



### Ice Breaker

**What is the dumbest thing you've done because of peer pressure? Can you name something good that you've done because of peer pressure?**

### Day 1 — Today's Theme: Open It

Daniel chapter 3 is a well-known and well-loved chapter in the Bible. It contains things we all like in a story: 90-foot idols, furious kings, fiery furnaces hot enough to kill people who are just passing by. That sort of thing. When we left our friends at the end of chapter two everything was going along very nicely. Daniel and his three amigos Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were exalted to a position of privilege and power in Babylon. But unfortunately things have a habit of changing in this life. And so they did, for King Nebuchadnezzar decided to set up a golden image that was ninety feet high and nine feet wide! And what's worse, everyone was commanded to bow down and worship the image! What will our friends, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego do?<sup>1</sup>

**Read Daniel 3.**

- 1. What did Nebuchadnezzar make on the plain of Dura?**
- 2. What was this image made of?**
- 3. Who did Nebuchadnezzar invite to the dedication service?**
- 4. What did he command the people to do when they heard the music?**
- 5. Who refused to obey the King's command?**
- 6. What was their reasoning for not obeying?**

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<sup>1</sup> <https://jesusplusnothing.com/series/post/Daniel3>

## Day 2 — Today's Theme: Hidden Idols

**Read Daniel 3:1–7.**

### Key Verse:

*“...when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, you are to fall down and worship the golden image that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up” (Daniel 3:5).*

So king Nebuchadnezzar makes an image of gold, and it is no small undertaking. This image is 30 meters [98 feet] high! So the first question is where do you think they got this idea from? While the Bible doesn't say exactly what the image was of, many commentators believe that the king would have been inspired by the vision that he had had in chapter 2 and created an image of a man. It could even have been in his own image. The Bible states it was all in gold. You may remember from chapter 2 that in the dream of the statue, he was the head of gold, but he also learned that this head of gold would come to an end. It is therefore likely that king Nebuchadnezzar had this image set entirely in gold to indicate that his Babylonian empire would never perish or be conquered. While this is speculation, knowing the pride of Nebuchadnezzar, it's probably on the money. So the king gathers all his leaders in preparation of some grand dedication. Seems like something big is on the way!<sup>2</sup>

7. How could King Nebuchadnezzar go from honoring God at the end of chapter 2 (read Daniel 2:46–47) to setting up this idol in chapter 3?
8. What are some idols that our culture puts before us today? How big (visible) are these idols? Are they hidden?
9. Are there any idols you personally struggle with? If none immediately come to mind, is that good or bad? Why?

<sup>2</sup> <https://jesusplusnothing.com/series/post/Daniel3>

## Day 3 — Today's Theme: Peer Pressure

**Read Daniel 3:8–12.**

Key Verse:

*"Now if you are ready when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, to fall down and worship the image that I have made, well and good. But if you do not worship, you shall immediately be cast into a burning fiery furnace. And who is the god who will deliver you out of my hands?" (Daniel 3:15)*

If you've ever seen the first Avengers movie you will remember the scene where Loki (the villain) has arrived in Germany and proceeds to tell a crowd of people to "kneel" before him. The crowd is scared and tries to run away, but Loki, being able to project multiple versions of himself, surrounds the crowd of people and screams "Kneel before me!" The hundreds of people in the crowd, being terrified and feeling like there's no hope, one by one all kneel down before Loki.

Loki then says "You were made to be ruled. In the end, you will always kneel." And one man stands up in a crowd of people, refusing to bow and says, "Not to men like you!"

I am often reminded of this old man standing up against Loki, because it is so easy in life to just "follow the crowd" and do something just because everyone is doing it, but it takes REAL courage and strength to stand up against what we know is wrong.

In Daniel 3 we see whenever the instruments would play that everyone was commanded to fall and worship the idol. With thousands of people all worshiping and submitting to Nebuchadnezzar's orders it would be so easy to just blend in, especially if the punishment is to be thrown into a fiery furnace. We see Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refuse to worship the idol even if it means death.

**10. Why is it true that most people will go along with the crowd?**

**11. Share an example of a time when you "went along with the crowd."**

**12. There were thousands of people who bowed to the idol. What do you think made the difference between the Jews who bowed and the three who didn't?**

## Day 4 — Today's Theme: Fight for What's Right

Read Daniel 3:13–18.

Key Verse:

*Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered and said to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. If this be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up" (Daniel 3:16–18).*

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego stood up against Nebuchadnezzar even if it meant death, but what really draws me into this passage is the confidence that the three display while refusing to worship the idol. They not only display confidence that God will deliver them, but more importantly that God's will is going to be fulfilled.

At the start of verse 17 we read "if this be so" and in 18 it says "but if not." What this shows us is that the three men trusted in God so much that no matter what was going to happen to them (life or death), they would trust God's will and plan for them.

**13. What keeps you from having the same confidence and trust in God as Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego?**

**14. Was there ever a time when you stood for God when no one else was willing to?**

**15. Reflect on the phrase "but even if he does not." What does it reveal about the trio's perspective on God's sovereignty and their trust in Him? How can we apply this attitude to our own lives?**

Read Daniel 3:19–30.

**16. Jesus told us that life would bring trouble (John 16:33,) but He also told us that He would always be with us (Matthew 28:20). How has the presence of Jesus helped you face the troubles of life? How do you practically experience the presence of God in your life and how can you experience more of Him in the days to come?**