

When Prayer Doesn't Seem to Work  
Pastor Brian Davies  
Lord of Glory, Grayslake

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego are followers of God in the Old Testament, forced to live in the foreign land of Babylon. After a huge gold statue is erected, they are given the option to either bow down in worship to it or be thrown into a fiery furnace. They then use this opportunity to give testimony to their faith in God, as they trust that He will guide and protect them. They are prayerfully and faithfully turning to God, and check out what happens next:

"The King...ordered the furnace heated seven times hotter than usual" (Daniel 3:19).

So track with me here - God's answer to their prayer and faithfulness... was making the furnace hotter?

Think about it for a moment - has something similar ever happened in your life with your prayers? You prayerfully and faithfully turn to God, trusting in Him to guide and protect, and the result is that the situation gets worse?

This narrative serves as a great reminder of the phrase, "a long obedience in the same direction." Keep going; keep praying; and don't give up, even when it seems like it's getting worse. It doesn't mean that God isn't hearing you or has forsaken you. Look at Jesus - He prayed in the garden, and the immediate result was flogging, beating, and crucifixion.

However, the hotter furnace wasn't the end of the story, as the crucifixion wasn't the end for Jesus. Thrown into the furnace, there with them is a fourth being, the Almighty God, who sees them through it. "Not a hair on their head was singed" (Daniel 3:27). Similarly, see how God raises Christ Jesus from the grave.

So if it seems like your prayers are only resulting in a hotter furnace, take courage! The Lord is indeed near!