



## Sermon Questions

Date: *December 17, 2023* | Scripture: *Daniel 3:1-6, 16-30*

1. Read the passage from the sermon together. What do you find convicting? What do you find challenging? What do you find confusing?
2. This story follows three acts, each in relation to the furnace: outside the furnace, inside the furnace, and on the other side of the furnace. Each of these positions come with their own challenges to our faith and opportunities to see God with us. Which position are you in? How are you seeing (or struggling to see) God with you in that?
3. Skim over Daniel 1 and consider the road that led these three friends to where they were. The trauma of being torn from home and family compounds with the perks and pleasures of power in Babylon. This ambivalence makes temptation all the more intense. When have you experienced similar circumstances? How is your school, your workplace, the broader culture affecting us the same way?
4. Consider the response these three friends give to the king in 3:16-18. Could you imagine yourself giving a similar response? What would your version of this response be for the circumstances you've faced?
5. Connect this story to Christmas. What hope can we find in the person and work of Jesus when it comes to our trials?

### *Inward Grace in Action*

Dan 3:27 tells us the three friends come out of the furnace unscathed: "The hair of their heads was not singed, their cloaks were not harmed, and no smell of fire had come upon them." This is a great miracle of deliverance and many of us wish we could all come through our trials equally unscathed. Yet we know that in God's providence, that's not true for all of us. Some of us come out with burns and scars. What hope is there for us? The same hope that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego trusted in. Because of the work of Jesus, we will one day emerge through the other side of the furnace totally unscathed. Our clothes will be white as snow. The smoke of hell will have no trace on us. We shall be fully with God in a new world born again by fire, forever with God face to face.

- How is your faith holding up on the other side of your fiery trials?
- How does the hope of heaven strengthen your resolve? How often do you think about the life that awaits us?

**ACTION:** Consider reading Hebrews 11 this week to see saints through the ages placing their hope in God through trials. Ask him to grant you faith like that as you look forward to the new heavens and new earth.