

Stand Fearless for God

by Erlo Stegen

We are called to stand fearless for God, trusting in His power and deliverance, and to offer our bodies as a living sacrifice, even in the face of opposition or persecution.

Duration: 50:53

Scripture: Daniel 3:19, Daniel 3:28, Matthew 7:21, Matthew 7:23, Ephesians 6:12, Colossians 1:13

Topics: "Courage"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego from the book of Daniel. The sermon emphasizes the importance of true freedom, which comes from a relationship with God, rather than political freedom. The preacher highlights the courage of these three men who refused to bow down to an image and only worshiped their God. Despite facing the threat of being thrown into a fiery furnace, they remained steadfast in their faith, trusting that God would save them. The sermon also draws parallels to the New Testament, mentioning the apostles Peter and John who also chose to obey God rather than man.

Transcript

We praise you our God, there's no one like you. Thank you Lord Jesus that you shed your blood to redeem us. You didn't buy us with silver or gold, but with the precious blood of our Lord Jesus, to set us free from the power of darkness.

Your word tells us that we don't fight with flesh and blood, but with powers and principalities, rulers of darkness in this world. Thank you Lord Jesus for your victory on the cross. May that victory of the cross, your victory be evident in our lives, in spirit, soul and body.

Amen. Now let's read from Daniel chapter 3, chapter 28. Nebuchadnezzar responded and said, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who has sent his angel and delivered his servants, who put their trust in him, violating the king's command and yielding up their bodies, so as not to serve or worship any god except their own god.

Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who has sent his angel and delivered his servants, who put their trust in him, violating the king's command and yielding up their bodies, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego shall be torn limb from limb, and their houses reduced to a rubber sheep, inasmuch as there is no other God who is able to deliver in this way." Then the king caused Shadrach,

Meshach, and Abednego to prosper in the province of Babylon. We'll stop there. Now just in brief.

Nebuchadnezzar was a great ruler, a great king on earth. And God said of all the kings, Nebuchadnezzar is the head of gold. He was above all the kings.

However, he was a heathen. Reigning in Babylon. They were Iraqis now.

That's where Babylon was. So even to this day, it's such a contentious issue where the whole world is up in arms. Where even Europe, France, and Germany, and other countries are going against Bush because he attacked the old Babylon.

Now I'm not someone who gets involved in politics. In fact, yesterday I spoke to the parents and the children of the school, and I said anyone who has a political spirit must rather just go. We preach the gospel, and that's what we stand for.

Not the things of this world. But we need to state facts as they are. And the truth.

So Nebuchadnezzar reigned from Babylon, reigning over the kingdoms of the world. Today, the Muslims are also trying to take control of the world. Even here in our country, they have a big say.

But there were just a few men who served God and God alone. Daniel and his three friends who ended up in the furnace. Nebuchadnezzar had a good and a bad side.

Remember how in the beginning he had a dream which Daniel interpreted. And Nebuchadnezzar honored Daniel. And even instructed that they should sacrifice with incense.

Then Nebuchadnezzar did homage to Daniel and gave orders to present to him an offering and fragrant incense. The king answered Daniel and said, surely your God is a God of gods and a Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries. Since you have been able to reveal this mystery.

But then just after that, the king Nebuchadnezzar goes and makes an image of gold. And he made a decree past the law that everyone should bow to this image. But these three men, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego said, we will not bow to this image.

Nebuchadnezzar knew these men. Because after Daniel had interpreted the king's dream and he had actually told him what it is, what had been revealed to him. And then Nebuchadnezzar said, there is no God like the God of Daniel.

And then Daniel asked the king for permission to give these three men, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, special positions in the government. So even when Daniel was honored and given this high position in the land, Daniel didn't forget his three brothers, his friends. And he said, oh king, can't you also promote these three friends of mine? A Christian can also not forget his friends.

He doesn't just want to enjoy everything on his own and keep it to himself. He shares it with his brethren. Remember when they were taken to the royal palace and they had to eat the king's food.

Then Daniel and his friends said, no, we don't want to eat of the king's food. He would just give us vegetables to eat. We won't eat the king's food.

A good and upright man does not forget his friends and brothers in the Lord. And Nebuchadnezzar accepted that request. And he said, there is no God like your God.

But almost in the same breath he goes and he sets up this big image. It reminds me of some people who become Christians and they say what the Lord has done for them and how wonderful it is. And the next day suddenly you see no trace of it anymore.

Anything of the Lord left in their life. And you can't understand how such a thing is possible. He made this huge image of gold.

