

DANIEL IN THE LIONS' DEN

DANIEL 6



CHRIST CONNECTION: Daniel trusted God, and God saved him from the lions. When we trust Jesus, He saves us and gives us life with God forever.

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: How can we glorify God? We can glorify God by loving and obeying Him.

KEY PASSAGE: Do everything for the glory of God. 1 Corinthians 10:31

STORY POINT: Daniel trusted God, and God protected him.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

As Daniel grew into an older man, God continued to show him favor as Daniel served under a new king—King Darius. Yet, Daniel’s place in the government of Babylon was a subject of jealousy. In an attempt to trap Daniel, royal officials petitioned Darius to enact a law forbidding anyone from praying to any god other than the king. Just as the officials suspected, Daniel continued praying to the one true God.

The Bible points out that Daniel prayed as an act of defiance to the new law. When Daniel was faced with the possibility of death if he prayed, he made a courageous decision. Daniel 6:10 says, “When Daniel learned that the document had been signed, he went into his house. The windows in its upstairs room opened toward Jerusalem, and three times a day he got down on his knees, prayed, and gave thanks to his God, just as he had done before.” Instead of hiding his prayers, Daniel boldly walked in obedience, knowing his life would be put in danger.

In the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus faced a similar decision with even greater consequences. Following the Last Supper, Jesus spent time with the Father in prayer. Jesus wrestled with His coming death as He asked the Father to take the cup from Him if possible. Luke describes the agony that Jesus went through in this decision by telling us Jesus’ sweat fell like blood due to the intensity of His time with God. Jesus surrendered to the will of the Father even though it led to death. God honored the obedience of both men. He delivered Daniel from the lions’ den, and He delivered Jesus—the only person to obey God perfectly—from the grave in victory over death.

One final detail of this story should challenge us in our walk with God: Darius was rooting for Daniel. Right before Daniel was thrown into the lions’ den, the king hoped out loud that Daniel’s God would deliver him from death. Eventually, after Daniel’s deliverance, the king declared that all people must respect Daniel’s God. This week, encourage the kids in your class to live a life that honors God, even when others around them are making different choices. May we model lives that are so honorable to God that even people who disagree with us might want us to be right about God.



PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



WELCOME

10–15 MINUTES

Greet preschoolers and open the session



LEARN

25–30 MINUTES

Teach preschoolers the story of the gospel



LOVE

Lead preschoolers to love the God of the gospel

30–40 MINUTES



LIVE

Lead preschoolers to live the mission of the gospel



BONUS

60–65 MINUTES

Teach preschoolers for an additional hour



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a supply of the following items available during all teaching sessions: Allergy Alert, Bibles, washable markers, crayons, scissors (adult use), blunt-tipped scissors, construction paper, copy paper, glue sticks, glue, tape, baby dolls, blocks, play dough, and a beanbag.



WELCOME

Find the hidden message

- Big Picture Question Poster
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- large envelope



LEARN

Tell the Bible story

- "Daniel in the Lions' Den" video (optional)

Review the Bible story

- Bible Story Picture Poster
- plush lion toy

Learn and practice the key passage phrase

- Key Passage Phrase Marker



LOVE

Play a matching game

- "Matching Game" printable

Snip with scissors

- cupcake liners



LIVE

Make animal tracks

- "Key Passage Phrase Labels" printable
- washable paint
- disposable plates
- toy animal figures
- heavyweight paper
- art smocks

Missions activity

- "Manchester Photos" printable

Snack and transition

- hand sanitizer (optional)
- "Complete the Pattern" activity page, 1 per child
- Big Picture Cards for Families



BONUS

Say the key passage phrase

- Key Passage Phrase Marker

Play with play dough

- craft sticks

Complete animal puzzles

- animal puzzles



WELCOME Preschoolers

Provide as many learning activities as possible from the Love and Live sections to give preschoolers choices to learn. Incorporate the Bible story, the Christ Connection, story point, and key passage phrase in your conversations as the preschoolers engage in learning activities throughout the session.

