all kinds of music, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made well. But if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace, and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands? See here, he put a challenge out to the God of heaven, and to any God, but all other gods are false, that if they would not do it, let their God deliver them. But he was just certain in his own mind that there was no God that could deliver these people.

Verse 16, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou set up.

Then was the Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Therefore he spake and commanded that they should heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated. And he commanded the most mighty men that were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace.

Then these men were bound in their coats, their hosen, and their hats, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. Therefore, because the king's commandment was urgent, and the furnace exceeding hot, the flame of the fire slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

Then Nebuchadnezzar, the king, was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counselors, Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king. He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the son of man. Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the mount of the burning fiery furnace, and spake, and said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, ye servants of the Most High, God, come forth, and come hither.

Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came forth out of the midst of the fire, and the princes, governors, and captains, and the king's counselors, being gathered together, saw these men upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was the hair of their heads singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them. Then Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god except their own god. Therefore I make a decree that every people, nation, and language which speak anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill, because there is no other god that can deliver after this sort than the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the province of Babylon.

Let us pray. O Lord our God, we come to Thee realizing that these dear people have come to worship Thee, and that we are gathered here to give Thy word and to expound upon it. I pray Lord that in this service You would give glory and honor and praise to Thy wonderful and glorious name.

And may it be when we leave here today that we will realize that Thou has been with us, and that Lord we have been blessed, and that Your will has been done in our lives. Now Lord we know that we live in a sinful and adulterous generation. We live in the days of the most perverse way of living known to man.

And yet Lord we know that we are to keep ourselves unspotted from the world. Help us Lord to realize that we may too face the fires of persecution. Help us O God to be prepared to stand, and having done all to stand, to stand with our loins girded about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and wearing the whole armor of God.

Lord we thank You for Brother Modine and his faithful stand for the word, his steadfastness in not compromising and using the methods and the doctrines of the world. And Lord I pray that You would bless him as he continues to minister in this church. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.

You may be seated. This is an amazing chapter. I know that I'm not going to tell you anything that you've never heard before.

I'm confident that your pastor keeps you informed on what is going on in the world. And I'm confident that he is warning you from time to time of what we need to be ready for in this perilous age in which we live. The Bible says in the last days perilous times shall come.

And if we're not in the last days, we're awfully close to it, because I'm looking for His coming any day, any hour. But right now we're here, and God has a work for us to do. He has a testimony for us to give.

He has a life for us to live for His honor and glory. And so this morning, what will you do when you face the fire? That's the question. You say, well, I'll never face the fire.

I live in the United States of America. We have religious freedom, and we're protected by our Constitution and our laws. And you have to recognize that even though we do live in a great country, that more and more it is slipping into heathenism, more and more the government and the nation is clamping down on Bible-believing Christians who will not bow, who will not bend, and who will not back up, just as these three Hebrew children.

They wouldn't bow down. The music, no doubt, was beautiful. Look at all of those musical instruments.

And you can see that they had music, but they were not going to bow down. And they could have used what some religious people call the mental reservation. They could have said, well, we don't really mean it.

You know, we're just doing it to satisfy the king, and God knows our hearts, and we don't really worship idols, but where would their testimony have been? Where would Daniel 3 be? It wouldn't exist if these men had compromised. You see, everything happens for a purpose. I preached up there in Michigan, and on the bottle it said, smart water.

And I usually have to have some water to wet my whistle, but I didn't drink that. I was afraid, Brother Modine, if I drank that smart water, I might turn out to be a smart aleck. And I didn't want to do that.

But we're going to face, in the future, and we are facing, some tremendous challenges today. The music is being written, and the music is ready to play, and I don't know exactly how it's going to come in our lives. But we're living in a time when we're facing tremendous challenges, and we're going to face furious rulers, and furious judges, and a furious society that demands that we bow down and worship at their altar.

