

Living in a Pagan World

Part 3

“Dramatic Moments”

Review:

- We live in a pagan world.
- It's not a surprise to God.
- Stay true to the Word.

2 Timothy 3:13-14 (NASB95)

But evil men and impostors will proceed *from bad* to worse, deceiving and being deceived.

But you must remain faithful to the things you have been taught. You know they are true, for you know you can trust those who taught you.

Daniel 1 & 2: Wisdom in an ungodly culture

- Jerusalem destroyed... Captives taken to a pagan culture.
- Daniel and his three friends decided not to go along with the culture - **Conviction vs. Belief**
- Daniel and Nebuchadnezzar - the dream of the statue and the future kingdoms.
- Where we left Neb

Daniel 2:47 (NLT)

The king said to Daniel, “Truly, your God is the greatest of gods, the Lord over kings, a revealer of mysteries, for you have been able to reveal this secret.”

Lessons from Daniel 3

Daniel 3:1-5 (NLT)

King Nebuchadnezzar made a gold statue ninety feet tall and nine feet wide and set it up on the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon. ²Then he sent messages to the high officers, officials, governors, advisers, treasurers, judges, magistrates, and all the provincial officials to come to the dedication of the statue he had set up. ³So all these officials came and stood before the statue King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. ⁴Then a herald shouted out, “People of all races and nations and languages, listen to the king's command! ⁵When you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes, and other musical instruments, bow to the ground to worship King Nebuchadnezzar's gold statue.

1st What do we learn about Neb?

A. Believing God is a god instead of the only God leads to a pagan culture. (Idols)

- Neb worshiped what God had done instead of God.
 - Idols: Neb's idol was himself, his power, and his position.
 - The wise men bowed to Neb's idol because they worshiped their lives and their position.

B. He is God, the only God.

- **Our culture doesn't mind if you just place Jesus along side of all the other ways to heaven.**

Isaiah 45:5 (NLT)

I am the LOrd; there is no other God. I have equipped you for battle, though you don't even know me,

Deuteronomy 6:13-15 (NLT)

You must fear the LOrd your God and serve him. When you take an oath, you must use only his name. “You must not worship any of the gods of neighboring nations, for the LOrd your God, who lives among you, is a jealous God. His anger will flare up against you, and he will wipe you from the face of the earth.

John 14:6 (NLT)

Jesus told him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.

C. He must be your God. (See Daniel 2:47)

Daniel 3:28 (NLT)

Then Nebuchadnezzar said, “Praise to the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego! He sent his angel to rescue his servants who trusted in him. They defied the king's command and were willing to die rather than serve or worship any god except their own God.

Deuteronomy 6:4-5 (NLT)

“Listen, O Israel! The LOrd is our God, the LOrd alone. And you must love the LOrd your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength.

2nd What do we learn about conviction in a pagan world?

A. Conviction is unconditional. It may cost you.

Daniel 3:16-18 (NIV)

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to the king, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and he will rescue us from your hand, O king. **But even if he does not**, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up.”

Daniel 3:20-21 (NIV)

and commanded some of the strongest soldiers in his army to tie up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and throw them into the blazing furnace. So these men, wearing their robes, trousers, turbans and other clothes, were bound and thrown into the blazing furnace.

B. Faith produces conviction. It will be tested.

John 16:33 (NIV)

“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”

Hebrews 11:13-16 (NIV)

All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance. And they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth. People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶Instead, they were longing for a better country—a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.

3rd What do we learn about God?

A. He may let you go through trials, but He goes through them with you.

Daniel 3:25 (NIV)

He said, “Look! I see four men walking around in the fire, unbound and unharmed, and the fourth looks like a son of the gods.”

B. Conviction and God's activity leads to God's glory.

- The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church.

Daniel 3:28 (NIV)

Then Nebuchadnezzar said, “Praise be to the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who has sent his angel and rescued his servants! They trusted in him and defied the king's command and were willing to give up their lives rather than serve or worship any god except their own God.

John 21:18-19 (NIV)

I tell you the truth, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go.” ¹⁹Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, “Follow me!”

Dramatic moments happen every day.

- Will you seek God's approval above all else?
- Will you step out in faith or do what is comfortable?
- We all look for a worthy cause to spend our life on.
- Most of us just pass time.
- Get involved in the eternal dramatic spiritual battle.

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