

DANIEL OBEYED GOD

DANIEL 1



CHRIST CONNECTION: Daniel listened to God even in small things, like what he ate. Jesus listened to God in everything. When we trust Jesus, God sees us as if we lived a perfect life, just like Jesus did.

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 followed God, and God made him wise.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

Some see Daniel as a book filled with epic adventures and fascinating prophecies—yet the heart of Daniel’s narrative goes much deeper. At its essence, Daniel is a survival guide, a bold blueprint for thriving in a world that’s hostile to those who place their faith in the one true God.

Daniel and his friends found themselves in a situation far removed from what they may have expected for their lives. Their people had been captured by the leading power of their day, the Babylonians. God’s people were exiled from their home to a foreign land where they would face severe persecution as they boldly lived out their faith in God.

What made this nation such a hostile environment for these young men? First, Babylon had a godless king who was known for murdering his enemies and those who defied him. Second, Daniel and his friends were forced to receive a Babylonian education that focused heavily on religious practices directly in contrast to their own, including a strong emphasis on astrology and the occult. These young men were not just to be removed from their homeland; rather, they were to be transformed into followers of the Babylonian way of life.

Imagine for a moment the pain of being removed from the only place you have ever known, isolated from friends and family, and inundated with daily teachings that contradict your fundamental beliefs. How would you react?

Daniel and his friends reacted with humble obedience. Even in the seemingly small matters, like eating the correct foods, Daniel and his friends desired to obey God and remain faithful to Him. Daniel and his friends decided they would stick to the diets prescribed in the Law instead of indulging in the king’s food, regardless of the consequences. Like Jesus in His time of temptation, Daniel and his friends realized that “man does not live by bread alone.” These young men trusted God to honor their obedience, and that is exactly what God did by giving them wisdom beyond their years.

As you teach kids this story, help them see how obedience to God is always better than following the ways of the world and how Jesus provides Christians with the Holy Spirit to help them obey God. Remind kids that we can glorify God in the small everyday choices we make and in everything we do.



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

Find food

- toy food items
- large bowl

Tell the Bible story

- "Daniel Obeyed God" video (optional)

Review the Bible story

- Bible Story Picture Poster
- large bowl

Learn and practice the key passage phrase

- Key Passage Phrase Marker



LOVE

Taste vegetables

- assorted whole vegetables
- assorted cut vegetables

Cut out pictures of healthy foods

- grocery advertisements



LIVE

Painting with vegetables

- "Key Passage Phrase Labels" printable
- assorted cut vegetables
- washable paint
- disposable plates
- art smocks

Missions activity

- "Welcome to Europe" missions video
- world map or globe

Snack and transition

- hand sanitizer (optional)
- "Choose Vegetables" activity page, 1 per child
- Big Picture Cards for Families



BONUS

Say the key passage phrase

- Key Passage Phrase Marker

Cook vegetables

- toy food items
- pots and pans
- cooking utensils
- toy kitchen (optional)

Find and match plates

- sticky notes, 5
- disposable plates, 5



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 big picture question 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?** The answer was found in our hidden envelope. **We can glorify God by loving and obeying Him. DANIEL FOLLOWED GOD, AND GOD MADE HIM WISE.** ”

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





LEARN the Bible Story

1 FIND FOOD

Place toy food items around the classroom. Encourage preschoolers to find a piece of food and bring it to group time. Assist preschoolers as needed so that everyone brings a food item to the group. Invite preschoolers to place their food in the large bowl.

SAY “The king gave Daniel and his friends food and drinks from his kitchen, but Daniel knew that eating this food wasn’t what God wanted. Daniel listened to God even in the small things, like what he ate. **We can glorify God by loving and obeying Him. DANIEL FOLLOWED GOD, AND GOD MADE HIM WISE.**”

2 TELL THE BIBLE STORY

Open your Bible to Daniel 1. Tell the Bible story using the following summary. You may choose to review the Bible story by showing the video.

DANIEL OBEYED GOD

SAY “King Nebuchadnezzar went to Judah and took some special things from God’s temple. He took some smart and strong young men to his palace. One of these men was named Daniel. The king wanted Daniel and his friends to learn how to live in his country, Babylon, so they could work for him.

The king gave them food and drinks from his kitchen, but Daniel knew eating this food wasn’t what God wanted. So, Daniel asked the king’s helper if they could eat something else.