Now, Brother Modine mentioned it, but it won't hurt if I mention it again. There are people in Canada that are in prison because they preached against homosexuality. The same is true in Europe, and some are in prison over there, and no doubt other parts of the world.

And they are going to try to force us to accept this awful practice. Not that they will try to make us practice it, but to accept it, and to gloss it over and say it's alright. Now, if you don't believe that, you just think about what has already happened, and even though we have a wonderful Constitution, all the freedoms and liberties guaranteed that we'd ever need, but the courts and the Supreme Court are rewriting the Constitution.

They're not changing the real Constitution, they're just changing their view of what the Constitution says, and they're determined that they're going to change our views. Now, what are you going to do if your church grows, and you need an employee, either an assistant or some other employee for the church, and a homosexual applies for the job? You say, well, we wouldn't hire them. Well, what if they go to the court

and claim discrimination against you? Your pastor would be down in court, and this church would be liable for not accepting them.

These kinds of things are happening out in California and in Massachusetts and other states. They've legalized this abominable sin, and they're trying to make people accept what the Bible so strongly condemns in the Old Testament and in the New Testament. And what if you have a home, and you decided to build an apartment for a little extra income, or maybe you buy a duplex, or you even buy several apartments, and you want to rent them out? And if lesbians and homosexuals come and want to rent them, you better be careful, because they can sue you for discrimination.

You see, they've made these things into a hate crime. If you're against them, that's hate. And it's just like the hate crimes against the people of color, the black people.

And they have their rights, and rightly so. Sometimes it's put to the extreme. But the point is that they will make anything they want to be approved and to force upon civilization, and to force upon Christians, they'll make it into a hate crime.

That's the approach. Not that they say you'll have to accept this. It's just a hate crime to be against it or discriminate against anybody that is engaged in it.

I know you're kept well informed. I see your bulletin or your folder there that the pastor hands out. And I know he puts in there these important events that are taking place in the world.

But sometimes when we're living in our secure position, sometimes when all seems well in Zion, we forget about what's coming down the road. We forget about this express train of sin and debauchery that is being forced upon society today. And so there are one way, two ways, maybe a million ways that they're coming after us today.

And I don't mean to go into all of that. But we're being asked to compromise our convictions, compromise what the Bible teaches. It's not what E.L. Bynum thinks, but it's what saith the Lord.

That's what's right, and that is what is certain. And there are many other idols that people are bowing down today. There's the religious idols in religious organizations and in evangelism.

There's so much going on that people accept that is absolutely abominable in the sight of God. Compromise with ungodliness and with the world is a stench in the nostrils of Almighty God. He says, because I'm holy, be ye holy.

And God wants us to be a holy people, not to follow the fashion of this world and the schedule of the world and the way of the world, but to stand up for the truth. And sometimes it's not popular. Sometimes if you're on a job and you're asked to do things that are immoral, then you have to take a stand.

You can't use mental reservations and say, well, I don't really believe that, but I'll go ahead and do it because I want to keep my job. I want people to respect me. I don't want them to look down upon me as some kind of a fanatic.

And that's what a lot of people, they face that and they buckle, they bend, they bow down. And of course, their shame later on, they may confess it to God, but the damage has already been done. Now, we're faced with a world of iniquity.

You turn on the television and what do you see? You see the devil's play toy. You see all of the iniquitous things that are shown on television. We were in our room up there in Romulus, Michigan, a motel room, and I didn't know where the channels were in these hotels.

You don't always know. And I was just trying to find the Weather Channel and Fox News and get a little bit of what was going on in the world. And I hit this button and vile acts were taking place right there.

And I got it over there as quick as I could, but it was planted in my mind, this vile act that was being committed as an abomination before God. Our children go to school, and when they go to school, they are taught the imbecilic idea and theory of evolution, and that God did not make them, but that they came about through an amoeba in a mud puddle that worked its way up to a professor in a suit in the university. And this is being taught over and over again.

