**Full Lesson November 12**

**Bible Teaching: Fiery Furnace**

**Bible Passage: Daniel 3**

# **Bible Teaching Summary**

When Babylon captured the Israelites, they took the best and brightest Israelite young men to Babylon to train them in their ways. Daniel and his friends chose to honor God and they stood out among all the rest. King Nebuchadnezzar built a giant gold statue. He commanded that when the people heard the music, they should bow and worship the statue. Whoever didn’t would be thrown into a fiery furnace. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego refused to worship something other than God. When this was reported to the king, he gave them one more chance. They still refused and they were thrown in the furnace. When Nebuchadnezzar checked on them, he saw a fourth man in the fire with them.

**brite\* Idea: God is with us.**

**Memory Verse: Psalm 99:3**

Let them praise Your great and awesome name! Holy is He!

**Focus Verses: Isaiah 41:10, Romans 8:38-39, 1 Timothy 1:17**

**He Question: Why can't we see God?**

God is spirit which means He is invisible, but He is everywhere and with everyone. Even though we can't see Him, we can see His work in the world.

**We Question: What can we do when we are afraid?**

We can trust and know that God is with us and we can talk to God through prayer and ask Him to help us know what to do.

**Me Question: What does God want me to know about Him and what does this mean for me?**

Kids will be given the opportunity to reflect on the truth they learned about God and respond accordingly.

# **Leader Tips: Modeling Prayer**

As a leader, you have an opportunity to model a life of prayer through the examples you share as well as the prayer times you facilitate. Kids benefit from hearing about your own personal experiences with prayer. Share examples that highlight interacting with God in a variety of ways (worship, gratitude, confession, intercession, lament, etc.) This helps reinforce that the kids can meet with God anytime about anything. During group times, you can also model these types of prayer. Lead prayers of different lengths and about different topics. Use language that is accessible to kids. When there are group prayer times, participate along with the kids and go first if needed to help get them started. Also, provide times during prayer for the group to listen for what God might be trying to say to them. By modeling a robust prayer life, you help kids to get a picture of what this could look like for them.

# **Navigating a Broken World: Persecution**

Over 360 million Christians experience significant persecution in the countries in which they live, including facing kidnapping, jail and even loss of life.\* Just like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, believers around the world risk their lives by following the one true God. American children are not facing this level of persecution, but our post-Christian culture is certainly less friendly to believers. Because reality will increase as culture continues on this pathway, our challenge to build resilient disciples is so crucial. In today’s lesson, kids will see that Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego stayed true to their faith even when it made life much harder for them. You can help kids see that God uses persecution to point others towards Him. In the story, Nebuchadnezzar ends up believing in and praising God. Around the world the church is growing in countries of persecution.

**https://www.cato.org/commentary/christianity-worlds-most-persecuted-religion-confirms-new-report**

**Large Group Experiences Overview**

**Welcome:**

*Supplies Needed: Video player*

**Find it in the Bible:**

*Supplies Needed: Bible, teaching slides*

**Bible Teaching:**

*Supplies Needed: Bible, fan, red, orange, and/or yellow crepe paper, large empty boxes, music players*

**Bible Teaching Review:**

*Supplies Needed: Bible, teaching slides*

**Bible Teaching Wrap-Up:**

*Supplies Needed: Bible, teaching slides*

**SPLASH FLOW**

Note: Advance slide at hi lighted lines

Theme Slide

**Kid’s Enter**

Welcome and encourage to play games/interact with other kids and teachers

**Gather kids into their age groups**

Do the “Belong” activity with the 2 groups

Play Countdown **when groups are winding down with their “Belong” activity and gather them into the main teaching area**

**Quick Welcome, ask to stand up, then Play worship videos**

Video: “Praise”

Video: “Same God”

Offering

Theme Slide

**Ask all to sit, then teach through “Bible Teaching” section below**

**Welcome Activity**

**Supplies:** Video player

**Prep:** Select two kids to come to the front or have every kid do this from their spot.

**Say:** I have a challenge for you today. I want you to sit on the ground with your feet flat in front of you. Without putting your hands on the ground or moving your feet, I need you to stand straight up.

*Allow kids to try several times unsuccessfully.*

**Say:** Trying to do that alone was tough. Let’s try a different way. Sit down with a partner. Sit back-to-back and link elbows. Now try to stand up.

*Allow kids to try and there should be more success, though it may take them a couple of minutes to figure it out.*

**Say:** That worked so much easier than when you were trying to do it alone. We are going to talk about that more today, but first let’s see what’s happening on Adventure Island.