An image that stood higher than this building. You could see it from far away. Then he gathered all the nations of all the kingdoms which he ruled over.

And he ordered that every single person from every nation bow down to this image. And Nebuchadnezzar and his friends, they rejoiced. And the Babylonians, they were thrilled and said, well, how wonderful.

We rule the earth. And we rule the land. So they were very happy about this idea of this image.

And they thought, well, this will eventually just cement our authority and everyone will just have to bow down to what we want. And then they thought of an idea how they could get everyone to bow to this image. And then they decided to use music.

So they thought of music as an instrument to get everyone to bow down to this image. So they got a band together and they said when they start playing, something will be aroused within them to make them bow down to this image. Today it's the same.

Rock and pop and all the different types of music that you get, that is used to arouse people. One of the pop stars in fact went as far as to say publicly that whoever buys my records or CDs and listens to my music, he is selling his soul to the devil. He says when you listen to my music, that music will go into you and you will move like you've never moved before and it will stay in you.

Like sometimes when you're driving along the road, you see people in a car, these young boys and girls, and when you look at them, you think there could be something wrong with them. The way they move their body, you can see that something's gotten into them and that's how the devil has gotten into them through music. And it's difficult to get it out again.

It's in that person, like he's been injected with it. It's in his bloodstream. Music.

Music. Music. Music.

Music. Music. So it was through music that the devil got it right.

In fact, if you think of the necklacing where people were burnt with these ties alive, at that time also they used music. they used would toy toy and and sing and chant and that's how they got people into this mode and where they would burn people kill them and I said well it's right that they have a service to ask God to forgive the people for the sin a terrible thing and if you parents know that your children are listening to these CDs and records you're actually doing them a favor if you burn those CDs and save their souls. If you don't burn them, your children, you'll burn them in hell forever.

They don't go to heaven, never. Unless they repent and the repentance goes deep and not like Nebuchadnezzar did here. There's no God like your God.

The next thing he makes a statue for his God. So we need to take note of these things lest they rob us of the blessings for we will not receive a blessing with these things around and in our lives. And if you just think of these horrific figures almost half a million children that have been killed and that's just what the statistics say we don't even count those that are not known.

You cannot imagine how it's possible that a mother can kill her own child. The one who's closest to her heart kills it. You don't know.

One wonders how women can be so bewitched to do such a thing. But that whole multitude will one day stand before the judgment throne and then those babies are going to point out their mothers and say Lord that's my mother and say but mother how could you do such a thing. And that child will stop you from entering heaven.

And how will you answer those questions when that child asks you and said mother but what did I do to deserve this? Was I ever disobedient? What did I ever do to you to have deserved that you murdered me? So music was used. Now what music do you play in your home? Is it such music that sanctifies the Lord's name brings glory to him or not? Whatever you listen to or that TV in your home, does it bring glory to God's name? Mr. Kunenda, who was in charge of TV here in South Africa years ago, he went to his seniors and he said we cannot show these disgusting things on TV and if you want to persist then rather fire me. I'm not prepared to let it happen but if you look today on TV what disgusting, immoral, filthy things are shown and you look at it together with your children.

He said you can show this to the whites, to the Afrikaners, to the English, to the whites, but don't show them to the blacks as long as I am here. I won't show it. I won't allow it and today it's swallowed, hooked, lined and sinking.

Not only by the blacks but by you whites as well. I still want to know how you can call yourself a Christian with having such a satanic thing in your home. Maybe in other countries it's different, but here in South Africa you know what you're looking at.

You're bringing the curse upon your house and upon your offspring. When I spoke to a young girl reprimanding her I said how can you do such a thing and go with a boy and kiss a boy and flirt around with a boy. A girl that grew up here.

Have I ever done such a thing? Have your parents done such a thing? Why can you do that to a stranger? You don't know where that man comes from and where he goes and you flirt around with him. And she told me my father has got a television set and he's hidden it. He doesn't know that I know, but as soon as they gone I go there and I switch it on and I look at those films and then that's where I learned to kiss a boy.

That's where I learned how to be immoral. And then it says if somebody is one with an adulteress or sleeps with her, he's one with her. What is in you goes into her, what's in her goes into you.

And that's why maybe you are bewitched through that immoral behavior. I don't know what to do with you. I don't know what to do with you.

I don't know what to do with you. I don't know what to do with you. I don't know what to do with you.

I don't know what to do with you. You need to have a genuine repentance that that curse may be taken away from you. Lest you go to the Lord and you say Lord, Lord and he says I don't know you.

Now let's pass that music point. But remember what what role music plays and how hell can enter your life through music. In fact you just need to listen to the words which they sing, which these things which arouse you.

