

Refusing to bow to the gods of Babylon

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[0 : 0 0] Good, well we're looking forward to Paul Brennan's third sermon in this series on the book of Daniel. So let's turn now to Daniel chapter 3, and that is to be Paul's chapter for this morning.

In the big hardback Bibles you'll find that on page 739, page 739. Daniel chapter 3, and King Nebuchadnezzar, the emperor of Babylonia, is about to set up a great golden image.

And this story concerns not Daniel himself, but his three good friends, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. So Daniel chapter 3. King Nebuchadnezzar made an image of gold, whose height was 60 cubits and its breadth 6 cubits.

He set it up on the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon. Then King Nebuchadnezzar sent to gather the satraps, the prefects, and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the justices, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces to come to the dedication of the image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

Then the satraps, the prefects, and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the justices, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces gathered for the dedication of the image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

[1 : 2 6] And they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up. And the herald proclaimed aloud, You are commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, that when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, you are to fall down and worship the golden image that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up.

And whoever does not fall down and worship shall immediately be cast into a burning, fiery furnace. Therefore, as soon as all the peoples heard the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, all the peoples, nations, and languages fell down and worshipped the golden image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

Therefore, at that time, certain Chaldeans came forward and maliciously accused the Jews. They declared to King Nebuchadnezzar, O King, live forever!

You, O King, have made a decree that every man who hears the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music shall fall down and worship the golden image. And whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast into a burning, fiery furnace.

There are certain Jews whom you have appointed over the affairs of the province of Babylon, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

[2 : 5 0] These men, O King, pay no attention to you. They do not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up. Then Nebuchadnezzar, in furious rage, commanded that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego be brought.

So they brought these men before the king. Nebuchadnezzar answered and said to them, Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the golden image that I have set up?

Now, if you are ready when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music to fall down and worship the image that I have made, well and good.

But if you do not worship, you shall immediately be cast into a burning, fiery furnace. And who is the God who will deliver you out of my hands?

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. If this be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning, fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of your hand, O king.

[4 : 00] But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up. Then Nebuchadnezzar was filled with fury and the expression of his face was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

He ordered the furnace heated seven times more than it was usually heated. And he ordered some of the mighty men of his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and to cast them into the burning, fiery furnace.

Then these men were bound in their cloaks, their tunics, their hats, and their other garments, and they were thrown into the burning, fiery furnace. Because the king's order was urgent and the furnace overheated, the flame of the fire killed those men who took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell bound into the burning, fiery furnace. Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished and rose up in haste.

He declared to his counselors, Did we not cast three men bound into the fire? They answered and said to the king, True, O king. He answered and said, But I see four men, unbound, walking in the midst of the fire, and they are not hurt.

[5 : 20] And the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods. Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the door of the burning, fiery furnace. He declared, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out and come here.

Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out from the fire. And the satraps, the prefects, the governors, and the king's counselors gathered together and saw that the fire had not had any power over the bodies of those men.

The hair of their heads was not singed, their cloaks were not harmed, and no smell of fire had come upon them. Nebuchadnezzar answered and said, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent his angel and delivered his servants, who trusted in him, and set aside the king's command, and yielded up their bodies rather than serve and worship any god except their own god.

Therefore, I make a decree. Any people, nation, or language that speaks anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego shall be torn limb from limb and their houses laid in ruins, for there is no other god who is able to rescue in this way.

Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the province of Babylon. Amen. This is the word of the Lord, and may it be a blessing to us today.

[6 : 54] Well, please do turn up Daniel chapter 3, which was read earlier, Daniel chapter 3, on page 739. We get to have that open in front of us.

Now, peer pressure is incredibly powerful, isn't it?

You may call it something else, the power of public opinion, the zeitgeist, the dumb thing, crowd think. Whatever you may call it, the pressure to fall in line and go with the flow is so incredibly powerful, hard to resist.

The desire to not want to stick out, to attract attention, or opposition. That is a strong desire, isn't it? To resist sticking out.

And that's observably true, from the trivial to the deadly serious. I remember as a youngster, I was maybe eight or nine years old, I was with a group of other children.

