life group study guide
June 15, 2014

LIFE GROUPS
doing life together

Conviction: Even If He Doesn't

But even if he does not, we want you to know, Your Majesty, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up." **Daniel 3:18**

In today's world of instant gratification and the Me Generation's apparent I deserve it now attitude I wonder if today's lesson might be difficult to accept.

Let's set the stage to a story that is well known, even if the particulars are not--
Nebuchadnezzar, the King of Babylon sacked the Southern Kingdom of Judah and destroyed the temple built by Solomon. He then took the people into what is called the Babylonian Exile.
One of the Jews deported in the exile was a man named Daniel. Most scholars attribute the book of Daniel to his pen. Perhaps the best-known story in the book might be Daniel and the Lion's Den. Followed by the story of the fiery furnace.

The Bible doesn't say why Nebuchadnezzar built the giant image but it does tell us that he issued a decree that everyone under Babylonian authority had to worship the image.

> *Then the herald loudly proclaimed, "Nations and peoples of every language, this is what you are commanded to do: [5] As soon as you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipe and all kinds of music, you must fall down and worship the image of gold that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up. [6] Whoever does not fall down and worship will immediately be thrown into a blazing furnace."* **Daniel 3:4-6**

READ DANIEL 3:8-12
Q) -Why do you think the Officials went to the King with this complaint?
Q) - V8 of my NIV says of the officials: "...these men denounced the Jews." Do you see any similarity in today's world, not just with the Jews, but Christians in general?

These are the basics of the charges against the three men:

- They showed disregard for the king's authority.
- They did not serve his gods.
- They would not bow down to the image.

Q)- What is the significance of what is happening in the world today to what transpired in this story thus far?

So "furious with rage" the king has Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego brought before him where he gives them an opportunity to turn from God and worship his idol. He threatens to throw them into the fire if they refuse.

Q) - At what other moment in history will we be ordered to turn from God to worship a false god?
So these three respond to the command to worship the idol by standing firm in their faith even in the face of prosecution that they already *know* is going to lead to their death.

I really like the question Nebuchadnezzar poses to the three as he gives his threats and I think it's a piece of the story that needs to be told:

READ verse 15
Q) - Do we see any questions like that being asked in the world today? Where/how/why?

So in their defiance, they tell the king of their faith in God, claiming that He can save them if He so desires, and then they say these words: **But even if he does not**, *we want you to know, Your Majesty, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up."* **Daniel 3:18**

But even if He does not...

What a statement of faith that really is. In this name it claim it time of faith, But even if He does not, to me, speaks as loud as can be...

Q)- What does that mean to you, "But even if He does not...?

Q)- How does that fit into your prayer life?

Q)- When we pray for something that is really heavy on our heart, like a family member or friend turning to Christ, or for healing, do you anticipate God *will* answer that prayer?

Q)- If you don't see an answer how do you explain that?

Q)- Do you believe your own answer?

Q)- How do we get this message out to a world that is in such a hurry looking for immediate satisfaction?