



Sermon Notes and Study Questions

You can do it! But you don't have to do it alone!

¹⁶ Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to him, “King Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. ¹⁷ If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to deliver us from it, and he will deliver us from Your Majesty’s hand. ¹⁸ 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.” ¹⁹ Then Nebuchadnezzar was furious with Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, and his attitude toward them changed. He ordered the furnace heated seven times hotter than usual ²⁰ and commanded some of the strongest soldiers in his army to tie up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and throw them into the blazing furnace. ²¹ So these men, wearing their robes, trousers, turbans and other clothes, were bound and thrown into the blazing furnace. ²² The king’s command was so urgent and the furnace so hot that the flames of the fire killed the soldiers who took up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, ²³ and these three men, firmly tied, fell into the blazing furnace.

²⁴ Then King Nebuchadnezzar leaped to his feet in amazement and asked his advisers, “Weren’t there three men that we tied up and threw into the fire?”

They replied, “Certainly, Your Majesty.”

²⁵ He said, “Look! I see four men walking around in the fire, unbound and unharmed, and the fourth looks like a son of the gods.”

²⁶ Nebuchadnezzar then approached the opening of the blazing furnace and shouted, “Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out! Come here!”

Daniel 3:16-26

¹⁷ One day Jesus was teaching, and Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there. They had come from every village of Galilee and from Judea and Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was with Jesus to heal the sick. ¹⁸ Some men came carrying a paralyzed man on a mat and tried to take him into the house to lay him before Jesus. ¹⁹ When they could not find a way to do this because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on his mat through the tiles into the middle of the crowd, right in front of Jesus.

²⁰ When Jesus saw their faith, he said, “Friend, your sins are forgiven.”

²¹ The Pharisees and the teachers of the law began thinking to themselves, “Who is this fellow who speaks blasphemy? Who can forgive sins but God alone?”

²² Jesus knew what they were thinking and asked, “Why are you thinking these things in your hearts? ²³ Which is easier: to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up and walk?’ ²⁴ But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.” So he said to the paralyzed man, “I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home.” ²⁵ Immediately he stood up in front of them, took what he had been lying on and went home praising God. ²⁶ Everyone was amazed and gave praise to God. They were filled with awe and said, “We have seen remarkable things today.”

Luke 5:17-26

Notes:

Introduction

Choosing Community

Everybody has a Mat

Releasing God's Power

Conclusion

Connecting Questions

1. Share a time when you experienced unexpected help that made all the difference.
2. What was an experience that helped you appreciate the power of community and friendship?

Discussion Questions:

1. Respond to the following statement: We cannot overcome the challenges of life all by ourselves. Do you think this true? Why or why not?
2. How do you deal with the challenges of life? Do you tend to face them by yourself or with help?
3. Who are the people you would turn to for help and why?
4. How does your schedule get in the way of embracing Christian community?
5. Everybody has a mat. A place of neediness where we are broken and imperfect. What does your mat look like?
6. Who are people in your life who could help carry your mat?
7. Are you more likely to carry someone else's mat for them or to allow someone else to carry your mat? Why?
8. If you want deep friendship you can't always be the strong one. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Why?
9. What is the difference between being friendly and being a friend?
10. What would choosing to go deeper into community look like for you?
11. Whose faithfulness and friendship has had a deep impact on your walk with the Lord?
12. How is God speaking to you through this sermon series? Is there any sense of clarity of call on how to live out of God's priorities for your life?

Going Deeper into Scripture

Read Luke 5:17-26

1. What did the healing miracles signify to 1st Century Jews?
2. What was the reaction of the religious leaders to what was unfolding?
3. What was their reaction to the claims Jesus made?
4. Why were the religious leaders upset?
5. How did Jesus know what was in the religious leader's hearts?
6. What is easier, to forgive sins or heal a paralytic?
7. What is the difference between saying someone's sins are forgiven and actually forgiving their sins?
8. Jesus identified himself as the "Son of Man" - this comes from Daniel 7. How does Daniel 7 give insight into understanding what Jesus meant by the Son of Man? Why do you think Jesus refers to himself as the "Son of Man" instead of just saying, "I'm God incarnate," or "I'm the messiah"?