[8 : 03] And it was a simple experiment. So one child would be taken out of the room, and the rest of us were told, in response to a very simple answer, to give the wrong answer.

A very simple question, we had to give the wrong answer. So something like, we're showing a picture with three lines, and we had to say which was the longest line. And the rest of us were told to give the wrong answer. And so the child is brought back in, and the rest of us know what's going on.

And one by one, we all give the wrong answer to the question. And the child that's left, even though they know it's wrong, they go with the crowd. They vote with everybody else. And they vote for the shortest line, rather than the longest.

Now that's a pretty trivial example. But that sort of thing can take a far more serious and sinister form, such as the one in our passage here this morning.

The great and the good from the mighty Babylon Empire bow before what they all know is a false god. Nobody there on the plain of Jura seriously thought what they were bowing down to was the real thing.

[9 : 07] They all knew it was fake, a set-up. But no one dares step out of line because the fear of death has been put in their hearts. Great pressure to conform.

And so there you have it on the plain of Jura, many, many thousands sticking their noses in the dirt to this set-up God. Brings to mind, doesn't it, the footage we've all seen from the height of Adolf Hitler's powers addressing vast crowds and they all salute in unison.

He had that amazing ability to place people under such pressure to conform, to use their fears, to bring them into line even when their consciences were straining.

They could but bow before him. And God's people throughout all ages have done and will continue to face such pressure to conform to the world, pressure to reject their loyalty to God and instead pledge their loyalty to the things of this world, to the kings of this world, to toe the line, to just go with the crowd, pressure to disregard and disobey the very first commandment which Edward read at the very start of the service, pressure to deny the one true God.

That is why this passage is just so enduringly relevant. That pressure won't go away. There will always be moments when God's people will have to choose where does your loyalty really lie when it comes to the crunch.

[10 : 43] Are you willing to stand for God and honor him or will you throw your lot in with the world, take the path of least resistance and compromise?

That's the challenge of this very dramatic and tension-filled Daniel chapter 3. We'll follow the story in three acts. Act 1, verses 1 to 15, act 2, verses 16 to 18 and then act 3, verse 19 to the end.

So firstly, act 1, the threat of fire. We see the overwhelming pressure to get in line and to bow to a false god.

So this is verses 1 to 15. So we see in this act the huge image constructed by King Nebuchadnezzar and the overwhelming pressure on all to come and bow before it.

And it is astonishing that he would do this in light of what we've just seen in Daniel chapter 2. Two weeks ago, we were there, Daniel chapter 2. And remember, in that chapter, the king had this dream that absolutely terrified him.

[11 : 54] It was a dream that Daniel alone was able to reveal and explain. And in that dream, there was this great image whose head was made of gold.

Its chest made of silver, its middle and thighs of bronze in its legs, a mixture of iron and clay. A very impressive image. But one that was destroyed, remember, in the dream by this stone cut, not by human hands, and the stone came and smashed it.

And that stone would grow and grow and grow and one day fill the whole earth. And the point of the dream was that earthly kingdoms would come and go.

But there would be an everlasting kingdom that would be established and that would endure forever, God's kingdom. But it seems Nebuchadnezzar has entirely missed the point.

In the dream, he was that head of gold. But there would be another one after him, another kingdom and another one after that. What is he up to here in chapter 3?

[13 : 02] Constructing this massive image made entirely of gold. Clearly, he's not got the message. He's not learned yet to submit to the only true God.

He will, in the end, flick on to chapter 4. Now, in the end, he does submit. But he's got to be brought pretty low to get to that point. But here, chapter 3, he's determined, isn't he, to fight hard against the revelation from the living God that he was given in chapter 2.

And instead, he sets up his own God and demands that all in his great empire come and pay homage to the image that he set up. Great pressure is applied, isn't it, to all people to get in line and to bow the knee.

So in Act 1, we're taking in two points, we see two types of pressure. In verses 1 to 7, there's a general pressure and then 8 to 15, a more specific pressure for God's people.

So first, verses 1 to 7, the general pressure. Nebuchadnezzar's great image, it was one that was intended to impress and intimidate.

