In His Hands #4 “Faith in the Fire” Daniel 3: 1-30

**Intro**: Sarcasm is a powerful literary tool. (ugly for a 15 year old)

***Sarcasm*** = the use of words that mean the opposite of what they say in order to mock, cut or expose.

 **ILL** – Watching the News and Julie comes home with groceries

 “*Don’t get up; I don’t need any help. Important Work*”

**t/s** – Today, a story I have heard since I was 5 --- Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the Fiery Furnace… Surprised by Sarcasm!

**Daniel 3: 1-7**

Review: Three with Daniel in Exile in Babylon… We may be in Exile, but ***our LORD is on His Throne***. Resolved.

Dream Story… ***Head of Gold***. King of Heaven Rules on Earth.

* LORD Sets Up Kings and Kingdoms; Set Up His Kingdom

Daniel and **Three** are **Exalted as Administrative Leaders**.

**READ** noting the Sarcasm…

 The Image, ***He Set Up*** (6 times)… not a god, gold image!

 Almost cartoon like… repetition of nine different positions

 (peer pressure…. Dramatic crisis of faith…Decision time)

***You Know the Story, Great Story…***

* Accusation against the Three (prejudice and Jealousy)
* I see four, loosed, walking about, unharmed and one looks like a son of the gods! (angel)…. Jesus?!
* Neb. convinced, Boys exalted, God Praised.

**t/s** – And the moral of the story is, we should be brave like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego! No… Theology… Story about God!

**Vs. 28** – Nebuchadnezzar interprets the Events… Key Issue.

 *They violated king’s command; yielded up bodies; refused to worship any other god*…. ***Why?*** **FAITH**.

 ***They put their trust in Him!***

**t/s** – This story is not primarily about bravery in face of danger or defiance in face of harsh authority; but about ***Faith in LORD***.

**Daniel 3: 16-18** – *What god is there who can deliver you out of my hands?*  The Three Confess Their Faith.

(Only Words the Three Speak.)

The Three make a clear statement on Faith:

 The LORD is Able to deliver us from the Fire.

 We will not worship your Image (Whether we burn or not)

 We Belong to Him.

**Faith involves stubborn, loyal, obedience to the LORD Who has ALREADY proven Himself. *We already know everything we need to know to be Faithful to our LORD.***

**Exodus 20: 1-4** – ***Relationship*** (covenant) and ***Redemption*** = Loyalty

 This Matter is Already Resolved.

 *Faithfulness to the commandment is the result of grace Already experienced.*

We do not know whether or know we will burn in your fire.

 What we Do Know: He has saved us and we belong to Him!

 (The Exodus and the Covenant)

**We already know everything we need to know to be Faithful to our LORD.**

**Paul lived with a stubborn, loyal obedience to the Lord.**

 He was in prison, facing death, uncompromised…

 *For me to live is Christ and to die is Gain!*

*I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live but Christ lives in my and the life that I know live I live by faith in the Son of God,* ***Who loved me and delivered Himself up for me****.*

I don’t know if I will be executed or be set free; But, ***I already know everything I need to know to live for Jesus.***

**Faith involves stubborn, loyal, obedience to the LORD Who has ALREADY proven Himself.**

**Application:** ***Looking for Faith in All the Wrong Places.***

I want a Faith like the Three… Courageous, Consistent in Exile!

 Tired of being weak, waffling, pushed around…

 … by peers, by fears, by circumstances…

(The Party; Your Cancer; The Shady Deal; opportunity to Speak)

* You will not find this kind of Faith by **Looking Within**.

Stirring up some feeling of certainty; capacity to make a claim on God.

* You will not find this kind of Faith by **Looking Ahead**… To what you want to happen, desired outcome, Confidence/Claim!
* This Kind of Faith is always **Looking Back** to what the Lord has Already Done… **The Cross.**

**I already know everything I need to know to live for Jesus.**

***I need no other argument, I need no other plea;***

 ***It is enough that Jesus died, and that He died for me.***