God is Still God

1 Chronicles 16:25 / Daniel 3

8/14/22

This song “It is Well” that Kristina ministered to us with was written by a man who lost his son to scarlet fever. A little while later he loses his four daughters to a wreck at sea. Immediately after the wreck he sails to meet his wife and writes this song. Through all this travesty Horatio Spafford never lost his love for God and his faith that better days were to come.

1 Chronicles 16:25 (says) "Great is the Lord! He is most worthy of praise! He is to be feared above all gods."

The Lord IS great, and He IS worthy to be praised. But this does not just apply when things are good. Many times, we are guilty of praising the Lord when things are going our way. And too often as we talked about before, we are quick to blame Him when things are going wrong. He is worthy to be praised in the good times AND in the bad. He is worthy of praise on the mountaintop and in the valley deep. We are to praise Him in the midst of the storm and in times of peace. This morning’s message is not a message of “toe stomping” or to make you squirm in your seat, but I am here to encourage you and tell you more than once this morning that GOD IS STILL GOD!

Sometimes we pray and God answers those prayers the way we want...other times we pray and God answers, but the answer is the opposite of what we want. that even in those times HE IS STILL GOD! When we join together and pray for a child that is in the hospital and God moves in a mighty way and that child receives a miracle and is healed it is easy to join together and praise the Lord. Then there are times when we join together and pray for a man who has been sick for years and in and out of the hospital for months and even with fervent prayer that man passes away. Does this mean that God did not hear our prayer? Did God let us down? Is God any less worthy of our praise? Absolutely not! God is sovereign and He knows what is best for every situation. Even in a situation like that... HE IS STILL GOD!

We are living in increasingly difficult days... especially for those who are real, true, & born-again Christians. Jesus said it Himself in *John 15:20 “...since they persecuted me, naturally they will persecute you*” We are headed for oppression, opposition, and persecution like we have never seen before. Even though things may be bad today and getting worse, this morning we can face the future with hope. How, may you ask? Because no matter what we may face, we are CONVINCED...that no circumstance, no surprise phone call, *neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God’s love. 39 No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord. nothing can ever separate us from God’s love* & nothing can change the fact that **God is still God**!

Troublesome times for God's people is nothing new. One of the most well-known examples of God's people facing persecution is the story of the 3 Hebrew Children. I would like to look at this very familiar story and encourage you on the fact that no matter what God's people may face... "He's Still God".

**I. Though the Government Denies Him...He's Still God**

King Nebuchadnezzar had set up a gold statue in Babylon. He sent word to everyone to come to the dedication of this idol. The princes, governors, captains, judges, treasurers, counselors, sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces gathered before the image of gold. It was demanded that when the music was played that all would bow and worship this 90ft statue. The King also warned that any who refused to bow and worship the idol would be bound and cast into a furnace of fire.

Nebuchadnezzar was not the first ruler to set up a false idol and he won't be the last. Our current government has not set up an image of gold, but there is an attempt by many of our leaders to deny God. Secularism, humanism, atheism and many other “–‘ism’s”are on the rise in America. In recent decades and even recent day these leaders have attempted to ban God from every area of our society. They have taken prayer and the bible out of our schools. They have banned the 10 Commandments from our courthouses. They have endorsed immorality. They continue to push the agenda of the murdering of babies in the name of “healthcare”. They have basically redefined marriage. And are telling our kids it’s ok to not want to be what you are! In almost every budget, every bill, every law that is passed every branch of our government is making it clear that God is not welcome in our country. On a side note, maybe we can’t put all the blame on the politicians, as we are the one who keep electing them!

When you look at where we are as a country it is apparent that we are headed for some dark days in America. But if you are truly born again there is no need to fear! We are citizens of another country! And our King cannot be defeated or dethroned!

Nebuchadnezzar denied the One True God and instituted false worship. But this did not change the fact that God was still God! Regardless of what the future holds for America...HE'S STILL GOD!!!

Now it is easy, and justified, to complain about the fact that our government is dening God, but it is not just those in high places who deny God.

**II. Though the World Rejects Him... He's Still God**

*Look at verse 7*

*“So at the sound of the musical instruments, all the people, whatever their race or nation or language, bowed to the ground and worshiped the gold statue that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.*

The King issued the decree and the people bowed and worshiped the image of gold. For many who were present it was no issue at all for them to obey the command. The pagans had no convictions they simply did what they were told with no fear of the consequences.

