



Jesus says, "In this world you will have trouble. But be encouraged!
I have won the battle over the world."
John 16:33

KINGDOM FAITH

Lesson 20: *The Fiery Furnace* (Condensed Version)

Saint Matthew's Anglican Church Children's Ministries

Year 2. Kingdom Life
Unit 7: Kingdom Faith

TRUSTING GOD IN DIFFICULT TIMES (Scripture: Daniel 3)

Objectives: To explain that: *To have faith is to trust and obey Jesus, even when bad things happen. *The Babylonians worshipped false gods (idols), but Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were faithful to the true God of Israel. *They trusted that God was powerful enough to save them from the fiery furnace, and they stayed faithful to God even when they faced death. *God doesn't always save us from difficulty. But God has promised that he will always be with us, both in good times and hard times, and he has given us the hope of eternal life with him. *When others want us to disobey God's commands, we should ask God to help us stay faithful.

Review & "I Wonder" Questions: *We have learned that Jesus is Almighty, and he is in control, even when storms and bad things happen. *What do you see in this picture? ***I wonder** why the people are bowing down to the statue. *I wonder why the three men kept standing when everyone else bowed down. *I wonder who the people are in the flames. Let's find out more in our lesson...

Lesson Props: None

Lesson Summary: Today's story is from the Old Testament and is all about trusting and obeying God in hard times. In this story, the people of Israel had been taken far away from their Promised Land to Babylon, where they had to serve King Nebuchadnezzar. This king had built a huge gold statue that everyone had to bow down and worship or else be thrown into a fiery furnace. *(Point to statue)* But three young Israelite men named Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were faithful to the One True God. They refused to bow down and worship the statue. They said, "If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God whom we serve is able to save us...But even if he doesn't, O King, you can be sure that we will never serve your gods or worship the gold statue you have set up." They knew God **could** save them from death, but they didn't know whether he **would**, because God doesn't always save us from difficulty. The three men chose to be faithful to God. Therefore, they were bound and thrown into the fiery furnace. This time God **did** save the three men. *(Point to furnace)* When the king looked into the furnace, there were not three men in the fire, but four, and they were all walking around! The king was amazed and said the fourth man in the furnace looked like a son of the gods. (Christians have always believed that it was God the Son himself who appeared in this fire, a long time before he came to earth as the baby Jesus born in Bethlehem!) King Nebuchadnezzar walked up to the furnace and called Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to come out. When he saw that they had not been burned by the fire, the king gave praise to the One True God for this miracle. In this story, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego faced a very difficult situation, but they stayed faithful to God, even when they weren't sure if God would save them from the furnace *(point to furnace)*. Sometimes life is hard, and there are important choices to make. Sometimes we experience trouble. Jesus talks about that in our memory verse. Let's read the verse together: *(Children read verse on poster)* Jesus won the battle over sin and evil on the cross, and he has promised that he will always be with us, both in good and hard times. In our country, nobody gets thrown into a fiery furnace because they are faithful to God. But staying faithful to God can make us unpopular. People might want us to do things that are against God's commandments, things like lying, stealing or being mean and hurting others. In those situations, we can pray and ask God to help us be faithful to him just like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were. Jesus has promised that he will always be with us, both in good times and in hard times, and he has given us the hope of eternal life with him.

Suggested Questions: ***What does this story tell us about Jesus?** (He is always with us in good and hard times. He wants us to be faithful to him) ***What was the difficult situation the three men faced?** (They were told to bow down to worship the statue, or they would be thrown into the fiery furnace) ***What did they choose to do in this difficult situation?** (They refused to worship the statue. They chose to be faithful to the One True God) ***Were they hurt in the furnace?** (No. God saved them) ***Does God always save us from hard times?** (No, but he promises to always be with us.) ***What should we do when others want us to disobey God's commandments?** (Remember that God is with us. Ask him to help us stay faithful to him even when it makes us unpopular)

Bible Memory Verse: Jesus says, "In this world you will have trouble. But be encouraged! I have won the battle over the world." John 16:33 NIRV