



Unit 16 | Session 2

DANIEL WAS FAITHFUL

Daniel 1

When Jehoiakim was the king of Judah, Babylon's king, Nebuchadnezzar, went with his army to Judah. Because God's people had sinned against Him, God allowed King Nebuchadnezzar to take over the city of Jerusalem.

King Nebuchadnezzar's leaders gathered a group of young men from among the Israelites and brought them to Babylon. The king wanted people who were healthy, handsome, and good learners to serve in his palace. Every day, King Nebuchadnezzar gave the young men special meals. They ate the same food and drank the same drinks that the king ate and drank. They would be trained for three years. Then they would be ready to serve the king.

Four of the young men from Judah were different from the others in the group. They worshiped the Lord, the one true God. Their names were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. The man in charge of the group gave them new Babylonian names.

Even though Daniel and his friends weren't in Judah anymore, Daniel wanted to be faithful to God. God's laws told Daniel what he could and could not eat. Daniel was not allowed to eat some of the food that the king gave the young men. Daniel asked the

man in charge for permission to eat other foods. Daniel said, "Try this for 10 days. Let us eat only vegetables and drink only water. Then see if we are healthier than the other young men."

The guard agreed. At the end of 10 days, Daniel and his friends looked healthier than the young men who had eaten the king's food. After that, the guard allowed Daniel and his friends to keep drinking water and eating vegetables.

God was happy that Daniel obeyed Him. God blessed Daniel and his friends. He made them wise and smart. They learned lots of new things. God gave Daniel the ability to understand visions and dreams.

When their training was over, Daniel and his friends stood before the king. The king saw that they were smarter and stronger than all the other young men. They were even smarter than the wise men who worked for the king. Daniel served the king for many years.

Christ Connection: Daniel was faithful to God, and God blessed him. In an even greater way, Jesus was always faithful to God. He came to earth and followed God's plan to save sinners. Those who trust in Jesus receive God's forgiveness and blessing.



1 WELCOME TIME

Greet each preteen as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

- **Has there ever been a time that you made a choice to obey?**
- **Was it hard to do? What happened?**

2 SESSION STARTER

OPTION 1: BE FAITHFUL



Before the session, write down commands on the sticky side of the sticky notes. Some examples include: *Clean your room when asked; Make fun of someone; Lie to your parents; Help someone in need.* Create enough sticky notes for each kid and place the sticky notes on a wall.

Form kids into a single file line. On the count of three, send the first kid to the wall to get a sticky note. Lead the kid to discuss whether the command will honor God or if it will not. Continue sending kids to get a sticky note until everyone has had a turn..

SAY “ It’s not always easy to be faithful and obey God. Sometimes we are not faithful. Thankfully, God is always faithful. In our Bible story today, we will learn about a time Daniel was faced with a choice of whether or not he would be faithful to God. ”

OPTION 2: MEMORY GAME

Before the session, print out matching pairs of photos of different foods such as candy, vegetables, meat, cake, etc. Mix up the photos and lay them picture side down on the floor in a grid.

Instruct kids to work together to find each pair of foods. When all of the matching pairs have been found, ask the kids which foods they would want to eat and why.

SAY “ Do you think you could only eat vegetable for 10 days? Would it be hard to do? In our story today, Daniel was faithful to obey God and only eat vegetables for 10 days. Let’s read our Bible story to learn why Daniel made this choice. ”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY

The Bible tells us what is true about God and about ourselves. All of the stories in the Bible fit together to tell us the big story of how God rescues sinners through His Son, Jesus.

Today we are going to hear about how Daniel was faithful. Whether this is your first time or your tenth time hearing this story, there is always something new to learn in God's Word.

Read from Daniel 1.

•What does this story teach us about God?

God honors our faithfulness to Him. God was pleased with Daniel's decision to trust Him and obey His commands. He blessed Daniel and his friends by making them stronger, healthier, and wiser than the other young men when they chose to obey Him.

•How did the faithfulness of Daniel and his friends show they loved God?

Daniel firmly made up his mind to not disobey God. This revealed that Daniel's heart was set on God above all else. Daniel loved God more than other things, like delicious foods or following the ways of the king of Babylon.

Form groups of two or three and practice retelling the Bible story in your own words. Think of someone you could share the story with this week.

CHRIST CONNECTION

Daniel was faithful to God, and God blessed him. In an even greater way, Jesus was always faithful to God. He came to earth and followed God's plan to save sinners. Those who trust in Jesus receive God's forgiveness and blessing.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

2 MISSIONS MOMENT

Explain to the kids that almost half of Vancouver residents speak neither English nor French as their first languages, although those are the two main languages spoken in Canada. Tell kids that almost one-third of the people who live in Vancouver are of Chinese heritage. Lead kids to understand that many kinds of churches are needed in Vancouver because the people who live there are so diverse. Tell kids that God has called people to start new churches in Vancouver to tell the hundreds of thousands of people who live there about Jesus.

