

(Questions for Small Groups & Individuals - from Pastor Mark's sermon on 6-13-10)

## **Daniel – Chapter 3**

### **“Bow or Burn”**

[Many of the questions have no right or wrong answer but are meant to promote discussion (or individual contemplation) about the scriptural principles involved. If you have difficult questions (that cannot be resolved in your small group), please feel free to contact Pastor Mark. **To the Small Group Facilitator:** There may not be time to discuss all of the questions. Always feel free to skip some questions so that you can focus on those that are most important for your group to discuss.]

#### **READ Daniel 3:1-3 and Proverbs 16:18**

**Question #1:** Pastor Mark said it is generally believed that Chapter 3 begins about 10 years after Chapter 2. During this time, he said Nebuchadnezzar's advisers have influenced the king and he has become much more prideful. Do you think pride is a problem for Christians? Why do you think that is? What are some “golden statues” that Christians can create in their lives? What ways have you found to overcome pride in your life?

#### **READ Daniel 3:4-12**

**Question #2:** Pastor Mark said, “The suspicion is that because of envy, the Chaldeans “cooked-up” this plan to retaliate against the Jewish young men.” Do you think envy is a problem in Churches today? In what ways are envy and pride related?

#### **READ Daniel 3:13-18**

**Question #3:** Pastor Mark said Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego model faith to us in these verses. Describe in your own words the faith that they are demonstrating. Do you now (or have you in the past) face a blazing furnace that will require faith to endure? If appropriate, it would be good to share with your small group.

**Question #4:** Pastor Mark said these three young men also model prayer in these verses. Their prayer is not recorded here, but as you consider their response to the king, what do you think their prayer might have been? Question 3 may have revealed some blazing furnaces being faced by members in your group. It would be good to now pause and pray for these difficult situations in your group.

#### **READ: Daniel 3:19-23**

**Question #5:** Pastor Mark said that facing the blazing furnace is ‘Christianity without the safety net’. He said that it is times like this that shape our faith and make us who we are. Pastor Mark said that heat and pressure are required to make metal more pure and strong. As you see others in your world face their ‘blazing furnace’, in what ways can God use you to be a part of His plan for these situations?

#### **READ: Daniel 3:24-30**

**Question #6:** Pastor Mark said that the fourth person in the furnace was probably a “Theophany” or the pre-incarnate Christ. In other words, Jesus was present with Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego as they went through the blazing furnace experience. Have you experienced Jesus presence in this way? Share your experience with your small group.

#### **READ: Acts 4:18-20**

**Question #7:** Pastor Mark said, “We are supposed to obey our government except when it violates scripture.” What issues in our world are placing us at odds with our government? Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were forced to have a confrontation with the government but apparently Daniel was able to avoid such a confrontation. What would be your advice to a new Christian as they are faced with these kinds of situations?