Use the following activity to greet children as they enter the room. Talk about the big picture question and answer. After each child completes the welcome activity, encourage him to participate in the activities provided from the Love and Live sections of the leader guide.

FIND THE HIDDEN MESSAGE

Post the Big Picture Question Poster near the entrance to the room. Tape the Bible Story Picture Poster to the outside of a large envelope. Write the key passage phrase on a sheet of paper and place it in the envelope. Hide the envelope in the room. Encourage children to find the hidden message. Show the Bible Story Picture Poster as you read the message. Invite preschoolers to hide the envelope for the next child to find.

SAY “ I am so glad that you are at church today. Our big picture question asks, **How can we glorify God? We can glorify God by loving and obeying Him.** The hidden message you found inside the envelope is our key passage phrase and says, ‘Do everything for the glory of God. 1 Corinthians 10:31.’ Daniel glorified God by loving and trusting Him. Daniel loved God so much that kept praying to God even when people told him not to. **DANIEL TRUSTED GOD, AND GOD PROTECTED HIM.** ”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





LEARN the Bible Story

1 WHAT CAN WE PRAY ABOUT



Bring a piece of paper and a marker to group time. Invite preschoolers to help you think of things that we can pray, or talk to God, about. Write each idea on the paper. Remind preschoolers that we can talk to God about anything, at any time.

SAY “ There are so many things that we can talk to God about. Daniel loved God so much that he kept praying to Him, even when others made a rule that said he shouldn’t. **DANIEL TRUSTED GOD, AND GOD PROTECTED HIM.** ”

2 TELL THE BIBLE STORY

Open your Bible to Daniel 6. Tell the Bible story using the following summary. You may choose to review the Bible story by showing the video.

DANIEL IN THE LIONS’ DEN

SAY “ After King Nebuchadnezzar, a new king named Darius became the ruler. King Darius really liked a man named Daniel, and he made Daniel a very important leader. But some other leaders were jealous of Daniel.

These jealous leaders wanted to get Daniel in trouble. They tricked the king into making a rule that said everyone had to pray only to the king, not to God. If anyone prayed to God, they would be put in a den with lions!

Daniel knew about the rule, but he loved God so much that Daniel kept praying to Him. The jealous leaders saw Daniel praying and told the king. The king was sad because he liked Daniel, but he had to follow his own rule. So, Daniel was put into the lions’ den.

That night, the king could not sleep. He was so worried about Daniel. In the morning, he ran to the lions’ den and called out, “Daniel! Did your God save you?”

And guess what? Daniel answered! “Yes,” he said, “God sent an angel to close the lions’ mouths, and they didn’t hurt me at all!”

The king was so happy! He took Daniel out of the lions’ den and made a new rule: “Everyone must worship the God of Daniel because he is the one true God who can keep people safe!” ”

Christ Connection: Daniel trusted God, and God saved him from the lions. When we trust Jesus, He saves us and gives us life with God forever.



3 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

Display the Bible Story Picture Poster. Encourage preschoolers to tell you something about the Bible story or answer a question about the story as you pass a plush lion toy around the circle.

SAY “**DANIEL TRUSTED GOD, AND GOD PROTECTED HIM.** Where did the king put Daniel? (the lions’ den) Why was Daniel put in the lions’ den? (He prayed to God, even though there was a rule not to.) Did God protect Daniel? (yes) **DANIEL TRUSTED GOD, AND GOD PROTECTED HIM** from the lions. When we trust Jesus, He saves us and gives us life with God forever.”

4 SING A SONG

Sing the song to the familiar tune of “Here We Go ‘Round the Mulberry Bush”:

Do everything for the glory of God,
The glory of God, the glory of God.
Do everything for the glory of God.
1 Corinthians 10:31

5 LEARN AND PRACTICE THE KEY PASSAGE PHRASE

Place the Key Passage Phrase Marker at 1 Corinthians 10:31. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Encourage preschoolers to clap out the syllables of the key passage phrase as they say it with you several times.

SAY “Our key passage phrase tells us to do everything for the glory of God. Daniel glorified God by loving and obeying Him. Daniel prayed to God even when others told him not to. **DANIEL TRUSTED GOD, AND GOD PROTECTED HIM.**”

6 PRAY

Pray, asking God for courage like Daniel to follow Him.





