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STAND YOUR GROUND

"Stand firm...having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace," (Eph. 6:14,15). When the powerful world forces of this darkness and the spiritual forces of wickedness launch a full force attack upon us, good solid footwear would come in handy if we are to remain standing firm against the enemy. Just as Roman soldiers would have equipped their feet with shoes having nails or spikes driven through the soles to ensure a firm, solid stance with secure footing was achieved in battle, so Christians must equip their feet with the gospel of peace. The peace we now have with God can provide us with the sure confident footing needed to replace intimidation and fear with courage and confidence when face to face with the onslaught of trials and temptations. Note the confidence of three Jews whose trust in the God they had peace with gave them the courage to dig their heels

in the ground when face to face with an ultimatum in regards to their faith and loyalty. *"Then Nebuchadnezzar in rage and anger gave orders to bring Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego; then these men were brought before the king. Nebuchadnezzar responded and said to them, 'Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the golden image that I have set up?...If you do not worship, you will immediately be cast into the midst of a furnace of blazing fire; and what god is there who can deliver you out of my hands?' Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego replied to the king, 'O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to give you an answer concerning this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from*

the furnace of blazing fire; and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But even if He does not, let it be known to you, O king, that we are not going to serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up.'" (Dan. 3:13-14,15-18).

Once they were thrown into the furnace of blazing fire, a powerful demonstration of the magnitude of strength in the God they had put their trust in goes on full display for all to see. A visible fourth figure was seen walking around with the three who had initially been cast into the flames, even though the men who carried them up to the furnace were consumed by the hideous raging inferno (Dan. 3:19-23). *"Was it not three men we cast bound into the midst of the fire?" They replied to the king, 'Certainly, O king.' He said, 'Look! I see four men loosed and walking about in the midst of the fire without harm, and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods!'"* (Dan. 3:24-25). Not only were they unharmed, but an additional demonstration of divine power was displayed when not even the smell of fire could be traced on them at all. *"The satraps, the prefects, the governors and the king's high officials gathered around and saw in regard to these men that*

the fire had no effect on the bodies of these men nor was the hair of their head singed, nor were their trousers damaged, nor had the smell of fire even come upon them," (Dan. 3:27).

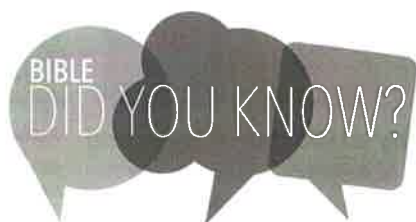
Not only is this an awesome display of the power of God, but an equally awesome display of immovable faith in the power of God. Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego dug their heels into the ground, confident and assured that God was more than capable of this type of deliverance if they would be cast into the furnace. Do you realize, as Christians, God is essentially calling upon us to demonstrate this same faith in His divine strength to deliver us? Not from a blazing furnace of fire, but from the blazing fiery arrows of the evil one that are essentially ignited by the desires consuming the very world we walk through. We are walking around in a world set ablaze by the fleshly desires of the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. This whole world lies in the power of the evil one who has not only set it on fire with his allurements, but, like Nebuchadnezzar, is constantly seemingly to heat it seven times more than normal, always making it that much harder to walk through unharmed. And

yet, the challenge is given for us as Christians who have died to sin, to walk through the flames unharmed: *"What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it?" (Rom. 6:1-2).* We are not only challenged to walk through unharmed, but, like the three in Nebuchadnezzar's furnace, we are to walk through the tempting allurements that have set this world on fire without the smell even attaching itself to us. *"But immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints," (Eph. 5:3).* How? Paul tells us to put on our shoes of the confidence given to us through the gospel of peace, knowing that another walks with us, who does not merely have the appearance of a son of the gods, but IS the Son of God! We have the assurance that the very one who withstood every temptation thrown at us when He dwelt on this earth in the flesh is coming to our aid to give us the strength needed to stand. *"Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the*

devil, and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives...For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted," (Heb. 2:14-15,18).

Let us put our shoes of confidence on, remembering the power of the gospel that brings us peace with God, gives us access to the only one Satan could never bring down, Jesus our redeemer.

– Daniel Ruegg



Angels serve Christians in ways unknown to us.

"But to which of the angels has He ever said, 'Sit at My right hand, until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet'? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?"

Hebrews 1:13-14

FIFTH SUNDAY PHOTOS

Every fifth Sunday of the month, we try to highlight some of great things happening around our congregation that were captured through photography. If you happen to get a good picture of one of those great things, please feel free to post it on our Facebook page, tag us on Instagram (@wellsburgchurch), tweet us at @wellsburgchurch, or e-mail us at minister@wellsburgchurchofchrist.com with a little description of what is happening in the picture.



Why so serious, Wayne and Charena? You're on vacation. Come on...lighten up a little!



Several members here along with other brethren and friends took a trip to Washington DC to tour the Museum of the Bible. Praise God that His Word is on display for the world to see!



Makena sporting her "Big Sister" shirt! We are so excited for the Shay family with the news they are expecting another baby! What a great big sister you are going to be, sweet Makena!



Joy abounds in the Prager home as the addition of cutie-pie Gideon brings even more smiles and love to this sweet family! "Behold, children are a gift of the LORD,"
Psalm 127:3