So when they play that music everyone bow down to the image except for these three men. And they were quickly reported to the king that oh there are three men who don't want to bow down to the image. Who are they? Now it's these three men Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.

Bring them here. And he said don't you obey the king's command? And they said oh king you can say and do what you like but we will not bow down to this image. We will only bow down to our God.

And Nebuchadnezzar as it says in verse 19 he was filled with wrath and rage and his facial expression was altered toward these men. We remember in Acts where Peter and John and them also said to the authorities they said well you judge for yourselves whether we should listen to God or to men. And so he became filled with rage.

He was furious and he said that the furnace should be heated seven times more and they be thrown into it. The fire was so hot eventually that when they threw these three men in the men that threw them in were burned to death. And these three men said oh king we are not prepared to bow to this image and if God wants to save us from the fire and from the furnace he will but if he doesn't well then we straight on our way to heaven anyway.

So they were bound and thrown into the furnace and the men that threw them in were consumed they died. Suddenly Nebuchadnezzar called out he said what has happened? Didn't we throw three men bound into the furnace? Now I see four men walking around totally free in the furnace. You see what freedom really is? Not political freedom this is true and he said look the fourth man is like the son of God you see how wonderful the gospel is there's nothing like it.

Suddenly the Lord Jesus was there with them to be with them to encourage and to support them no matter how difficult it is don't be scared of death or whatever can happen to you. And so we see this old Saddam Hussein saying but who is this fourth man he looks like the son of God do we need to be ashamed of the Lord Jesus? And then he called out to them that they should come out from the furnace and when they came out there was no sign of the fire on them their hair was not singed their clothes didn't even have the smell of fire or smoke on them. And Nebuchadnezzar responded and said blessed be the God of Shadrach Meshach and Abednego who has sent his angel and delivered his servants who put their trust in him violating the king's command.

Now suddenly he blessed the God of these men who had violated his own command he had made the decree but the same man later blessed them for having broken it for not having bowed to go to the government's law of the day. And then this heathen king spoke amazing words he said they yielded up their bodies so as not to serve or worship any other God he they gave and sacrificed and yielded up their own bodies have you ever done that for the Lord? And we remember in Romans where it says I urge you brethren to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice to the Lord tell me have you done that it's offered your

body as a whole body. So they gave their themselves heart and soul and body and they said even if we have to die for it and be burned for it we will not bow.

That's our problem here in Africa we are not prepared to stand up for what is right we are cowards we always scared to say oh no I'm not going to say anything what will the other person say of me oh what what he'll harm me or you'll kill me if I say something well you keep quiet with it and you'll end up in hell with it. And people live in sin and you say no well I'm just rather going to keep quiet and not split on anyone I'd rather just hide it. And then Nebuchadnezzar said made a decree a law he said all people of all nations should honor and and serve and worship the God of these men.

And that's when you see the gospel spreading and running through all the lands no matter who you are what nation you are what type you are. And Nebuchadnezzar says inasmuch as there is no other God who is able to deliver in this way. Can you stand for the truth? Have the kings of our land have Mandela and Mpege and authorities seen that there is no other God like our God because of you and your life? Have the rulers of your land there where you live have they been able to see the living God and say there's no other God like the God of this person that they see God in your life? He says but we threw three men into the furnace and now I see the fourth man and the fourth looks like the Son of God.

Isn't it something amazing which he saw? What do people see in your life? Do they point the finger he's a Christian? But see and kind and friendly like this like that? Well they must say so if you're a child of the devil and of Satan but if you are true to the Son of God they'll see him in you. And you find people saying many different things at the same time contradicting himself. Do you experience the freedom that these three men experienced or do you just always complain oh I've got such a tough time I haven't got enough money I don't have this I don't have that but these three men walked on those hot coals and they were totally free and those that looked saw the Son of Man and the Son of God with them.

Do they see that when they see you? Let's bow our heads. Thank you Lord for the for your word that we've heard. Thank you also for the testimony we've heard.

No one can set free people like the Son of God. Even the Satanists who join up with the devil and do their terrible deeds even they must recognize that here is true freedom. Thank you Lord for the gospel your gospel there's nothing like it.

Thank you also for the opportunity to hear your word and may he who hasn't decided for you may do so today. The one who hasn't broken with sin may he come today confess his sin come to the cross to be cleansed in your blood. Work in an amazing way Lord.

May they be rejoicing today in heaven because of children that repent and also adults fathers and mothers that each one will be cleansed in the precious blood of the Lord Jesus. Amen.

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