[14 : 10] It was huge. It was about 90 feet high and 9 feet wide. Many of you will perhaps have seen or at least driven past the angel to the north.

You know that great statue with its arms outspread? It's huge, but it's 60 feet high. So add another 30 feet and you've got Nebuchadnezzar's golden image here. It's a lot of gold.

It's big. It's impressive. And it's set up there in the middle of the plain of Jura, just outside the main city of Babylon, I think. And the king summons the great and the good. Look at verse 2.

He gathers the satraps, the prefects, the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the justices, the magistrates, all the officials of all the provinces come to the dedication of this image. And just to reinforce the point, verse 3, then the satraps, the prefects, the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the justices, the magistrates, all the officials of all the provinces come to this great image and they all stand before the image that Nebuchadnezzar has set up.

The full power of the Babylonian government, the elite, the movers and shakers, they were all there for this great unveiling, the dedication of this image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

[15 : 24] And the homage that was paid to this image, well, really equated to homage being paid to the king himself, to the state. Failure to bow to this image, well, it will be met with death.

Look at verse 6. Anyone who does not fall down and worship shall immediately be cast into a burning, fiery furnace. I call that pressure, don't you?

Great pressure is applied here to conform, to pledge allegiance to this created idol. And the pressure is coming direct from the head of state.

Notice how often King Nebuchadnezzar is mentioned in these opening verses. Again and again, King Nebuchadnezzar, King Nebuchadnezzar. You dare not fail to toe the line. He was not the sort of king you messed with.

But it's not the only source of pressure. This was a great event. There is a religious flavor to all that's going on here. The music, the corporate gathering.

[16 : 25] Look at the instruction there in verse 4. The herald proclaimed aloud, you are commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, that when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, every kind of music, you are to fall down and worship this golden image.

Hard to resist when all around you are moved by this great noise, this great cacophony of sound, all these instruments. Everyone's there. And everyone in unison is putting their noses in the dirt and worshipping Nebuchadnezzar's set-up God.

Very hard for God's faithful there in Babylon, don't you think? Very hard to resist the temptation to go with the flow, especially when the punishment that awaits you if you don't is a fiery furnace.

But this pressure to conform, this pressure to bow the knee to set up God, it's that pressure to conform endures, doesn't it? It wasn't unique here to Daniel chapter 3. And that pressure takes all sorts of different guises.

And we know, don't we, that there is a general pressure applied to go with the flow, to bow to the gods of this age, to submit ourselves to whatever the media informs us is public opinion.

[17 : 48] It's all around us. The air we breathe, as we saw a few ago, the air we breathe is not of Jerusalem. The air we breathe is of Babylon. And it's so very hard not to capitulate, to take the path of least resistance.

And many do just that, don't they? Many churches, many Christians. When it comes to the crunch, they have bowed the knee to the progressive agenda.

It's hard. It's hard to resist, especially hard when folk we once looked up to, respected, read their books, folk who would have been clearly in the evangelical camp hard when they cave in and capitulate.

When they appear on TV and speak about how they've now seen the light, just how dated the Bible is about sexuality and gender. It's hard.

It's hard when we start to feel that pressure. It's real. So there is a general pressure seen here in the first seven verses, but it gets more specific from verse 8.

[18 : 57] Certain Chaldeans came forward and maliciously accused the Jews. And they pinpoint, they name, Daniel's three friends there in verse 12.

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. They go to the king himself. They do not serve your gods, Nebuchadnezzar, or worship this golden image you've set up. These three guys, and the king, is absolutely furious.

And so they're hauled in front of the king and he puts the question to them, will you refuse to bow to my image? If you don't, then you're in the furnace.

What excruciating pressure, personal pressure, is applied to the three Jews there in the throne of the mighty king of Babylon. Great, great pressure.

And Christians throughout the ages have been singled out, like these guys were, hauled before the authorities and pressured on pain of death to deny Christ, to bow the knee to other gods.

[20 : 04] Here's one example from AD 154. The prisoner is a man named Polycarp. He was the bishop of Smyrna, which is now modern-day Turkey.

And the Roman proconsul, the Roman man in charge of the town, he says to his prisoner, swear, and I will set you at liberty. Reproach Christ.