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God because of what we learned

1 MAKE A PAPER CHAIN

Cut pieces of construction paper into 1-inch strips. Invite children to help you think of things we can talk to God about. Write out each prayer on a strip of paper. Create a ring with the first strip of paper and secure it with tape. Demonstrate how to loop the next strip through the first and secure it with tape as well. Assist preschoolers as they work together looping the strips and taping them until you have a chain of prayers. Display the chain in the room.

SAY “ We can talk to God about so many things. God hears our prayers when we talk to Him. Daniel loved God so much that he kept praying to Him even when the king made a rule that said he would be put into the lions’ den. Daniel was put in the lions’ den, but God protected him. God sent an angel to close the lions’ mouths. **DANIEL TRUSTED GOD, AND GOD PROTECTED HIM.** ”

2 PLAY A MATCHING GAME

Print and cut the “Matching Game” printable. Turn the cards facedown on the table. Invite preschoolers to take turns turning over two cards, looking for a match. If a match is not found, flip the cards back over and allow another preschooler to have a turn. Continue until preschoolers find all the matches. For younger preschoolers, place the cards faceup on the table. Talk about the pictures on the matching cards as you play.

SAY “ You found the matches to all the cards. The pictures on these cards remind me of our Bible story. The king made a rule that said everyone had to pray only to the king, not to God. Anyone who prayed to God would be put in a den with lions! Daniel knew about the rule, but he loved God so much that he kept praying to God. Daniel was put in the lions’ den, but God saved him from the lions. **DANIEL TRUSTED GOD, AND GOD PROTECTED HIM** from the lions. When we trust Jesus, He saves us and gives us life with God forever. ”

3 SNIP WITH SCISSORS

Place cupcake liners and blunt-tipped scissors on the table. Demonstrate for preschoolers how to snip around the edges of the cupcake liner, without completely cutting through the liner. Assist preschoolers as needed.

SAY “ I like the way you snipped around the circle with your scissors. It reminds me of a lion’s mane. Daniel was put in a den of lions. King Darius was tricked into making a rule that said people could only pray to him. Daniel knew this was wrong. He loved God so much that he kept praying to God. Daniel was placed in the lions’ den, but God sent an angel to close the lions’ mouths, and they did not hurt Daniel at all. **DANIEL TRUSTED GOD, AND GOD PROTECTED HIM.** ”

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE for God out of love

1 MAKE ANIMAL TRACKS

Assist preschoolers with placing an art smock over their clothing. Pour a small amount of washable paint onto a paper plate. Distribute plates with paints, toy animal figures, and heavyweight paper to each child. Invite preschoolers to dip the paws of a toy animal figure into the paint. Demonstrate how to walk the animal across the paper to make tracks. Encourage preschoolers to place a label from the “Key Passage Phrase Labels” printable onto their papers.

SAY “ Our key passage phrase tells us to do everything for the glory of God. Daniel glorified God by loving and obeying him. Daniel kept praying to God even though he knew he would be put in the lions’ den. Your animal tracks remind me of lion footprints. **DANIEL TRUSTED GOD, AND GOD PROTECTED HIM** from the lions. ”

2 MISSIONS ACTIVITY

Print and display a copy of the “Manchester Photos” printable. Point to the United Kingdom on a world map. Guide preschoolers to look at the printable and pass it around the circle as you talk about City Church in Manchester, England. Following the activity, pray that people in Manchester, the Northwest of England, and all of Europe will have the opportunity to know about Jesus. Pray for other churches to help start new churches in the United Kingdom.

SAY “ The people of City Church in Manchester, England, say they love the city of Manchester, love its people, and most importantly love Jesus. City Church wants to teach people the good news about Jesus and help people understand the Bible. City Church welcomes people who are new to England. They are happy to serve people from all over the world. ”

3 SNACK AND TRANSITION



Post an Allergy Alert. Serve the snack. As children eat, review and talk about the Bible story. When children finish their snack, lead them to complete the activity page. As they work, continue talking about the Bible story and emphasize the Christ Connection.