**Intro Video**

*Play the Intro video, then follow the script below****.***

**Say:** Pat had to face one of his biggest fears to find the next clue! Pat was really afraid of going up into the Canopy Zone.

**Ask:** What is something that you have been afraid to do?

**Say:** We all face scary circumstances sometimes. Today’s Brite idea reminds us that we are not alone when we are afraid, God is with us.

**Today we will answer these two questions:**

Why can’t we see God?

What can we do when we are afraid?

**And at the end of our time today, the question you will be able to answer is:**

What does God want me to know about Him and what does this mean for me?

**Find It in the Bible**

**What is the Bible?**

The Bible is real and true. God gave us the Bible so that we could know Him. The Bible is filled with many books and stories, but it’s all a part of one BIG story—God’s Story.

**What is God’s Bigger Story?**

**Creation:** God is the Creator of all things, and He is very good.

**Fall:** Adam and Eve sinned and disobeyed God. Sin broke the world and people were separated from God. All people have sinned so the relationship with God is broken for each of us.

**Redemption:** People could not fix their sin problem on their own. God promised all throughout the Old Testament that He would send a Rescuer, a Messiah, to save the people from their sin. He sent His Son, Jesus. Jesus lived a perfect life and died on the cross to take the punishment for our sins.

**Restoration:** When we trust in Jesus as our Savior, our relationship with God can be made right again. We don’t do anything to earn it and we don’t deserve it. God restores us through His grace. One day, Jesus will return and restore the whole broken world, making it new again.

**Play “These Are The Books Of The Bible” Song video**

**The video can be viewed at this link:**   
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OwDywQ5qaqM> or on our Brite page.

**Where is today’s Bible story?**

Today’s story is in the book of Daniel. Daniel is one of the books of the major prophets in the Old Testament. The stories of Daniel happen before Jesus came. After God created the world and Adam and Eve sinned, He promised Abraham to make his family great and to give them a great land. God kept His promise and made a great nation out of the Israelites, but they didn’t honor God. The nation divided in two and was taken over by great enemies. The book of Daniel tells us some of what happened in the land of these enemies.

*Open a Bible and show the kids the title page for the book of Daniel. Then show them how to get to today’s Bible passage (Daniel 3).*

**Bible Teaching: Fiery Furnace**

**Bible Passage: Daniel 3**

**Supplies:** Bible**,** fan, red, orange, and/or yellow crepe paper, large empty boxes, music players

**Prep:** Ensure you have a wide-open space in your room today. At one end of the room, place the fan. Tie or tape some short crepe paper pieces to it so when it’s turned on, the fan will blow the crepe paper to look like a burning fire. During the lesson, wait to turn on the fan until directed. Instead of doing this as a whole group, you could bring three kids up front and act it out with just them.

*To begin, have kids gather at the end of the room opposite where the fan was placed.*

**Say:** Just like Isaiah had prophesied, Judah was overtaken by Babylon and God’s people were taken captive. Babylon chose some of the strongest, smartest, and most handsome young men from Judah and took them away from their homes and back to Babylon to train them in the Babylonian ways.

*Have the adult leaders pretend to be “Babylonians,” taking captive each of the kids and then leading them into the center of the room. Have adult leaders lead kids in doing some exercises to “train” them, such as jumping jacks and arm rotations.*

**Say:** This group of young men included Daniel and three of his friends. His friends were given new names - Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. They honored God in this foreign land and followed His ways. Because they honored Him, God showed His favor on the four men. They stood out among all of the young men and were given special privileges and honor.

*Have kids raise one hand and wave like they are in a parade.*

**Say:** Daniel went to work in the king’s court and Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were sent to serve in other places. One day, King Nebuchadnezzar built a massive, 90 foot tall, golden statue and made a frightening announcement.

*Pile the boxes high in the center of the room.*

**Read Daniel 3:4-6 directly from the Bible,** *And the herald proclaimed aloud, “You are commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages,* *that when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, you are to fall down and worship the golden image that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up. And whoever does not fall down and worship shall immediately be cast into a burning fiery furnace.”*

*Point toward the fan. Play non-worship music.*

**Say:** The music played and everyone bowed down.

*Have a couple adult leaders show how the Babylonians might have bowed. Encourage kids not to bow.*

**Say:** Everyone except for Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. They refused to worship something other than the one true God. Some of the other leaders realized what they were doing and reported them to King Nebuchadnezzar. The king was furious and ordered that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego be brought before him.

*Have the “Babylonians”—the adult leaders—lead kids near the fan.*

**Say:** When they were before him, the King asked, “Is it true that you will not serve my gods or worship my golden image? If you don’t you will be thrown into the fiery furnace. And what god will deliver you from that?”

