

A Nebuchadnezzar's decree to worship the golden image (1-7)

B The Jews accused (8-12)

C The Jews threatened (13-15)

D The Jews confess their faith (16-18)

C*The Jews punished (19-23)

B*The Jews vindicated (24-27)

A*Nebuchadnezzar's decree honoring the Jews and their God (28-30)

- In spite of appearances God is in complete control.
- Fear Not...I am going to meet you in the Furnace
- Live the Truth
- The full Glory of God's rescue has not happened yet, vindication is still to come. We live at vs. 18—so stand firm, trust God with humility, gentleness, courage, respect and obedience.

- Who is really in control Nebuchadnezzar or God
- Power and Pride or Obedience and Trust
- Society obsessed with power—but here the moral nature of God is more important than his might—die for the right vs. might...will I be obedient or compromise
- Society obsessed with results—but here the true reward not found in the rewards but knowing the presence of God in the midst of the heat of struggle

- Paul Tillich: “a person’s god is the thing or person that one is most concerned about, thinks the most about, or affects one’s life the most.”
- Bill Bright: “Who is on the throne of your life?”
- What does it mean to “keep the main thing the main thing?”
- Idol: Where do we find meaning in life?

- Uninvited
- Unexpected
- Seems Unimportant
- Let Lives Speak—Live the Truth
- We will all face the furnace—Fire is for judgement or refinement if meet Jesus in it.
- If Christian—you will have enemies
- If you love someone—you will suffer
- Follow Me and you're going to have a great big God and outrageous joy and you're going to be in trouble all the time—Jesus

- Where need to say—“Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him” — for my God is God is Able—so....I will not bow down—instead I will trust God—where have you been holding back full devotion—God is able—let Him provide, trust Him—obey Him
- Where need to hear God say: Fear Not—I will meet you in the furnace—and say—ok—I’m scared—but I’ll meet you there
- What idols do you bow down to? Where are you called to obey God’s law?
- How are you in the face of persecution—are you gentle/humble/loving?
- Do you serve God for Himself, or what you get out of Him?

- To know the power of Christ's Resurrection—must die? What are you being called to die to?
- Are you living a life of furnace avoidance? Are your prayers all about furnace avoidance?
- What prevents you from following God with utter abandonment and trust?
- What King do you worship? What Kingdom are you building?
- Where do you find meaning in life?
- Where in our lives today is conformity normative and disobedience unthinkable? Where has our disobedience become mechanical?
- Have I allowed God's forgiveness to take away the smell? In what ways am I letting God refine me in the midst of my present furnace?
- Where do I need to trust God to fight my battle and live in humility?

- Promise of persecution
 - Expect it/Worse for Christians
- Promise of Preservation
 - God will meet us in the fire
- Promise of Promotion
 - Refining Fire/Set Free of Bonds/Glorifies God Before others