

Transforming Daily
“... in the midst of the fire ...”
Daniel 3:24

Does it seem at times based on the circumstances in which you find yourself that you are in the midst of the fire? Maybe you're wondering how in the world you got there? To be sure, sometimes of our own doing, we jump from the frying pan into the fire. At other times, such as it is here in Daniel 3, the circumstances seem to be thrust upon us.

A few years back, my brother-in-law and I were preparing to burn some yard debris at the church. We had it all collected and stacked carefully. It was late at night, as a matter of fact, it was after midnight. The night air was cold and damp, and not a wisp of wind was blowing. We doused the heap of trash with gas soaking it very thoroughly. All that was left was the proverbial matchstick. Jesse and I stepped back to what we thought was a safe distance, struck the match and tossed it. Where we stood is where we placed the gas can. If we were at a safe distance from the fire, it stands to reason the gas can was at a safe distance from the fire. We soon found that our estimation would fall well short of the actual outcome. The match was launched perfectly into the center of the heap, and suddenly there was a flash and a bang. The fire went up in a ball of flame, but it also flared out. In a flash, the two of us were engulfed in flames. However, thanks be to God, as quickly as it flared out the flames shrank back. Jesse and I stood motionless, stunned trying to comprehend what had just taken place. We later went through the “what ifs” and the “how comes.” Oversimplified, the cold night air kept the flames closer to the ground. Therefore the explosion went further out than up.

Your fire might be literal or figurative. It might be of your own making or that of your current circumstances being thrust upon you, but thanks be to God, for the believer he or she is not alone. Just as it was for the three men in the fiery furnace of Daniel, so it is with us. Tom Elliff says that peace and serenity exist for the believer when we are consciously aware of the presence of Christ. He is not talking about salvation. That's a given. He is referring to the disruptions in our lives, what I would call flare-ups, due to situations perhaps unforeseen that distract us from the confidence that is ours in Christ.

Do those around you wonder why the “fire” in your life does not have the usual effect on you that it does on the lives of others? Are you consciously aware of the presence of Christ in the midst of the fire?