*Have the “Babylonians” make a shuddering noise.*

**Read Daniel 3:16-18 directly from the Bible,** *Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered and said to the king, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. If this be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up.”*

*Teach kids the following chant, repeating it several times. If time allows, have kids make up motions to go along with the chant.*

*No! No! We won’t bow!*

*God will save us!*

*Yes, He will!*

**Say:** This made Nebuchadnezzar even angrier. He ordered that the furnace be turned up 7 times hotter.

*Turn on the fan.*

**Say:** Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were tied up and thrown inside.

*Have the “Babylonians” gather kids and guide them closer to the “fire.” Have them pretend to shut a big door and make a loud creaking sound and locking sound as they do.* Pause for about 10 seconds.

**Say:** After a few minutes, Nebuchadnezzar checked on them.

**Read Daniel 3:25 directly from the Bible,** *He answered and said, “But I see four men unbound, walking in the midst of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods.”*

*Have “Babylonians” pretend to open the door and lead the kids out. Play a worship song, possibly even “Hallelujah Chorus.”*

**Say:** When Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego came out of the furnace they were completely unharmed. They didn’t even smell like smoke. God was with them in the fire and had rescued them. King Nebuchadnezzar praised God and made a new law that no one could speak badly of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego’s God.

*Invite kids to knock over the “statue”—piled boxes. And then have them chant, “God’s the only one!”*

**POINT TO JESUS**

Who was in the fire with the three guys? Some people believe it was an angel. Some people believe it was Jesus Himself. There are several places in the Old Testament that scholars believe may have been Jesus appearing on earth before He came as a baby. Either way, we know God was with them. Just like God was present in the fire with Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, Jesus stepped down to be with us in our broken world. Not only did He join us here, but He paid the price for our sins, making it possible for us to live forever with Him.

**Bible Teaching: Review**

**Supplies:** Bible, teaching slides

**Prep:** None

**Watch the Bible Story Review Video and then play the game below.**

**Read each question. Kids can run in place if their answer is true and pretend to swim if their answer is false. Discuss each question.**

1. The Babylonians took away the smallest and weakest Israelite men. (False)

*They took the strongest, smartest, and most handsome young men. Their goal was to train them in the Babylonian ways, which was a culture that didn’t follow the Lord.*

1. King Nebuchadnezzar made a giant statue out of silver. (False)

*The statue was made of gold and was 90 feet tall. He instructed the people to worship it whenever they heard the music.*

1. When the music played, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego bowed down to the statue like everyone else. (False)

*The guys refused to bow down and worship something other than the Lord. Some others reported them to the king and he was angry.*

1. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego said God would protect them and even if He didn’t, they still wouldn’t bow down. (True)

*They knew God was with them. They knew God could protect them, but even if He chose not to, it didn’t change what they would do. They chose to do the right thing and trust God.*

1. When the king looked in, he saw four people walking around the fire. (True)

*Though three men were thrown in, the king saw four. He described the fourth as looking like a son of the gods. When the three guys came out, they were unharmed and didn’t even smell like smoke.*

1. We can’t see God because He is spirit. (True)

*God is spirit which means He is invisible, but He is everywhere and with everyone. Even though we can't see Him, we can see His work in the world.*

1. When we are afraid it’s not safe to trust God because we don’t know what He will do. (False)

*When we are afraid, we can trust that God is with us and we can do the right thing no matter what. We can pray and talk to Him.*

**Bible Teaching: Wrap-Up**

**The brite\* idea for the day is:** God is with us.

**Memory Verse:**

Choose an older kid to look up the verse and read it aloud to the group. Have the whole group repeat it together.

*Let them praise Your great and awesome name! Holy is He! Psalm 99:3*

**Teaching Wrap-Up**

**He Question:** Why can't we see God?

God is spirit which means He is invisible, but He is everywhere and with everyone. Even though we can't see Him, we can see His work in the world.

**We Question:** What can we do when we are afraid?

We can trust and know that God is with us and we can talk to God through prayer and ask Him to help us know what to do.

**Prayer**

God, thank You for always being with us. When we face tough times, help us remember You are there. If we face times where we have to stand up for believing in You, I pray that You will help us trust You and be bold. Amen.

**Small Group Wrap-Up**

**Supplies Needed:** Take-Home page (1 per kid), writing utensils

**Prep:** None

**Me Question – Older Kids**

**Say:** We are going to take a few minutes to think about what we have learned today about Jesus. God wants us to love Him even more as we learn more about who He is.