What would Polycarp do? Well, with the words of the Lord Jesus, no doubt, in his mind, these words that the Lord Jesus spoke to the church in Smyrna, he said, be faithful unto death and I'll give you the crown of life.

With those words, no doubt, in his mind, Polycarp answered the Roman proconsul with these words. He said, 86 years, I've served Christ and he never did me any injury.

How can I then blaspheme my King and Savior? And with that refusal to reproach Christ, Polycarp was executed by public burning.

[21 : 07] He was faithful to the end, being certain of the promised crown of life from his Lord. And his example is one of just many, isn't it? where Christians are singled out, put under enormous pressure, conform, and toe the line.

It's very sobering. It's real. We had last week Patrick Sudeau from the Barnabas Fund. Many Christians around the world today face exactly this.

It's very sobering. It's the reality. But, it's not the only reality of the pressure we're being shown here. It is real pressure.

There's no doubting that. But we're also being shown the reality behind the facade. It's serious, but it's also ridiculous.

Alongside the great fear is farce. Yes, it's serious, but it's also deeply sarcastic. Notice how the writer gently pokes fun at the whole thing.

[22 : 10] And amidst all the seriousness, notice how he pokes fun. The endless repetition makes the whole thing look ridiculous, doesn't it? The repetition of who's there.

The satraps, the prefects, the governors, all these great and good, it's repeated over and over. The repetition of all the musical instruments, again, it's repeated over and over again. Makes the whole thing look silly, ridiculous, pompous.

And then you have the constant reminder that all this is an illusion. There's nothing real here. It's a setup. Eleven times you have the words the king made or the king set up this image.

The king made this image there in verse one. And then again and again you get that he set it up. Nebuchadnezzar set up. He set up. He set up. The whole thing is a setup.

There's nothing real going on here. There's nothing about this image in itself that would require men to bow down before it. It's just a setup. It's something made by man.

[23 : 15] And the writer's mocking the whole thing, isn't he? He wants those who first read it and everyone since who reads this account, he wants us to see through the real pressure that we face with God's people to see through that real pressure and to see the reality behind those pressures.

And it's just the reality of chapter two, isn't it? The kingdoms of this world the gods of this world Nebuchadnezzar's great idol powerful as they might seem to us they are nothing more than chaff in the wind.

As God's people you and I belong to a permanent kingdom and it's his judgment we must fear not the kings of this world the passing Nebuchadnezzar of this world.

And this I think helps us to see the issues that we face today with real clarity and perspective doesn't it? Helps us to see behind the veil of the pressures we see.

Helpful to see the truth and the reality is the emperor really has no clothes. It's helpful to see the readiness of a whole society to bow down before what they know is obviously a false god.

[24 : 30] Nobody there in the plain of Jura seriously thought this image was a real god. They knew the reality they were pretending. They bow because they fear the power behind the idol they fear Nebuchadnezzar but the reality is he's a passing power he won't endure.

And so it's helpful for us to see the readiness of a whole society to bow to such gods. Take the issue of gender for example those pushing transgender ideology are pretending reality away aren't they?

But so many are towing the line afraid to counter the narrative being pushed. You can read articles by knowledgeable insiders who have spoken with countless MPs countless influencers who are simply too scared to dare challenge the new orthodoxy.

They can't say what everyone else knows is true and observable that men are men that women are women they can't say it. Too scared. Or take the issue of abortion.

The pro-choice position pretends reality away with careful use of language with deliberate use of language. Strip a child in its mother's womb of its personhood and voila we can get rid of what we just now call the products of conception and so we can label the whole thing a healthcare choice.

