

## *Persecuted but Faithful*

### **Daniel 3:16-18**

“Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to the king, ‘O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to give you an answer concerning this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire; and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But even if He does not, let it be known to you, O king, that we are not going to serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up.’” (NAS)

In Daniel's day (approximately 600 B.C.), he and his friends (Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego) were under tremendous pressure to worship the idols in Babylon, where they had been forced to go after the Babylonians conquered Israel. Isolated in a foreign land with no way to defend themselves, these brave men looked into the face of the most powerful man on earth at the time and firmly stated that they were willing to die for their faith.

While we rarely face such an obvious attempt to force us to worship that which is false in our time, we do face a number of temptations each day in our culture to bow our knees to the new false gods, including the gods of materialism, fame, and power. We are constantly being told that if we only had more money, or if we were more attractive physically, then we would arrive. We could be somebody. So the temptation is constantly before us to strive for the things of this world, sacrificing our devotion to God in order to achieve status in this world.

As the great King Solomon wrote in his book Ecclesiastes, the things of this world rarely satisfy the inner core our being. Numerous relationships with attractive people, enormous wealth, and even great knowledge ultimately did not satisfy Solomon, because toward the end of his life he realized that he would take nothing from this life into the next. He realized that life on earth is temporary, a small blip on the screen of eternal life. Solomon realized the truth that Daniel and his friends knew: nothing in this world is as valuable as God.

SSC

### **Point for Prayer:**

Is your faith in God the most important thing to you or is it something else more important? Are there gods of this world that you need to abandon?