The sad thing today is that there is a pretty good amount of people in our day that could care less that our culture is growing increasingly immoral. They do not care that Jesus is blasphemed and God is expelled from our society. They are not motivated to take a stand when our freedoms are taken away. They are quick to call us bigots and judgmental when we take a stand for Christ. They reject the Gospel, and they reject Christ. As a result, they will mock, scorn, and persecute those who follow Christ!

Now this was the case for the 3 Hebrew Children. Even though the majority of the people bowed and worshipped the idol, this did not change the fact that God was still God! And we can rest in the fact that even though the majority of this world may reject Him, this does not change the fact that HE IS STILL GOD! In this vast multitude that worshipped the golden idol, there were only 3 who took a stand for God. Things are no different today. Though there may be many who profess to follow Christ, there are very few who will take a stand!

**III. Though His Followers May Forsake Him... He's Still God**

Nebuchadnezzar had gone to Jerusalem and besieged it. He ordered his chief of staff, to bring some of the young men of Judah’s royal family and other noble families, to his palace as captives. Four of these men of Judah were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. They were renamed with the Babylonian names Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. Though we know four of the men who were captured and enslaved, it seems that there were others. It is very possible that in this crowd of people worshipping this idol that there were some who had previously professed to follow the True God. If this was the case, then there were some present who compromised their beliefs.

In our day there are constant attacks on Christ and there are many who profess to follow Him who remain silent. There are multitudes of people in churches as we speak who refuse to take a stand for what is right. There are countless others who have compromised and abandoned their beliefs and convictions.

Roger talked Wednesday about what is something you would fight for. Church, are you willing to fight and stand for your faith, your values, and your salvation, even when the devil is telling you to bow down because it’s not worth it and God isn’t coming to the rescue?? Even when the waves of difficulties and waves of persecution keeps hammering you.

Unfortunately, as we looked at with in the past few weeks, today the church is not much different than the world. People claim one thing and do another. And when Christ is attacked...they sit back and do nothing. Some bow and worship Christ on Sunday and then worship themselves, material goods and the world the rest of the week. My friend it doesn't work this way. You are either with Jesus or against Him.

* Luke 16:13 “*No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and be enslaved to money.”*
* 1 John 2;15 *” Do not love this world nor the things it offers you, for when you love the world, you do not have the love of the Father in you.*

You have a choice to make. Are you going to take a stand, or will you bow and compromise to your problems, to those who challenge your faith, to the evil that is mounting up? That is the choice that these 3 Hebrew Children had to make. And their choice was not an easy one. Keep in mind, we know this story from here looking back. We know how things turned out. These men had no idea what was coming their way. But they remained faithful in the face of intense persecution.

**IV. Though Troubles Come to Those Who Follow Him... He's Still God**

After the decree was made that everyone was to bow, Shadrack, Meshach and Abednego refused to bow. Some of the people went to the King and informed him of this. Nebuchadnezzar became furious and demanded that these 3 Hebrews be brought before him. He asked them if what he had heard was true. Then he gave them another opportunity to compromise and fall in line with the others. But he warned them that if they refused, they would be through into the fiery furnace. These men respectfully addressed their king. They told him that they would never bow and worship the golden image. Furthermore, they proclaimed that their God (the only TRUE God) had the power to deliver them from the furnace.

Notice what they said in verse 17-18 - *"If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God whom we serve is able to save us. He will rescue us from your power, Your Majesty. 18 But even if he doesn’t, we want to make it clear to you, Your Majesty, that we will never serve your gods or worship the gold statue you have set up.”*

Did you catch what they said?

* They proclaimed that God had the power to deliver them, but even if He didn’t, they still would not bow.

These men were not fair-weather followers. They didn't just follow God when things were easy and going their way. They were willing to follow God even if it cost them their life. But what I want you to take away from this is the confidence that they had in their God. They knew that no matter the outcome, GOD WAS STILL GOD!!