[26 : 02] It's the same linguistic tactic the Nazis employed. Strip a whole people group of their personhood reduce them to a sub human species makes the next step so much easier doesn't it?

we find it so hard to think how ordinary decent people could seem to collude in such horror but you see when people begin to collude in unreality when they turn the truth into a lie it's a very dangerous road which leads to dreadful things but today a whole culture a whole society is closing their eyes to the reality and very few dare raise their heads above the parapet very few dare to challenge the orthodoxy of the day to devastating consequences think of the 9 million abortions in the UK since it was legalized in 1967 9 million and when something is so normalized in our society as abortion is it soon becomes very hard indeed to go against the flow no politician today has any sort of future in government do they if they do not accept abortion it's unimaginable so very hard isn't it when all around are sticking their noses in the dirt as they did on the plane of Jura and bending to an unreal

God to a fiction and so we do face real pressure don't we real serious pressure to conform on these issues and others but we're encouraged here to see behind the veil to see the reality and so seeing the reality we're encouraged and strengthened to stand as Daniel's friends do we must move on then to the second act the first act we've seen this great pressure it's real but we're also being shown behind the reality there's nothing really there it's empty but what will Shadrach Meshach and Abednego do will they crumble and compromise or stand firm in their loyalty to God so act 2 the testing of faith we see the overriding priority for God's people to honour the only true God so verses 16 and 18 the testing of faith just look there again at how they respond

Shadrach Meshach and Abednego answered and said to the king after all this great pressure they've been hauled before the great mighty king what do they say O Nebuchadnezzar we have no need to answer you in this matter if this be so our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace and he will deliver us out of your hand O king but if not be it known to you O king that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up under the greatest of pressure the three friends of Daniel stand firm they live by faith they will not bow down to Nebuchadnezzar's gods or worship his set up idol their priority is the honour of the only true God that they worship he's the only God the living God the creator God and because they worship the only true God they cannot possibly worship another it's the first commandment isn't it you shall not bow before any other

God and they know also the reality of Daniel chapter 2 they know that there is only one enduring kingdom and it isn't Babylon they know there is only one king who is ultimately sovereign and it's not Nebuchadnezzar and they had witnessed hadn't they the great power of God they had seen first hand his sovereignty in the very earliest days of the time in Babylon back in chapter 1 they along with Daniel they refused to eat the king's food they refused to get swept up entirely in the Babylonian indoctrination program and God honoured their stand for him they excelled didn't they they were promoted above all the others and they had seen in chapter 2 the miraculous revelation of the king's dream they had every confidence in the God they worshipped they knew he could deliver them from the fiery furnace there was no guarantee that he would they acknowledged that there was no expectation that God would do that there was no expectation

[30 : 52] God would rescue them look at what they say in verse 18 but if not in other words if he doesn't deliver us be it known to you that we will not serve your gods they knew that there was something far more important than their own immediate safety and that was the honour of God they could not deny him they know that there is a greater king that they must answer to one to whom even Nebuchadnezzar himself would one day have to answer and submit to and so it's clear to them where their loyalty must lie where it must ultimately rest even if it means death for them they were willing to go to the fiery furnace for their God and that willingness to remain faithful even unto death it remains for God's people today the Lord Jesus says so so very clearly you can read about that in the letter the Lord Jesus sent to that early church in Smyrna where Polycarp grew up here's what the Lord

Jesus says do not fear what you are about to suffer behold the devil is about to throw some of you into prison that you may be tested and for ten days you will have tribulation be faithful unto death and I will give you the crown of life the one who conquers will not be hurt by the second death that is to say that though the church and Christians may endure terrible suffering and even death in this world they will not be touched by the far more terrible and everlasting judgment that will surely come on the day when God judges all the Lord Jesus says elsewhere do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul rather fear him who can destroy both body and soul and hell that is the perspective that Jesus pressed upon his church there in

Smyrna and for all today who face persecution even death for their faith in him and it's the reality it's the perspective that Shadrach Meshach and Abednego knew and lived by here in chapter 3 they knew Nebuchadnezzar could and probably would kill their bodies but they also knew there was a higher throne and you and I need to have that same reality clear in our minds of overriding importance when it comes to the crunch above all else is God's honor his glory it is his word that in the end must be obeyed not the whim of public opinion or of an earthly king those things fade how foolish to give up your loyalty to something that is fading that will in the end be blown away like chaff in the wind don't do that heed the lesson heed the warning the encouragement of the stand of these three men here in