*Pass out the Take-Home page. Instruct kids to think about what they’ve learned about God today and draw/write an answer to, “What does this mean for my life?”*

**Choose Your Challenge**

**Say:** We want to respond to God and remember what He has taught us today. During the coming week we also want to use what He’s taught us. As we become more like Jesus, our lives change!

*Read the challenges from the Take-Home page aloud. Ask kids to mark which one they want to choose for this week.*

**Prayer:** God, thank You for everything You have shown us about who You are today! Thank You for always being with us and showing us You are in the world around us. Be with us this week and allow us to remember to be bold and to stand up for what You have taught us is right!

**Say Goodbye**

*Tell kids goodbye and thank them for being a part of your group.*

* *As kids wait to be picked up, encourage them to complete the activities on the back of the Take-Home page. As kids work, ask relationship-building questions, such as, “What are you looking forward to this week?” or “What do you do for fun?”*
* ***As parents pick up their kids, look for opportunities to connect with them, pointing out the Take-Home page their kid is bringing home.***

**As time permits…**

**Gather kids into their 2 age groups**

Do the “Believing” activity with the 2 groups

AND/OR

*Do the “Becoming” activity with the 2 groups DEPENDING UPON TIME AVAILABLE*

***HAND OUT TAKE HOME SHEETS at end of class***

**Older Kids Small Group Experiences Overview**

**Belong**: (Choose One)

**Do As I Do:** Kids will follow the actions of a mystery leader. Can one kid in the middle find out who everyone is following?

**Learning Styles: Move, Solve**

*Supplies Needed: None*

**Take a Stand:** Kids will share different things that they love with the group by standing up to show what their favorite things are.

**Learning Styles: Move, Talk**

*Supplies Needed: Printable page*

**Believe:** (Choose One)

**Luck of the Draw:** In small groups, kids will draw a card with a word from the verse. They will recite the verse up to the word that they drew.

**Learning Styles: Solve, Talk**

*Supplies Needed: Bibles, printable page*

**World View:** Kids will view different pictures of places around the world. They will look for God's handiwork in each of the places.

**Learning Styles: Create, Talk**

*Supplies Needed: Bible, printable pages*

**Become:** (Choose One)

**How to Face the Fire:** Kids will rotate through stations and discover verses about how God is with us when we are afraid. Kids will pray using these verses.

**Learning Styles: Move, Write**

*Supplies Needed: Printable pages, unlined paper, scissors, stapler, writing utensils*

**Odd Man Out:** Kids will reflect on a time when they've felt excluded for a choice they made and discuss how we see God in these times.

**Learning Styles: Move, Talk**

*Supplies Needed: Bible*

**Small Group Wrap-Up:**

*Supplies Needed: Take-Home page, writing utensils*

**Older Kids Belonging Experience (Option 1)**

**Goal:** For kids to experience God’s love through a welcoming community

**Title:** Do As I Do

**Learning Styles:** Move, Solve

**Supplies:** None

**Prep:** None

**Instructions:**

1. Arrange kids to stand in a circle.
2. Choose one kid to be the detective and send them outside the room.
3. Choose one kid in the circle to be the leader.
4. The leader will lead the remaining kids in different actions: clapping, tapping their head, kicking their feet, etc.
5. Tell the remaining kids that they will follow the actions of the person that is the leader discreetly; trying their best not to be seen by the detective.
6. Invite the detective back into the middle of the circle. The detective will move around in the circle to try and find the person leading everyone’s actions.
7. Repeat the game as many times as desired.
8. **Discuss:** Who’s job do you think was the hardest – detective, leader, or follower? Why?
9. **Discuss:** What was the best part of your week? What was the worst part of your week?
10. **Discuss:** How did God use those experiences to grow you as a resilient disciple of Jesus?

**Activity Wrap-Up:** In our game, we all followed the guidance of our “secret” leader. Sometimes, in life, the people that lead us might not always ask us to do things that we agree with or things that we think are right. We’re going to learn about a few men who stood up against their leader today in order to follow God’s Word and do what was right.

**Older Kids Belonging Experience (Option 2)**

**Goal:** For kids to experience God’s love through a welcoming community

**Title:** Take a Stand

**Learning Styles:** Move, Talk

**Supplies:** Printable page

**Prep:** Have one copy of the printable page ready to facilitate the activity.

**Instructions:**

1. **Discuss:** What was the best part of your week? What was the worst part of your week?
2. **Discuss:** How did God use these experiences to grow you as a resilient disciple of Jesus?
3. Arrange kids in an area where they have space to move around as needed.
4. Read items off the printable page one at a time.
5. Instruct kids to stand if they agree with the statement read.
6. **Discuss**: Was it easy to stand up for the things that you liked?
7. **Discuss:** When was it hard to stand up for any of the statements?
8. **Discuss:** Did any of the statements we read make you think of something you’ve experienced before?