They had no knowledge of the future. They had not been promised that they would not suffer and die in the fire. They just trusted that God was sovereign, and they refused to bow to another! We know the outcome of this story. Through God's Word we are told that They indeed were cast into the fire. Nebuchadnezzar commanded that the furnace be heated 7 times hotter than usual. It was so hot that the men who cast them into the furnace were consumed by the flames. Nebuchadnezzar looked into the fire and saw the men were unharmed.

Look verse - *24 “But suddenly, Nebuchadnezzar jumped up in amazement and exclaimed to his advisers, “Didn’t we tie up three men and throw them into the furnace?” “Yes, Your Majesty, we certainly did,” they replied. 25 “Look!” Nebuchadnezzar shouted. “I see four men, unbound, walking around in the fire unharmed! And the fourth looks like the Son of God.*

We know the end of this amazing story! The men were released from the furnace and not a hair on their head was singed. Their clothes were not burnt. They didn't even smell like smoke. The only thing that had burned up was the ropes that had them bound. This is one of those stories in the Bible that is simply amazing. But can I tell you something? If these men had of died in the flames that day.... it still would not change the fact that God was still God!!

**Closing:**

My friend nothing can change that fact! You may be facing a time of uncertainty. You may be in the midst of a fiery trial like you have never experienced before. You may encounter persecution that never expected. Regardless of your circumstances, HE'S STILL GOD!!

As I have shared from my heart many times, I’m afraid that in the day we are living today, we have a generation of weak, shallow water, comfortable Christians. Those who will praise God in the good times but abandon Him when things go awry and are bad.

In times of adversity, we often cling to the promise of Romans 8:28 that says, *"we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."* - It doesn't say "all things work together the way we had planned." Nor does it say, "all things work together the way we would like". It says, "all things work together for good".

Sometimes we may not know what good is... but God always does! He is sovereign, He knows what is best and He is in control...even in the situation that isn’t making sense right now, seems unfair right now, or is even causing you heartache right now.

Even though you may be in a fiery, dark, low place, there are few people in history who suffered as much as a man named Job. Job lost his livestock, his property, his material goods, and worst of all his children all around the same time! In this time of great tragedy Job said "the LORD gave, and the LORD took away; blessed be the name of the LORD." Job realized that no matter how bad things got, GOD WAS STILL GOD!! He didn't blame God, he didn't doubt God, he didn't forsake God... He trusted that God was God!

We can have that same hope and assurance today! When the doctor gives you bad news ...HE'S STILL GOD! When the bank account is empty...HE'S STILL GOD! When you have rebellious children...HE'S STILL GOD! When your marriage is falling apart ...HE'S STILL GOD! When you face unspeakable tragedies .... HE’S STILL GOD! When death has taken a loved one ...HE'S STILL GOD! Though we live in a world of uncertainty ...HE'S STILL GOD!!!

I know that many of you are in the midst of the fire right now. Maybe you’re questioning if God is there and if He even cares for you. If so, I would encourage you to remember what Peter said in 1 Peter 4:12. *“Dear friends, don’t be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you. 13 Instead, be very glad—for these trials make you partners with Christ in his suffering, so that you will have the wonderful joy of seeing his glory when it is revealed to all the world.”*

Listen, I have one simple thought upon which I want you to focus today. Here it is...**God is still God**! There are so many situations and voices trying to grab your attention to convince you that God is actually not who God says that God is. Those circumstances and voices are all a lie.

* God is still doing the miraculous.
* God is still opening the right doors and closing the wrong doors.
* God is still healing ALL MANNER of sin, sickness and disease.
* God is still undoing, redoing and outdoing.
* God still has all power.
* God is still love.
* God is still loving us at our most unlovable point and forgiving us of things for which we cannot forgive ourselves.
* God is still bigger than any obstacle you will ever face.
* God is in your right now and God will be in your tomorrow.
* God is still working. God is still our hope. God is still keeping promises.
* God is still restoring marriages.
* God is still providing and making a way out of no way.
* God is still breaking chains and setting people free.
* God is still reconciling relationships.
* God is still seeking and saving those who are lost, confused, and disappointed.
* God is still speaking.
* God is still listening.
* God is still answering prayers.
* God is still birthing new life.
* God is still fulfilling dreams.
* God is still able.
* God can still be trusted.
* God is still God.
* Jesus is still Lord.
* God still loves you and has a plan for your life.

Fix your eyes on Jesus. God is still good. God...Is... Still... God!!!!