

The Bible Study for the week of April 22nd to 29th

This week I have been turning over a couple ideas. I really want to start a series on Prayer: what is it, what does it look like, what are the rules (not really), Biblical examples, hearing God, etc. However, the day has gotten away from me so I am going to look at a story in the Book of Daniel. There are some great classics here but I keep referring to the “Fiery Furnace” in my everyday life. This story inspires me, convicts me and reveals God to me. I hope you will enjoy looking deeper into it.

The season we are in is what I like to call “a storm of life.” Storms in nature are normal. In our lives, they represent trials, suffering, conflict, troubles, etc. God never promised us a “storm-free” life. He actually gives us in His Word the tools to weather them, the purpose to rise above them, and the blessings to be thankful for them. There is nothing fun about these storms, but we can get through them because our God is with us. (Mark 4:35-41 is a wonderful picture of Jesus calming a storm.)

If you want to check out some “storm” references: James 1; Thessalonians 3; Romans 5:3-8. For extra study, which will give you some background on the time and people, read Daniel 1-2. In these two chapters, you will see Daniel and his friends showing amazing commitment and wisdom while living in an ungodly world system. Think about who they are as young men, their choices, God’s timing and placement of them; also, check out the relationship to and response from the officials and King....Interesting

Chapter 3 is when Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego are faced with a command that will compromise what they believe; and here is where we will spend our Tuesday discussion time, starting at 10:30. (Let the office know if you want the Zoom link; Tuesday by 10 am, the link should be in your email.)

Questions for Reflection:

1. If this story is new, what did you see/learn? If familiar to you, did God reveal something interesting?
2. How did the 3 respond to their death sentence. Thoughts about their faith? In our personal “storms,” how do we include God? How do we draw strength?
3. NOW the cool part-Describe the furnace prep? What happened in the fire? After?
4. How would this story be altered if the 3 weren’t rescued? Would God be different? Think of times when you were rescued? Could your story have turned out another way?
5. God knows and loves us; When we are weak, He is strong. How can your church family pray for you to “stand up” to your storm i.e. joy, peace, patience, courage, love, wisdom, etc?

Extra thought: What did the King do that was “so bad?” Why was this an issue for the 3 to risk their lives? Think about any issues you would stand up for in the name of God that could bring death. Praise the Lord that America doesn’t kill, imprison or torture individuals for having a faith, but I do ask myself would I speak or be silent when tested.

BONUS: Check out THE VOICE OF THE MARTYRS. From the Bible days til today, people are still dying for what they believe. Because people stand up for Jesus, they are persecuted all over the world. This link takes you to the founder’s personal story

<https://www.persecution.com/founders/>