**Activity Wrap-Up:** The final statement in our activity was “If everyone around me is doing something I don’t think is right, it would be easy to have the courage to do the opposite.” Today, we are learning about a few men who did exactly that. They showed the courage to do what they knew would be the right thing to honor God, even though everyone around them was doing something different. This was certainly not an easy choice, but God chose to protect them.

**Older Kids Believing Experience (Option 1)**

**Goal:** For kids to discover who God is by engaging with the Bible

**Title:** Luck of the Draw

**Learning Styles:** Solve, Talk

**Supplies:** Bibles**,** printable page

**Prep:** Print the printable page and have one set of cards prepared for each small group.

**Instructions:**

1. Lead kids to find Psalm 99:3 in their Bible. Read the verse aloud together.
2. **Discuss:** How did the men in our story live out this verse?
3. **Discuss:** Why do you think they chose to worship God, who they can’t see, over a statue that they could see?
4. **Say:** Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego knew that even though they couldn’t see God with their eyes, they trusted that He was with them. They refused to worship a false god and chose to honor the true God, no matter what happened.
5. Divide kids into groups of 3-4.
6. Give each group of kids a set of cards.
7. One at a time, kids will pick a card from the deck. They will read the word on the card and recite the memory verse until they get to that word.
8. Repeat until all the cards have been used.
9. Have kids place all the cards in the right order and recite the verse when they have completed the activity.
10. **Read:** 1 Timothy 1:17.
11. **Discuss**: How can we trust that God is with us even if we can’t see Him?

**Activity Wrap-Up:** God is spirit which means He is invisible, but He is everywhere and with everyone. Even though we can't see Him, we can see His work in the world. We can trust that He is with us, just like He was with Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.

**Older Kids Believing Experience (Option 2)**

**Goal:** For kids to discover who God is by engaging with the Bible

**Title:** World View

**Learning Styles:** Create, Talk

**Supplies:** Bible**,** printable pages

**Prep:** Prepare each group's puzzle by having the printable page printed and cut.

**Instructions:**

1. **Read:** 1 Timothy 1:17.
2. **Discuss:** What does this verse tell us about God?
3. **Say:** God is invisible because He is spirit, but that doesn’t mean He is not here with us or that we can’t see evidence of Him everywhere we look.
4. Split kids into groups of 3-4.
5. Give each set of kids a picture puzzle and have groups work together to put their puzzle together.
6. Once puzzles are put together, instruct groups to look at the images and find the ways that they see evidence of God in them. (Remind them that God is the creator of all things and people.)
7. After a few minutes, allow groups to share the image that they made and the ways that they see evidence of God in the image.
8. **Discuss**: Even though we cannot see Him, God is always with us. How can we start to remind ourselves of that each day?
9. **Discuss:** Why do you think it’s important to remember that God is always with us? How does this help us stay close to Him?

**Activity Wrap-Up:** Even though we can’t see Him, God is always with us. Because He is such an amazing creator, He gave us reminders all around us. When you are feeling down or afraid, look for the reminders of who God is in the world around you. He’s always there!

**Becoming Discussion**

**Goal:** For kids to learn to follow Jesus by applying faith to their lives

**HOW CAN I KNOW THIS IS TRUE?**

**Discuss:** Some people aren’t sure God is real since bad things happen to good people. How can we know God is real regardless?

**Say:** Some people don’t believe in God because they don’t think He would allow bad things to happen to good people. Just as Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego faced the fiery furnace, one reason God allows bad things to happen is that they shape who we are on the inside (Rom 5:3-5; James 1:2-4). It is through hard times that we learn to be strong, kind, and closer to God. Just about all the positive character traits we need to have are developed only through hard times. Plus, God even promises to be with us in the middle of our hard times!

# 

# **BUT WHAT ABOUT … Persecution?**

**Discuss:** Have you heard about countries where people are treated badly for believing in Jesus?

**Discuss:** Why would people mistreat Christians?

**Discuss:** What does the Bible have to say about that?

**Say:** There are people all over the world who are hurt or put in jail because they believe in Jesus. Another word for this is “persecution.” In countries like North Korea, Iran, and Somalia, Christians are harmed every day. Most of us do not have to live in fear because we follow Christ, but we may encounter times where we are treated differently because of our faith or when we have to make some hard choices to honor Jesus when no one else is. In Matthew 5, Jesus says we are blessed when we are persecuted. He told the people that persecution happened to the Old Testament prophets and it would keep happening. We know people persecuted Jesus too. We can remember that God is with us. We can continue to live for Him and share His love because we are not alone, even if we are treated badly.