And in many places, when you try to school your children at home, then at that time they say you can't do that because that's against the law. And most places, I guess, you can still educate your children in the home, but more and more the pressure is building to keep God's people under the restrictive hand of the devil rather than allowing them to be under the hand of God. I want to ask you this morning, and I can't go into all of the trials that we are facing in this world, but the pressures on us from the religious world.

They want every church to conform, to be a member of some organization, whether it's a National Council of Churches or some convention or fellowship or something else. Nevertheless, it is not the will of God for a Baptist church. According to them, if I read the Bible right, and I believe I do, to belong to anything.

We belong to the Lord. It's the house of God. It's His body.

It's His truth. And we don't have any business in that. But they want to stick their finger into the church, into your home, into your personal life, into your business and everywhere that you move today.

Now, I want to ask you, are you committed and ready to pay the price? Are you willing to look for the compromises that the world is trying to thrust upon you? Are you willing to have discernment and not stick your head in the sand as the proverbial ostrich? They don't really thrust their head in the sand, but that saying started somewhere. I don't know, maybe there was an ostrich sometime that did. But, you know, a lot of Christians today, they may be saved, but they're in churches where they're not informed of what's going on.

Like they are here in Bible Baptist church. They don't have a pastor that preaches the whole counsel of God, the whole truth of God. And if they stand at all, they have to stand apart from their church.

You ought to just thank God for the privilege of belonging to a Bible-believing, sin-hating, devil-kicking Baptist church that is willing to go all out for God and believe the truth and live the truth. Now, there's a price to be paid. It may cost you friends.

It may cost you this or that or the other. Or it may even cost you your life. God's never promised that He will take us through the world in ease and comfort and allow us to not experience the problems and difficulties of life.

In fact, the Bible says, in the world you'll have tribulation, but be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world. Now, we have to have faith when we're going to face the flames. When we're going to face the fires of persecution, we're going to have to have faith and trust explicitly in God.

Did these three Hebrew children, did they necessarily have the right to expect that God is going to allow them to survive? Well, maybe God had revealed it to them. But, you know, in the New Testament, you see about James, the brother of John, Herod put him to death. And they put Peter in jail.

And Peter got out of jail. But why did James face death and Simon Peter only face imprisonment? I can't answer that. But I'm telling you that God's able, and we need to be ready to face whatever God allows us to face.

He sometimes allows His choice servants to be in the fires of persecution. Now then, their faith was in an all-wise God. You know, the God we serve is not an idol on a shelf.

It's not some concept of God dreamed up by man. But we serve the true and the living God. Now, by faith they knew that He would deliver them, either now or later.

God did deliver them, but He doesn't always deliver us. Sometimes He allows Christians to go to prison. Sometimes He allows Christians to face death.

It's happening all over the world now. I saw one of our missionaries up there in Michigan, and he's a missionary to India. And he has been thrown in prison.

He has been stoned a number of times along with other members of his congregation simply because they're Christians and not Hindus, not Jains, or some other false religion. So they have to stand. And you know, one of these things, some of these mega-churches, Brother Modine, has got the vast number of crowd, numbers of people today.

If they have to face the fires of persecution, they'll either compromise or they'll thin out their membership down to a small number because they have allowed, through all of the gimmicks and everything that they use, they've allowed people to come in that are unconverted, that simply come for the entertainment, that come to enjoy whatever's showing or whatever's going on. And I was noticing in the bulletin at that so-called church where they had these rasslers, and that was a part of the program. And where is God in all of that? Where do you find an example in the Word of God for all of that? So there are a lot of people.

We won't say how many of them are saved and how many are not saved. God knows the heart. But I'll tell you something.

The numbers would thin out. And maybe if we face the fires of persecution, maybe it would cleanse God's people. And maybe it would help us to draw nigh unto God.

It's been said that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church. And I love to read the stories of the martyrs in Martyr's Mirror and in Baptist Martyrs and the memorials of the Baptist martyrs and how that people, simply because they wouldn't allow their children to be sprinkled, or simply because they insisted that when their children were saved that they would be immersed in water. They were put into flames.