Daniel 3 in the testing of their faith well how will the eternal God respond to the challenge that Nebuchadnezzar lays down here in verse 15 he says who is the God who will deliver you out of my hands well let's see act 3 the triumph of the father we see the unmatched power of God to deliver those who refuse to compromise so verse 19 to the end act 3 the triumph of the father now predictably Nebuchadnezzar responds with absolute fury to the answer given by Daniel's three friends is not what he wanted is it he didn't want this defined act of standing firm for their God and so he orders the furnace to be superheated such that it even kills those gods who bring to the furnace Shadrach Meshach and Amedeag and in they go surely the king thought this was game over no one could deliver them now he thought surely well verse 24 the king is astonished he rises up in haste he declares to his counselors did we not cast three men bound into the fire and they answered and said true he answered and said but I see four men unbound walking in the midst of the fire they are not hurt and the appearance of the fourth is like the son of the gods he can barely believe his eyes instead of instant incineration he sees three men walking about in the furnace unharmed and what's more there's a fourth man with them and he describes this man as being like the son of the gods now whether it's an angel or the pre-incarnate appearance of the

Lord Jesus Christ we're not told either way but it's clear isn't it that their God the God of heaven has stepped down and stood with his men in the furnace the men who stood for him before the greatest king of the time who refused to compromise he now stands beside them in the furnace delivering them rescuing them and in many ways we need not be surprised he is keeping his promises made years before promises made through the prophet Isaiah here's what the Lord says to his people fear not fear not for I have redeemed you I have called you by name you are mine when you pass through the waters I will be with you and through the rivers they shall not overwhelm you when you walk through fire you shall not be burned and the flame shall not consume you for I am the Lord your God the Holy One of Israel your Savior and wonderfully

[36 : 57] God fulfills this promise in the most dramatic way for Shadrach Meshach and Abednego they took their stand trusting him for deliverance there was no guarantee that deliverance would look like this how God delivers well that's for him to determine isn't it and for us today as we face real decisions real moments when we must stand and not compromise we are to trust the God who delivers either from the trials or through them he may intervene in dramatic ways he may not but we do know for sure above all else that because of the empty tomb of the Lord Jesus Christ we will be delivered from death to eternal life that is sure every Christian is ultimately safe and secure as they trust

God's promise of deliverance even if that means you lose your life for the sake of the gospel there is an eternal life to come an eternal kingdom that cannot be touched by the kings of this world and we belong to that kingdom and so we are safe ultimately in the Lord Jesus Christ but this particular unique deliverance here in Daniel chapter 3 it brought great glory to God just look at the response from the mighty king Nebuchadnezzar what a turnaround at the start of the chapter he was demanding people fall down and worship his false God but look at what he confesses there in verse 28 blessed be the God of Shadrach Meshach and Abednego who has sent his angel and delivered his servants who trusted in him and set aside the king's command yielded up their bodies rather than serve and worship any god except their own god startling staggering confession isn't it and the truth of his dream in chapter two now hits home and the reality he now can't deny he seen it with his own eyes this miracle that leads him to confess the truth of his lips because these three men refused to compromise they refused to bow to any other god they were willing to die for their loyalty to him and

God demonstrates his total sovereignty his great power in delivering them out of his hands it's not the answer he was and through their stand God is glorified and the utter weakness of Nebuchadnezzar set up God is exposed brutally there's no power there and so it will be for you and I as we stand for God and his eternal kingdom we will bring him glory and expose the ultimate weakness of the powers of this world that will be the truth in the end won't it so don't panic in the face of relentless pressure the seemingly great power to conform that we feel don't panic rather live in light of this chapter see that pressure for what it really is and stand as these men do for the only living

God even unto death that is the message the encouragement the warning for God's people today from Daniel chapter three well let's pray shall we before we sing our father God we thank you for your word to us your enduring words your ever relevant words and Lord we do know the pressures we face day to day pressures to conform pressures to renounce you and your ways Lord please help us you know we are so weak and feeble but Lord help us not to have confidence in ourselves but in you because you are strong and mighty and powerful you alone are the everlasting king so Lord help us to stand in faith and when those moments come to trust you not deny you and to stand for your eternal kingdom help us

Lord how we need it for we ask it in Jesus name Amen