**Older Kids Becoming Experience (Option 1)**

**Goal:** For kids to learn to follow Jesus by applying faith to their lives

**Title:** How to Face the Fire

**Learning Styles:** Move, Write

**Supplies:** Printable pages, unlined paper, scissors, stapler, writing utensils

**Prep:** Have one copy of the verse card printable page printed, cut, and displayed around the room. Have one blank piece of paper to give to each kid.

**Instructions:**

1. **Discuss:** Can anyone think of a time they were afraid?
2. **Say:** We all have times when we are scared, whether it is a small thing like a thunderstorm outside or something major, like someone we love is sick. God’s Word reminds us that we can trust He is with us when we are facing something scary.
3. Place verse cards around the room.
4. Give each kid a blank piece of paper and a writing utensil.
5. Have kids fold their paper in half vertically and again horizontally. Kids can cut the creases at the top of the pages to make individual pages for a book.
6. Help kids staple their book on the remaining fold so the pieces stay together.
7. Allow kids time to rotate through each of the stations, taking notes on their printable page for each verse.
8. **Discuss:** Which verse did you like the most?
9. **Discuss**: What can these verses remind us we can do when we are afraid?
10. **Discuss:** How can you use these verses regularly, even when you’re not afraid?

**Activity Wrap-Up:** God is always with us. When we are afraid we can trust that He is close by. We can pray to Him. We can seek His wisdom on what to do in a tough situation. No matter what happens in life, we can know that God loves us and is with us.

**Older Kids Becoming Experience (Option 2)**

**Goal:** For kids to learn to follow Jesus by applying faith to their lives

**Title:** Odd Man Out

**Learning Styles:** Move, Talk

**Supplies:** Bible

**Prep:** None

**Instructions:**

1. Divide kids into partners.
2. Ask kids to reflect on a time when they felt excluded for a choice that they made.
3. Give kids a few minutes to share, then ask them to stand and rotate partners.
4. Repeat this process a few times.
5. Ask a few kids to share what made them feel excluded.
6. **Discuss:** Did being excluded make you want to change what you were doing?
7. **Discuss:** Did being excluded ever make you feel afraid?
8. **Read:** Hebrews 11:36-38.
9. **Discuss:** Who are these verses about?
10. **Say:** These verses are about things people experienced for following Jesus. Shadrach. Meshach, and Abednego were protected by God for standing up in their faith but they knew that might not be the case. They chose to do it “even if He doesn’t protect us.”
11. **Read: Romans 8:38-39.**
12. **Discuss:** How does this verse encourage us when we feel left out?
13. **Discuss:** How can you encourage yourself, and others, to be bold for Jesus when you don’t know what the outcome will be?

**Activity Wrap-Up:** It can be scary to think that we don’t know what will happen in this world. It can also be scary to step out and be different than those around us. No matter how scared we are, it is important to remember that God is always with us and He is working all things together for our good.

**Small Group Wrap-Up**

**Supplies Needed:** Take-Home page (1 per kid), writing utensils

**Prep:** None

**Me Question – Older Kids**

**Say:** We are going to take a few minutes to think about what we have learned today about Jesus. God wants us to love Him even more as we learn more about who He is.

*Pass out the Take-Home page. Instruct kids to think about what they’ve learned about God today and draw/write an answer to, “What does this mean for my life?”*

**Choose Your Challenge**

**Say:** We want to respond to God and remember what He has taught us today. During the coming week we also want to use what He’s taught us. As we become more like Jesus, our lives change!

*Read the challenges from the Take-Home page aloud. Ask kids to mark which one they want to choose for this week.*

**Prayer:** God, thank You for everything You have shown us about who You are today! Thank You for always being with us and showing us You are in the world around us. Be with us this week and allow us to remember to be bold and to stand up for what You have taught us is right!