They were sown in bags and thrown in the river. They were boiled in oil. They were put to the stake.

Why? Simply because they stood for the truth. We're not any better than those people. In fact, I doubt if we're worthy to even stand in their presence because they were so faithful unto God.

But we have to be prepared for whatever comes. You say, Brother Bynum, you're putting a bleak picture. Why can't you be more positive? And why can't you tell us a glowing story? I'll get it right.

Of what will happen to us if we're saved. Well, I do. You're going to go to heaven if you're saved.

You're going to miss the fires of hell if you're saved. You're going to have the blessings of God if you're saved. You're going to have an eternal home in heaven where there's no more death, and where there's no more pain, and no more suffering.

But that doesn't mean that you won't have some things in between. I know it's not popular to talk about these things. Most people would rather ignore them and let it pass and hope that it doesn't come in their lifetime.

But it will come, and it may not be in our lifetime, but what about our children and our grandchildren's lifetime? And it may well come even in our own lifetime. I believe that the true children of God are going to face some kind of a trial or tribulation. It may be health.

It may be business. It may be something else that you'll suffer loss in. But God's not promised that we'll be carried through the sky on flowery beds of ease while others fought to win the prize and sailed through bloody seas.

I'm glad you have this water, rather than smart water. That way I can drink it. All right, let's go on.

Satan will tempt and try you. It's all the time. But you just remember what the Scripture says.

There is no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man. But God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted. Above that you are able, but will with the temptation make a way of escape.

Now, I often illustrate this with a simple illustration. Suppose, and it's unlikely that it ever happened, but suppose this building would get on fire and is there a way of escape? Yes, there's a door. There's another door.

There are windows that could be broken out and you could get out. You could either take the way of escape or you could suffer the consequences. And we have to be ready to take God's way of escape rather than to suffer the consequences.

Let's turn over to the book of Hebrews for a minute. In Hebrews chapter 11, I just want to read just a few verses there in this wonderful book. And it's a book that shows us what some of God's people have had to face down through the centuries of time.

I think about Hebrews chapter 11, verse 37. Here it says, And others had trial of cruel malkings and scourgings, yea, moreover, of bombs and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword.

They wondered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented, of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and in mountains and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise.

Now, these people were true servants of the Lord. And look what they had to go through. And we must remember that when we come to a place like this, we have to be willing to pay the price.

If God would allow us to perish in the flames of persecution, so be it. Because God has a better place for us. Who wants to stay here on this sin-cursed earth forever? Because it's no place.

And we get weary with the difficulties that come. And we get weary with the tribulations along the way. But we always have a living hope in Jesus Christ.

There's a better day coming. There's a great day coming. As the Bible certainly teaches over and over again.

And if we want to know what we are to do, just read the Bible. Because the Bible gives us everything we need for this life. And everything that we need is in here.

And we don't have to be in doubt how we should live. What we should believe. What we should do.

Because the Bible shows us day by day. I think of Job who suffered temptation and trial at the hands of Satan. How that he lost his children.

He was a wealthy man. And he lost those children all in one storm. And then he was a wealthy man in cattle and livestock.

And the enemy came and took them all away. And he was left with only himself and his wife. And then, that didn't break him.

And so his body was covered with sores from the top of his head to the sole of his feet. And that didn't break him either. And then his dear wife, I call her dear wife, she said, curse God and die.

Everything in the world happened to this man. Did he curse God and die? No. Did he break under the pressure? No.

God brought him through the whole experience. And when you get to the end of the book of Job, you'll find that God abundantly blessed and doubled the supply that had been taken away. Thank God for people like that.

I think of Jesus who suffered temptation in the wilderness after he was baptized. Then, the Bible says that after he went through the temptations in Luke 4, 13, the devil departed from him for a season. Oh yes, that he didn't depart from him permanently, only for a season.