The helper liked Daniel, but he was afraid the king might get mad if Daniel and his friends did not look healthy. Daniel said, “Let us eat vegetables and drink water for ten days and then see how we look.” The helper agreed.

After ten days, Daniel and his friends looked healthier than everyone else, so the helper let them keep eating the food that God said was okay.

God was happy with Daniel and his friends for listening to Him. He made them very smart, and He helped Daniel understand dreams. When the king talked to them, he saw they were the best and made them his special helpers.”

Christ Connection: Daniel listened to God even in small things, like what he ate. Jesus listened to God in everything. When we trust Jesus, God sees us as if we lived a perfect life, just like Jesus did.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

3 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

Display the Bible Story Picture Poster. Invite preschoolers to take a piece of food from the bowl as they answer a question about the story. Questions may include: Who did the king take to his palace? (Daniel and his friends) Did God want Daniel to eat the king's food? (no) What did Daniel ask to eat and drink? (vegetables and water) Did Daniel and his friends look healthier than everyone else? (yes)

SAY “ Daniel asked to eat vegetables and drink water instead of eating the king's food. **DANIEL FOLLOWED GOD, AND GOD MADE HIM WISE.** Daniel listened to God even in the small things, like what he ate. Jesus listened to God in everything. When we trust Jesus, God sees us as if we lived a perfect life, just like Jesus did. ”

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. Invite preschoolers to do the following motions when saying the key passage phrase: Do everything (tap fists together, one on top of another) for the glory (wave hands in the air) of God (point upward). 1 Corinthians 10:31. Say the key passage phrase together several times.

SAY “ **How can we glorify God? We can glorify God by loving and obeying Him.** Daniel listened to God and obeyed Him even in small things, like what he ate. ”

6 PRAY

Pray, asking God to help us follow and obey Him, even in the small things like Daniel did.

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God because of what we learned

1 LISTEN AND OBEY

Invite preschoolers to play a listening game with you. Give simple commands that preschoolers can easily follow such as touch your toes, jump three times, or blink your eyes. To make the game more of a challenge, vary the volume of your voice with each command. Encourage preschoolers to listen closely and obey the command. Invite preschoolers to take turns giving commands to their friends, as well.

SAY “You had to listen closely and obey the commands I gave you. Daniel listened to God and obeyed what He said about the foods he should eat in the king’s palace. Daniel listened to God even in small things, like what he ate. God was happy with Daniel and his friends for listening to Him. He made them very smart, and He helped Daniel understand dreams. **DANIEL FOLLOWED GOD, AND GOD MADE HIM WISE.**”

2 TASTE VEGETABLES

Before the session, cut various vegetables into small pieces for preschoolers to taste. Be mindful of choking hazards. Post an Allergy Alert at the door listing the vegetables children will be tasting. Invite preschoolers to join you at the table. Show the preschoolers each of the whole vegetables they will be tasting. Describe their color, shape, and texture. Offer preschoolers an opportunity to taste each vegetable.

SAY “We were able to explore and taste several different vegetables. Did you try a new vegetable today? Which one was your favorite? Daniel and his friends were taken to Babylon. The king gave them food and drinks from his kitchen, but Daniel knew that eating this food wasn’t what God wanted. Daniel and his friends asked to eat vegetables and drink water. After ten days, Daniel and his friends looked healthier than everyone else. Daniel listened to God even in the small things, like what he ate.”

3 CUT OUT PICTURES OF HEALTHY FOODS

Place grocery advertisements and blunt-tipped scissors on the table. Invite preschoolers to look through the pictures and point out the healthy foods they see. Talk about foods that you like to eat. Encourage preschoolers to cut out pictures of healthy foods they like to eat. Assist preschoolers with cutting as needed.