**Say Goodbye**

*Tell kids goodbye and thank them for being a part of your group.*

* *As kids wait to be picked up, encourage them to complete the activities on the back of the Take-Home page. As kids work, ask relationship-building questions, such as, “What are you looking forward to this week?” or “What do you do for fun?”*
* *As parents pick up their kids, look for opportunities to connect with them, pointing out the Take-Home page their kid is bringing home.*

**Younger Kids Small Group Experiences Overview**

**Belong**: (Choose One)

**Item Mismatch:** Kids will review a set of items and find the one that doesn't belong.

**Learning Styles: Solve, Talk**

*Supplies Needed: Printable pages*

**King’s Commands:** Kids will follow the commands of the "king" in "Simon Says" style.

**Learning Styles: Move**

*Supplies Needed: None*

**Believe:** (Choose One)

**5 Senses Walk:** Kids will take note of what they see around them on a walk. How did God play a part in all the ways they take in the world?

**Learning Styles: Move, Write**

*Supplies Needed: Bible, printable page, writing utensils*

**Who Has the Mystery Item?:** Kids will practice their verse while passing around a mystery item. Can they guess who has it at the end?

**Learning Styles: Move**

*Supplies Needed: Bibles, one small object to be the mystery item*

**Become:** (Choose One)

**Four Corner Fears:** Kids will discover who shares common fears with them. After identifying their fears, they will pray for God to be with them as they face those fears.

**Learning Styles: Move, Talk**

*Supplies Needed: Printable pages, Bible*

**Picture Hunt:** Kids will hunt for pictures of events from the story. When they've found them all they will see who can put them in the correct order the fastest.

**Learning Styles: Move, Solve**

*Supplies Needed: Printable page, Bible, envelopes (one per group of 3-4)*

**Small Group Wrap-Up:**

*Supplies Needed: Take-Home page, writing utensils*

**Younger Kids Belonging Experience (Option 1)**

**Goal:** For kids to experience God’s love through a welcoming community

**Title:** Item Mismatch

**Learning Styles:** Solve, Talk

**Supplies:** Printable pages

**Prep:** Print one copy of the printable pages to display.

**Instructions:**

1. Greet kids.
2. **Discuss:** What was the best part of your week? What was the worst part of your week?
3. **Discuss:** How did God use those experiences to grow you as a resilient disciple of Jesus?
4. Have kids stand and say, “I’m going to show you a card with three items. One doesn’t belong. When you see the one that doesn’t belong, sit down as fast as you can.”
5. Display item cards to kids one at a time.
6. Choose the kid who sits down the fastest to identify the item in the set that doesn’t belong.
7. After the kids identify the item that doesn’t belong, ask “How did you know this item didn’t fit the group?”
8. Repeat the above steps until all the cards have been reviewed.
9. **Discuss:** Was there any time it was hard to pick out the mismatched item? Why or why not?
10. **Discuss:** Has there ever been a time when you felt like you didn’t belong?

**Activity Wrap-Up:** You guys were great at finding the item that didn’t match the group! Today, we’re learning about a group of men who stood out in their city. Everyone around them was following rules that they knew were not honoring God. Instead of following along, they chose to stand out and be different. God protected them through that brave choice.

**Younger Kids Belonging Experience (Option 2)**

**Goal:** For kids to experience God’s love through a welcoming community

**Title:** King’s Commands

**Learning Styles:** Move

**Supplies:** None

**Prep:** None

**Instructions:**

1. Greet kids.
2. **Discuss**: What was the best part of your week? What was the worst part of your week?
3. **Discuss:** How did God use those experiences to grow you as a resilient disciple of Jesus?
4. Choose one kid to be the “king.”
5. Have all the other kids stand up.
6. The “king” gives kids commands and they follow them as quickly as they can.
7. The last kid to follow the command is out.
8. If time permits, repeat the game by choosing a new “king.”
9. **Discuss:** How did it feel to keep following someone’s commands?
10. **Discuss:** Were there any commands that you didn’t like? What did you want to do when you heard them?

**Activity Wrap-Up:** The king in our game gave us some silly commands. However, most kings that are rulers, do not always ask people to do things that are easy. Today, we’re going to learn about Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego who were supposed to follow a king that asked them to do things that they knew were not right. Even though they had to go against his commands, God was with them and protected them the whole time.

**Younger Kids Believing Experience (Option 1)**

**Goal:** For kids to discover who God is by engaging with the Bible

**Title:** 5 Senses Walk

**Learning Styles:** Move, Write

**Supplies:** Bible, printable page, writing utensils

**Prep:** Print a copy of the printable page for each kid. Find an area for your group to walk (preferably an outside location).