Each victory will help us to overcome the next crises in our lives. Whether it be in your business, whether it be in your personal life, whether it be in your family life, we all need God. Thank God there's coming a day according to Revelation 12, 10 when the accuser of the brethren is going to be cast down.

But the Bible says, yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. Now, if you'll just do everything that the world is doing and make no make no complaint against it, then you'll get along pretty good. But how can you serve God? How can you have fellowship with God? You can backslide, I believe, get out of the will of God and sin, but how are you blessed when you do that? What will it get you in the end? And it will get you chastisement from God in the first place if you compromise and turn against the things of God.

It will bring you to the place where the Lord says in Hebrews 12, For whom the Lord loveth, he chasteth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. And if you'll be without chastisement, whereas all are partakers, then are you bastards and not sons. So, if we compromise, if we turn our backs on the Lord, if we give in to the world and the flesh and the devil, then we are going to face God's chastisement.

Some people say, how can a loving God chastise one of His children? Well, I want to ask you something. Did you ever chastise your children when they were small? Did you just let them go without any chastisement, any correction? Let them run out on the street, get run over? Let them have a straight edge razor to play with? No, you do it for their protection and for their good and for their training. And God allows us to go through these things so that we might be pure, that we might be upright.

There is a purpose in all the fiery trials that we face. There are purposes that we may not see at the time, but in time of trials, God uses that to strengthen us. It is said that the trees that grow high on the mountain, that suffer the most from the wind and the cold, that live in a severe climate, that they, when made into a violin, make the sweetest music.

Now, I don't know if that's true or not, but it sounds right to me. You plant a tree where it is sheltered, where there is no damage from the environment, no wind, nothing. It's a very weak tree.

But a tree that grows out in the open, where the wind blows, where the rain falls, where the snow falls, and where it faces the elements, that tree is strong. So God wants us to be strong and in the power of His mind. Just remember, that if you have a gold ring, and that's my wedding ring that my beloved gave me at the marriage altar.

How was that made? It was refined. It was purified in a furnace. And it ain't silver the same way.

The impurities were so many that you couldn't make a ring out of that gold dust or gold nuggets. It had to be put through the fire. And so God uses the trials and tribulations to try us and to purify us that we might be more and more like the Savior.

And then I believe that God allows these things to happen to separate the true believers from the pretenders. I've already brought that up earlier in the message. But there are a lot of pretenders today that bear the name Christian, that really bear no resemblance or very little resemblance to what a Christian ought to be.

God wants to purify us and He wants to separate us from those that would compromise and those that would go the way that the devil wanted them to go. Now because I edit a paper and publish tracts, I get letters from people in various parts of the United States and even in England and every English-speaking countries. And we have lots of material on the World Wide Web.

I get letters, where can I find a church that believes like you believe? Where can I find a church that stands for the King James Version of the Bible, that stands for separation, that stands for holiness, that stands for the way of salvation? Well, oftentimes, Brother Modine, I'm helpless. I can't tell them. Because there's not that many churches that are like they ought to be.

But I'll tell you this, there are some. Thank God for churches, whether they be small or whether they be large, that are standing for the truth in these last days. Jesus said, when I come again, shall I find faith on the earth? Well, that's a question.

And sometimes it looks like that He might not. But He will. Because He said that His church, the gates of hell, would not prevail against it.

And so, there are going to be people, there are going to be churches that are standing for God when Jesus comes. It will go through the fires of persecution. I don't believe we'll go through the tribulation

period.

But we'll go through tribulation before the actual tribulation period begins. But you know, what happened also? It happened in the fiery furnace. Their fetters, the ropes that bound them, were burned.

And isn't it amazing? Here they are with their coats, their hoses, their hats, and the other garments on. And then they bind them in ropes and throw them in the fiery furnace. And it's so hot that even the men that put them in died.

They didn't fall in the fire, but the fire came out and just consumed them or at least brought them into death. And yet, these three men in the fire, they wouldn't burn. They wouldn't burn.

