

But If Not

We died before we left.

Fijian Missionary

6th Century B.C.

- Babylon is the world power
- Jews are defeated, deported to Babylon
- Nebuchadnezzar learns his kingdom will fall

Daniel 3

*(1) King Nebuchadnezzar made an image of gold
ninety feet high...and set it up on the plain of Dura in
the province of Babylon*

Daniel 3

(4) Then the herald loudly proclaimed, "... As soon as you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes and all kinds of music, you must fall down and worship the image of gold that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up. (6) Whoever does not fall down and worship will immediately be thrown into a blazing furnace."

Who's Who in Revelation

- Multi-nation confederacy that opposes God and His people

The Beast (Revelation 13:1)

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The Anti Christ (Revelation 13:6)

Who's Who in Revelation

- Multi-nation confederacy that opposes God and His people
- It is led by highly persuasive official (probably political)
- He is endorsed led by highly persuasive religious official

The Beast (Revelation 13:1)

The Anti Christ (Revelation 13:6)

The False Prophet (second beast) (Revelation 13:6)

Revelation 13

(14) He [the second beast] ordered them to set up an image in honor of the beast...(15) He was given power to give breath to the image of the first beast, so that it could speak and cause all who refused to worship the image to be killed.

As history draws to a close, unbelievers will devise more and more ways to intimidate Christians.

False religions are quite willing to use
terrorizing force to advance their cause.



1 Peter 2

(23) When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.

Daniel 3

(7) Therefore, as soon as they heard the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp and all kinds of music, all the peoples, nations and men of every language fell down and worshiped the image of gold that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

Daniel 3

(7) *Therefore, as soon as they heard the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp and all kinds of music, all the peoples, nations and men of every language fell down and worshiped the image of gold that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.*

I work for the king. This is my job. I have to do it.

It would be a waste to make such a sacrifice that will not
make any difference in such an evil land.

This has nothing to do with religion. I'm just showing political support for king and country.

I would consider taking a stand if others would stand with me.

Surely it can't be wrong if so many people are doing it.

A God of grace would never expect me to do
something this hard.

It's just five seconds of bowing before a piece of metal. What difference could that make in eternity?

If I compromise a little now, I will be able to stand for truth later.

Daniel 3

(8) *At this time some astrologers z came forward and denounced the Jews. (9) They said to King Nebuchadnezzar... "there are some Jews whom you have set over the affairs of the province of Babylon -*

Daniel 3

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego-who pay no attention to you, O king. They neither serve your gods nor worship the image of gold you have set up.”

Exodus 20

(2) "I am the *LORD* your God... (3) "You shall have no other gods before me. (4) "You shall not make for yourself an *idol*... (5) You shall not bow down to them or worship them;

Daniel 3

(13) *Furious with rage, Nebuchadnezzar summoned Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.*

So these men were brought before the king,

(14) *and Nebuchadnezzar said to them, "Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the image of gold. I have set up?"*

Daniel 3

*(15) Now when you hear the sound of the horn,
flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes and all kinds of music,
if you are ready to fall down and worship the image
I made, very good.*

Daniel 3

But if you do not worship it, you will be thrown immediately into a blazing furnace. Then what god will be able to rescue you from my hand?"

Daniel 3

(16) Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter.

Daniel 3

(17) 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.

Daniel 3

*(17)...the God we serve is able to save us...(18)
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

*(17)...the God we serve is able to save us...(18)
But even if he does not, we want you to know, O
king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the
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You should never go to God because he's useful. Go because he's beautiful. And yet there's nothing more useful than finding God beautiful.

Tim Keller



Wang Yi

Pastor, Early Rain Church

My Declaration of Faithful Disobedience

...I hope God uses me...to tell those who have deprived me of my personal freedom that there is an authority higher than their authority, and that there is a freedom that they cannot restrain, a freedom that fills the church of the crucified and risen Jesus Christ.

My Declaration of Faithful Disobedience

Regardless of what crime the government charges me with, whatever filth they fling at me, as long as this charge is related to my faith, my writings, my comments, and my teachings, it is merely a lie...of demons. I categorically deny it. I will serve my sentence, but I will not serve the law.

My Declaration of Faithful Disobedience

Those who lock me up will one day be locked up by angels. Those who interrogate me will finally be questioned and judged by Christ. When I think of this, the Lord fills me with a natural compassion and grief toward those who are...imprisoning me. Pray that the Lord would use me, that he would grant me patience and wisdom, that I might take the gospel to them.

My Declaration of Faithful Disobedience

Separate me from my wife and children, ruin my reputation, destroy my life and my family – the authorities are capable of doing all of these things.

However, no one in this world can force me to renounce my faith;

My Declaration of Faithful Disobedience

Jesus is the Christ, son of the eternal, living God. He died for sinners and rose to life for us. He is my king and the king of the whole earth yesterday, today, and forever. I am his servant, and I am imprisoned because of this.

Daniel 3

(19) *Then Nebuchadnezzar was furious with Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, and his attitude toward them changed. He ordered the furnace heated seven times hotter than usual.*

Daniel 3

(21) So these men, wearing their robes, trousers, turbans and other clothes, were bound and thrown into the blazing furnace. (22) The king's command was so urgent and the furnace so hot that the flames of the fire killed the soldiers who took up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego,

Daniel 3

(24) *Then King Nebuchadnezzar leaped to his feet in amazement and asked his advisers, "Weren't there three men that we tied up and threw into the fire?" They replied, "Certainly, O king."*

Daniel 3

(25) *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."*

Matthew 1

(23) "*The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel*"-which means, "God with us."

1. Christ's presence guarantees our safety from
eternal judgement

Revelation 19

(19) Then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to make war against the rider on the horse and his army.

Revelation 19

(20) But the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who had performed the miraculous signs on his behalf.... The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur.

Revelation 20

(12) And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. (15) If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

2. Christ's presence strengthens us as God leads us
into suffering

Matthew 28

(19) go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit...(20) And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."