SAY “You found several pictures of food. Some foods are healthy and some are not as healthy. Daniel and his friends were taken to the king’s palace. They were offered food and drinks from the king’s kitchen but Daniel asked if they could eat vegetables and drink water. Daniel knew the other food was not what God wanted. Daniel listened to God even in small things, like what he ate. After ten days of eating the vegetables and drinking the water, Daniel and his friends looked healthier than everyone else. God was happy with Daniel and his friends for listening to Him. **DANIEL FOLLOWED GOD, AND GOD MADE HIM WISE.**”

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





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE for God out of love

1 PAINTING WITH VEGETABLES



Post an Allergy Alert listing the vegetables you will be using to paint. Assist preschoolers with placing an art smock over their clothing. Pour a small amount of washable paint onto a paper plate. Distribute plates with paint and cut vegetables to children. Demonstrate how to use the vegetables as stamps by dipping them into the paint and then onto a piece of construction paper. 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. We bring glory to God by loving and obeying Him. Daniel and his friends obeyed God when they ate vegetables like God said instead of the food at the king’s palace. ”

2 MISSIONS ACTIVITY

Point to Europe on a world map or globe. Show the “Welcome to Europe” missions video. Following the video, pray for Dan and Tara as they start more churches in England. Pray that churches in the United States will help support these new churches in England.

SAY “ Dan and Tara Byrd helped start churches in England to tell people about Jesus. It can be hard to tell people about Jesus in Manchester, England, where Dan and Tara are missionaries. Many people in the area do not think they need to know about Jesus. Dan hopes to support churches by connecting them to churches in the United States who can help them in their work. ”

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 listened to God even in small things, like what he ate. Jesus listened to God in everything. When we trust Jesus, God sees us as if we lived a perfect life, just like Jesus did. ”

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 FAVORITE FOODS

Ask children to tell you their favorite foods as they come to group time. Tell preschoolers that Daniel and his friends asked to eat vegetables and drink water when they were at the king's house.

2 TALK ABOUT THE BIBLE STORY

Open the Bible to Daniel 1. Use the summarized points below to talk about the Bible story.

DANIEL OBEYED GOD

- King Nebuchadnezzar took special things from God's temple and some young men, including Daniel, to Babylon to learn and work for him.
- Daniel knew the king's food was not what God wanted him to eat, so he asked to eat vegetables and drink water instead.
- The king's helper was worried but agreed to test them for ten days. Daniel and his friends looked healthier than the others.
- God was pleased with Daniel and his friends for obeying Him and made them very smart, helping Daniel understand dreams. The king made them his special helpers.

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 several times as you march out the syllables.

5 PRAY

Pray, asking God to help us make wise choices and obey Him.



TEACHING HOUR

BONUS Teaching Hour Activities

6 WHO HAS THE VEGETABLE?



Cut a vegetable shape out of construction paper. Invite preschoolers to sit in a line, all facing the same direction, and place their hands behind their backs. Walk behind the children and place the paper vegetable in one child's hand while everyone sings the key passage phrase song. Encourage preschoolers to keep their eyes facing forward so they cannot see who has the vegetable. Take turns guessing who has the vegetable. Invite preschoolers to take turns placing the vegetable in a friend's hand.

SAY “ Daniel and his friends were taken to Babylon to work for the king. They were offered food and drinks from his kitchen, but Daniel knew that eating this food wasn't what God wanted. Daniel and his friends ate vegetables and drank water instead. After ten days, they looked healthier than everyone else. God was happy with Daniel and his friends for listening to Him. **DANIEL FOLLOWED GOD, AND GOD MADE HIM WISE.** ”

7 COOK VEGETABLES

Place pots, pans, wooden spoons, spatulas, and toy food out for preschoolers to explore. Encourage children to pretend to cook different vegetables. Talk about the foods you like to eat and how you prepare them. Ask preschoolers if they have ever tried certain vegetables.

SAY “ There are many different ways to prepare and cook vegetables. Daniel and his friends chose to eat vegetables and drink water when they were at the king's palace because they knew that was what God wanted. God was happy with Daniel and his friends for listening to Him. **DANIEL FOLLOWED GOD, AND GOD MADE HIM WISE.** ”

8 FIND AND MATCH PLATES

Draw a circle, square, rectangle, triangle, and heart shape on five individual paper plates. Draw the same shapes on five individual sticky notes. Arrange the sticky notes on the table and hide the paper plates throughout the room. Encourage preschoolers to find the plates. Once a child finds a plate, encourage him to match the shape on the plate with the shape on the sticky note.

SAY “ You found all the plates and matched them as well. We use plates to hold our food at mealtimes. Daniel and his friends ate vegetables for their meals. The king offered them food from his kitchen, but Daniel knew that eating this food wasn't what God wanted. God was happy with Daniel and his friends for listening to Him. He made them very smart. **DANIEL FOLLOWED GOD, AND GOD MADE HIM WISE.** ”

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