

## Believe In What Is Right By Kent Heaton

In the book of Daniel, three young men are put to a great test of character as they stood before the King of Babylon in defiance of a decree that could cost them their lives. Nebuchadnezzar had made an image of gold nearly ninety feet tall in the plain of Dura and commanded all people to fall down and worship the image at the sound of various forms of music. When the time came, all the “people, nations, and languages fell down and worshiped the gold image which King Nebuchadnezzar had set up” (Dan. 3:7). In the midst of this great throng of bodies bowing down in worship three men remained standing and refused to bow. The penalty for rebellion was clear. “Whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace” (Dan. 3:6).

Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were Hebrew slaves taken from their homeland in the invasion of Judah by Babylon. They had been placed in the king’s palace to serve and learn the language and literature of the Chaldeans. We know them best by their Chaldean names of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. Brought before King Nebuchadnezzar the king gave them a second chance to reconsider their refusal to bow down and worship the image. Their reply was clear and demonstrative. "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. If that is the case, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king. But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up" (Dan. 3:16-18).

The three Hebrews were cast into the furnace but through the grace of God delivered without the hair of their hair singed nor were their garments affected, and the smell of fire was not on them (Dan. 3:27). God used their faith to show the king of Babylon who “rules in the kingdom of men” (Dan. 4:17). This remarkable story of courage is one fitting for our young people to embrace as they graduate High School and begin the challenging walk of life.

Two things stand out in this story: first, the importance of believing in something; secondly, the need of believing in the right thing. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego did not go along with the crowd. It was not their life’s aim to be like everyone else. They believed in something and not only believed it but were willing to disobey the law of the king because of what they believed in.

It is easy to go along with everyone else and be like the crowd. When the music began to play in the plain of Dura, thousands of people fell down to worship the image. Consider how odd they felt to be the only ones standing. Literally, everyone was bowing but these three men. They could have fallen down and who would have noticed? They possessed a belief system that challenged the moral code of the day. Young people, you must possess a system of belief to find happiness in life that will set you apart. Following the crowd will get you no where (Matt. 7:13-14).

Having a belief system is not enough – you have to believe in the right thing. They refused to worship the image because it was wrong. They stood for what was right because they stood for what God taught them. They served the Lord and not man (Acts 4:19-20, 5:29). As young people going out into the world, you must believe in the right

thing and the only thing that is right is what is found in God (John 17:7). True happiness will not be found in bowing down to the music of the day. It will only come from standing for God in the face of great opposition to the norms of today. If your life is going to make a difference it must be made with the Lord as your guide and compass (John 14:6).

### The Window through Which We Look

A young couple moved into a new neighborhood. The next morning while they were eating breakfast, the young woman saw her neighbor hanging the wash outside. 'That laundry is not very clean,' she said. 'She doesn't know how to wash correctly.. Perhaps she needs better laundry soap.' Her husband looked on, but remained silent.

Every time her neighbor would hang her wash to dry, the young woman would make the same comments.

About one month later, the woman was surprised to see a nice clean wash on the line and said to her husband: 'Look, she has learned how to wash correctly. I wonder who taught her this.'

The husband said, 'I got up early this morning and cleaned our windows.'

And so it is with life. What we see when watching others often depends on the purity of the window through which we look.

### The Bottom Line to Worry

There are only two things to worry about: Either you are well or you are sick.

If you are well, there's nothing to worry about. But if you are sick, there are only two things to worry about: Either you get well or you die.

If you get well, there's nothing to worry about. But if you die, there are only two things to worry about: Either you will go to Heaven or you will go to Hell.

If you go to Heaven, there's nothing to worry about. But if you go to Hell, there is all eternity to worry about.

Where will you spend eternity? This is the bottom line to worry.

### A Church Garden

First, plant five rows of peas:

Presence

Promptness

Purity

Perseverance

Peace

Next to these, plant three rows of squash:

Squash gossip

Squash criticism

Squash indifference

No garden is complete without turnips:

Turn up for services

Turn up with a smile

Turn up prepared to study

Turn up with determination to make everything count for good

#### A Moments Wisdom

What you are going to be tomorrow, you are becoming today.

You cannot keep your shoes shined if you continually walk in the mud.

The Devil is willing for a man to preach the truth as long as he doesn't practice it.

Easy street and the strait and narrow path do not intersect.

Christians should be humbly grateful instead of grumbly hateful.

Common sense is a very uncommon commodity.

Thank God for what you have. Trust God for what you need.