**Even In the Face of Certain Death**

***16****Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered and said to the king, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter.****17****If this be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of your hand, O king.****18****But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up.”*

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***24****Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished and rose up in haste. He declared to his counselors, “Did we not cast three men bound into the fire?” They answered and said to the king, “True, O king.”****25****He answered and said, “But I see four men unbound, walking in the midst of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods.”*

***26****Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the door of the burning fiery furnace; he declared, “Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out, and come here!” Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out from the fire.****27****And the satraps, the prefects, the governors, and the king's counselors gathered together and saw that the fire had not had any power over the bodies of those men. The hair of their heads was not singed, their cloaks were not harmed, and no smell of fire had come upon them.****28****Nebuchadnezzar answered and said, “Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent his angel and delivered his servants, who trusted in him, and set aside the king's command, and yielded up their bodies rather than serve and worship any god except their own God.****29****Therefore I make a decree: Any people, nation, or language that speaks anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego shall be torn limb from limb, and their houses laid in ruins, for there is no other god who is able to rescue in this way.”****30****Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the province of Babylon. (Daniel 3:16-18, 24-30, ESV)*

 Even when you face the danger of death, your faith in God will get you through. Greetings dearly beloved as we get ready to talk about an important aspect of faith today. Showing your faith usually entails a decision. If someone wants to “use” their faith, they would either choose to do or avoid doing something, to say or to avoid saying something, to go or to avoid going in a certain direction. In other words, faith is practiced by making decisions or choices. Today we are going to see one of the clearest examples of the power of faith in God through the account of the three young men and their escape from the fiery furnace. Therefore, if there was one truth that I would want to clarify for all of us, it is that having an absolute faith in God will bring us believers even through certain death. Let us talk some more about this important aspect of faith.

 As believers, in all dangerous circumstances, trusting God for a solution is our best decision. Of course, it is easier said than done, this truth. Talking about faith is free – living by faith in God is costly. The three youths in the passage had already proven that they had a certain amount of faith when they denied the king’s luxurious food and chose to eat beans and vegetables, which was comparably plain food instead. This time around, however, the test of faith was much greater. The main test was about the strength of their faith. Just how ready were they to be faithful to God no matter what? Was their faith genuine, or just lukewarm? By their answer to the king, the three young men proved the purity and strength of their faith. They believed in God even if they would die and God had decided to take them to Himself. Even in that case, they were ready to be martyred for the sake of the Lord.

 This is like when someone claims that he is a great athlete. What good is it for him to say so if his abilities are never evaluated, and he does not prove himself in his sport?

 Today our faith is being tested on all fronts, and the one who stays faithful to God like the three young men did is the one who proves his or her faith. Perhaps physical death is not the price that is being asked of you today, but a relationship will die if you choose faith in God. Or perhaps your good name will die in certain circles because of your steadfast faith. Another possibility is that your job, your house, or your status may die or be lost because of faith – but despite all the above, will you still believe that God is with you? Even if you are faced with the specter of death, and if the punishment is certain, will you stay true to your faith in God until your last breath?

 If your faith is a decision, then God is calling today for you to decide to trust Him, even when you find yourself in the worst of situations. A decide based on faith has no regard for feelings. A faith-based decision is based on God’s truth, which is sometimes invisible and intangible.

 May God give us the strength to always make decisions based on our faith in Him, so that we come through each trial and tribulation successfully, even if the result is not what we desired.

 May the Lord Bless you All. Amen.