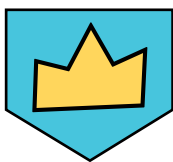
3 PRAY

Dear Lord, You are always faithful no matter what. Like Daniel, help us to be faithful to You in all circumstances. We love You. Amen.

THE GOSPEL

GOD'S PLAN FOR ME

The gospel is the good news, the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use Scripture and the guide provided below to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.



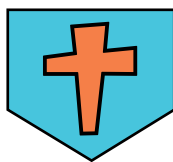
GOD RULES.

Ask: "Who is in charge at home?" Explain that because God created everything, He is in charge of everything. Read Revelation 4:11.



WE SINNED.

Ask: "Have you ever done something wrong?" Tell kids that everyone sins, or disobeys God. Our sin separates us from God. Read Romans 3:23.



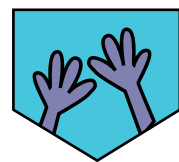
GOD PROVIDED.

Explain that God is holy and must punish sin. God sent His Son, Jesus, to take the punishment we deserve. Read John 3:16.



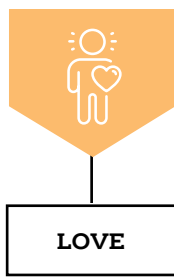
JESUS GIVES.

Ask: "What is the best gift you've ever received?" Say that Jesus took our punishment for sin by giving His life, and He gives us His righteousness. God sees us as if we lived the perfect life Jesus lived. This is the best gift ever! Read 2 Corinthians 5:21.



WE RESPOND.

Explain that everyone has a choice to make. Ask: "Will you trust Jesus as your Savior and Lord? You can turn from self and sin and turn to Jesus." Read Romans 10:9-10.



THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

1 THINK ABOUT THE STORY

- **Is it OK to not always fit in with others? Why?**
- **How can you be a friend to others who are different from you?**

2 GROUP DISCUSSION

Distribute Bibles. Guide preteens to open their Bibles to Daniel 1. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Daniel 1:8,17. Remind preteens that when Daniel and his friends were offered the king's food, they ask for permission to eat only vegetables and drink water because they wanted to obey God. Remind kids that being faithful and obedient to God, even while in captivity, gave them greater satisfaction than following the ways of Babylon. Tell kids that obedience to God is an act of worship and God honored their faithfulness to Him.

Choose another volunteer to read aloud Daniel 1:8,17 again. Then lead the group to discuss the following questions.

1. **When were you faced with the choice to obey God or follow the ways of the world?**

Answers will vary. Lead kids to think about how our culture is often in opposition to God's Word. Encourage kids to look for ways to be faithful to God in all areas of life. Remind kids that God is always with them and will help them be faithful. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Ps. 119:30-32.)

2. **What was God's response to Daniel's faithfulness and obedience?**

Remind kids that God was pleased and He blessed Daniel and his friends for their faithfulness. Lead kids to understand that God blesses our faithfulness too. Discuss how God's blessings do not always mean that we will be given the same gifts as Daniel, but that we can trust that God does not withhold good from those who love Him. Encourage kids to remember that Jesus is our greatest blessing. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Ps. 101:6.)

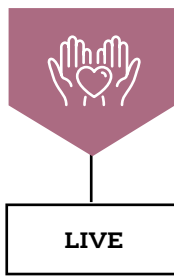
3. **How was Jesus faithful to God?**

Discuss how Jesus is the perfect example of faithfulness to God. Remind kids that Jesus willingly obeyed God's plan to die on the cross to save sinners. Encourage kids to remember that because of Jesus' faithfulness we can be saved from our sin. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Phil. 2:8.)

BIG PICTURE QUESTION

Where is God?

God is in all places at all times and is always with His people.



THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

1 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY

Instruct kids to open their Bibles to Zephaniah 3:17. Lead them in reading the key passage aloud together. Before the session, write a few words of the key passage on individual cups. Stack the cups in random order. Instruct the kids to unstack the cups and then stack them in order of the key passage.

Remind kids that through our story today, not only do we see an example of faithfulness through Daniel's life, but we are pointed to Jesus' faithfulness to God. Tell kids that just like Daniel was faithful to God, Jesus was faithful to God in even greater ways.

2 PRAY

Invite volunteers to share prayer requests. Then pray, thanking God for being faithful to bring salvation through Jesus.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

DRAW IT

Pair kids with a partner and give each pair a blindfold, a piece of paper, and pencil. Choose a kid from each pair to draw a vegetable blindfolded. Whisper the name of a vegetable to the blindfolded kids to draw. Instruct their partners to guess what vegetable is being drawn.

Switch roles and lead the kids to complete the activity again. Invite kids to share their drawing with the class and see if any of the vegetables are recognizable.

Discuss how drawing blindfolded is hard and can be frustrating. Remind kids that like Daniel and his friends, Jesus was faithful and obedient to God even when it was hard. Explain that Daniel was faithful to obey God when he was in Babylon. Remind kids that Jesus was faithful to God by living a sinless life and dying on the cross for the sins of others. Encourage kids with the truth that because of Jesus' faithfulness to us we can now be faithful to God.