Their garments were not even burned. They came forth and there wasn't even the smell of smoke upon them. Now, if you think about that, God uses things that are unpleasant sometimes to free us from the fetters and the binding effects of this world in order that we might live and be blessed of Almighty God.

Then it brings glory to God when we face these trials. It's glorious because here, God was honored by these three men. And here, the wicked monarch Nebuchadnezzar, the greatest king in the earth at that time over the greatest kingdom, it brought him to the place where he issued a decree that no god would be worshipped other than a god of the Hebrews.

And that they would be put to death if they worshipped any other god. I'm not saying that he was entirely right in that, but I am saying that it changed him. It changed his mind.

It changed his heart. And when God delivers us, it glorifies Him. And gives Him glory.

I think of Paul in prison at Philippi. Here is Paul and Silas in the prison at Philippi. Why? Because they were preaching the truth and doing God's work in the ancient city of Philippi.

And they were cast into prison. And their feet were fast in the stonks. Before all of that was done, they were whipped, I'm sure, until their backs and bodies were bloody, lacerated, and bleeding.

And here they are in the stonks. What did they do? Turn against God and say, Why could God allow this to happen to me? No, they did not. What they did was that they prayed and sang praises unto God at midnight.

And the prisoners heard them. God had shaken that old prison and opened the prison doors. And every man's bands were loose.

And they were free to go. But I believe that God used the prayers and the singing of Paul and Silas in that prison to cause those prisoners to not leave. They were still there.

You go down and let it happen here in Toledo. Let the largest prison. Let some night all the doors come open.

And all the things that restrain people. And you let that happen and see how many of them will be left in the morning in there. It won't be many.

There might be some. But most of them would flee. But these were all there.

And then the Philippian jailer who probably lived adjoining or maybe over the prison. Who knows? It sometimes happened that way. And that Philippian jailer, he felt that shaking.

He felt that earthquake. And he came down and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they told him, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. They didn't say, Now if you're one of God's elect, you'll be saved.

No, he said, What must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. I'll tell you something, God's still saving people. That Philippian jailer was saved.

That night he took those two preachers out of that jail. And he took them to his home and he fed them, washed their stripes with their wounds and bound them and even allowed them to baptize him and his household. That night, that's how God got the glory from all of that.

That Paul and Silas could have interpreted this whole thing some other way. They could have said, God's forsaken us. We might as well forget about these souls that are perishing.

We might as well forget about this call that we thought we had from God because it's not working out. But it was working out. God was working His divine purpose behind the scenes.

And God is able to do whatever He wants to with an earthquake or anything else to loose the bands that bind us by the world. You know why that these three Hebrew children didn't burn up in the fire? Look at verse number 25. Here's what the king said.

He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose walking in the midst of the fire and they have no hurt and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God. It was the fourth man in the fire that made the difference. And you know, we have the same promise.

He said, I'll never leave you nor forsake you. And we might go through the fires, but God will never leave us. He'll never forsake us because God is able.

But I believe that these men were in that furnace and the fourth man was none other than the Lord Jesus Christ. And He is Lord of all with all power in heaven and earth. And I'll tell you, if you haven't met the fourth man, if you haven't become acquainted with the Lord Jesus Christ, then I would beseech you and plead with you in His precious name that if you want your future to be secure, get acquainted with the fourth man.

Trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. He will save your soul and He will carry you through the trials of life. Whether it be sickness, whether it be disease, whether it be some catastrophe, whatever it is, He's there.

And He is willing and He is able. But if they had not had the fourth man, they would not have been preserved in that fire. I believe with all my heart they would have been turned to ashes in a few moments of time.

Thank God that we have the Lord Jesus Christ in the times of trials and tribulations. Thank God He is available for every lost sinner today to trust in Him, to believe in Him. He is the God of mercy, the God of love, the God of grace, and the God of salvation.

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