SAY “ Daniel trusted God, and God saved him from the lions. When we trust Jesus, He saves us and gives us life with God forever. ”

Remember to communicate helpful information to the bonus teaching hour leaders. If parents are picking up children at this time, tell them something their child did well during the session. Distribute Big Picture Cards for Families. Encourage parents to engage with the family discussion starters and family activities during the week.



TEACHING HOUR

BONUS Teaching Hour Group Time

1 ROAR LIKE A LION

Invite preschoolers to roar like a lion as you come to group time. Alternate between loud and quiet roars. End with a very quiet roar. Tell preschoolers that the king put Daniel into a den with lions.

2 TALK ABOUT THE BIBLE STORY

Open the Bible to Daniel 6. Use the summarized points below to talk about the Bible story:

DANIEL IN THE LIONS' DEN

- King Darius liked Daniel and made him an important leader, but some other leaders were jealous.
- The jealous leaders tricked the king into making a rule that everyone had to pray only to the king or be thrown into a den with lions.
- Daniel kept praying to God, and the jealous leaders told the king. The king had to follow his rule and put Daniel in the lions' den.
- The next morning, the king found Daniel safe because God sent an angel to close the lions' mouths.
- The king was happy and made a new rule that everyone must worship Daniel's God, the one true God who saves.

3 SING A SONG

Sing the song to the familiar tune of "Here We Go 'Round the Mulberry Bush":

Do everything for the glory of God,
The glory of God, the glory of God.
Do everything for the glory of God.
1 Corinthians 10:31

4 SAY THE KEY PASSAGE PHRASE

Place the Key Passage Phrase Marker at 1 Corinthians 10:31. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Say the key passage phrase together and then alternate between the boys and girls saying the key passage phrase with you several times.

5 PRAY

Pray, thanking God for being the one true God who saves us from our sins.



TEACHING HOUR

BONUS Teaching Hour Activities

6 DECORATE A BIBLE BOOKMARK



Cut construction paper into wide strips to form bookmarks. Place the construction paper, washable markers, and Bibles on the table. Encourage preschoolers to decorate a bookmark. Encourage preschoolers to place their bookmarks in a Bible at home.

SAY “ You can use your bookmark to mark the book of Daniel in the Bible. We have read the stories of Daniel and his friends in the Bible. Daniel followed God and God made him wise. **DANIEL TRUSTED GOD, AND GOD PROTECTED HIM.** Daniel loved God so much that he chose to pray to God, even when it meant that he would be put in a den of lions. Daniel trusted God, and God saved him from the lions. When we trust Jesus, He saves us and gives us life with God forever. ”

7 PLAY WITH PLAY DOUGH

Place play dough and craft sticks on a table. Encourage preschoolers to flatten out the play dough into a circle and use craft sticks to press around the edges of the circle, resembling a lions’ mane.

SAY “ Your play dough creation reminds me of a lion and his mane. Daniel was put into a lions’ den. The king made a rule that people could only pray to him, but Daniel loved God so much that he kept praying to God. Daniel was put in the lions’ den, but God sent an angel to close the lions’ mouths, and they did not hurt him at all. **DANIEL TRUSTED GOD, AND GOD PROTECTED HIM.** ”

8 COMPLETE ANIMAL PUZZLES

Place several animal puzzles out for preschoolers to explore and complete. Review the Bible story as children work to complete puzzles.

SAY “ You did a great job completing the animal puzzles! Was there a lion in any of the puzzles? The king was tricked into making a rule that said everyone had to pray only to the king, not to God. Daniel knew about the rule, but he loved God so much that he kept praying to God. Daniel was put into the lions’ den. **DANIEL TRUSTED GOD, AND GOD PROTECTED HIM.** God sent an angel to close the lions’ mouths, and they did not hurt him at all. Daniel trusted God, and God saved him from the lions. When we trust Jesus, He saves us and gives us life with God forever. ”

Release preschoolers to parents according to your church’s security procedure. Tell them something their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session.