**Instructions:**

1. **Discuss:** Can we see God? Why not?
2. **Read:** 1 Timothy 1:17.
3. **Discuss:** What does this verse tell us about God?
4. **Say:** God is invisible because He is spirit, but He is still real and He is still God. He is with us all the time. Even though we can’t see Him with our eyes, He shows us in many ways that He is God.
5. Give kids their printable page and review the five senses with the group.
6. **Say:** We’re going to go on a walk and use our five senses to see how we can see God in the world around us. Think about all the beautiful things that stand out to you and make you smile!
7. Take a 5-10 minute walk. While walking, point out a few things that you notice about God’s creation to give kids ideas.
8. Review a few things from each sense when you return from your walk.
9. **Discuss:** Our verse reminds us to praise God. What’s something from our walk that you want to praise God for creating?
10. **Discuss**: How did the things on our walk make you think of God?
11. **Read:** Psalm 99:3.
12. **Discuss**: What are some reasons we can praise God that we have talked about today?

**Activity Wrap-Up:** On our walk, we saw so many things that God had a part in. God created so many systems that made the world that we experience. Even though we cannot see God face-to-face, He has given us signs all around us that He is with us.

**Younger Kids Believing Experience (Option 2)**

**Goal:** For kids to discover who God is by engaging with the Bible

**Title:** Who Has the Mystery Item?

**Learning Styles:** Move

**Supplies:** Bibles**,** one small object to be the mystery item

**Prep:** Locate an object to be the mystery item.

**Instructions:**

1. Lead kids to find Psalm 99:3 in their Bible. Read the verse aloud together.
2. Instruct kids to get in a circle. The group can be sitting or standing.
3. Give one kid the mystery item and practice saying one word of the verse each time the item gets passed to a new kid.
4. Have kids close their eyes and stick their hands out in front of them. Give one kid the mystery item.
5. Have kids pass the item around the circle and say the verse, one word at a time.
6. When the verse ends, make sure everyone puts their hands behind their back before opening their eyes.
7. Have kids guess who has the mystery item.
8. Repeat as desired.
9. **Discuss:** You couldn’t see who had the item, but you knew someone did. How?
10. **Discuss:** How can we know God is with us if we can’t see Him?
11. **Read:** 1 Timothy 1:7.
12. **Say:** What does this verse tell us about seeing God?

**Activity Wrap-Up:** God is invisible, but He is real. He is with us and He is the one true God**.** God is good and righteous even when things seem scary for us. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego showed courage in trusting God’s holiness by going into the fiery furnace. We can show that same courage by walking with God even if it might not be understood by those around us.

**Discipleship Discussion**

**Goal:** To engage kids in faith conversations that help them navigate a broken world with biblical wisdom.

**WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR FOLLOWERS OF JESUS?**

**Discuss:** How does this true story from the Bible show us that God is near to us?

**Say:** Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were very brave, but I bet they were also scared. God did not leave them alone in their scariest time. He was with them.

**Read Isaiah 41:10 directly from the Bible,** *​​Fear not, for I am with you;*

*be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you.*

**Say:** When we pray, we know that God is with us. We can talk to Him and ask for His strength and His help.

# **BUT WHAT ABOUT … Persecution?**

**Discuss:** Have you heard about countries where people are treated badly for believing in Jesus?

**Discuss:** Why would people mistreat Christians?

**Discuss:** What does the Bible have to say about that?

**Say:** There are people all over the world who are hurt or put in jail because they believe in Jesus. Another word for this is “persecution.” In countries like North Korea, Iran, and Somalia, Christians are harmed every day. Most of us do not have to live in fear because we follow Christ, but we may encounter times where we are treated differently because of our faith or when we have to make some hard choices to honor Jesus when no one else is. In Matthew 5, Jesus says we are blessed when we are persecuted. He told the people that persecution happened to the Old Testament prophets and it would keep happening. We know people persecuted Jesus too. We can remember that God is with us. We can continue to live for Him and share His love because we are not alone, even if we are treated badly.

**Younger Kids Becoming Experience (Option 1)**

**Goal:** For kids to learn to follow Jesus by applying faith to their lives

**Title:** Four Corner Fears

**Learning Styles:** Move, Talk

**Supplies:** Printable pages, Bible

**Prep:** Have corners labeled with the pages from the printable page.

**Instructions:**

1. Show kids the corners and their labels.
2. Tell the kids that they will go to the corner that matches how they feel about different common fears.
3. Repeat the process through each of the fears.
4. After going through all the common fears, tell kids to partner up.
5. **Discuss**: What are the three biggest things we talked about that you are afraid of?
6. **Discuss:** What can we do when we experience things we aren’t prepared for during our day that might make us feel afraid?
7. **Read:** Isaiah 41:10.
8. **Discuss:** How can we remind ourselves that God is always with us, even when we’re feeling scared?
9. In pairs, have kids pray for their top fears. Guide them to ask God for courage and strength to get through those fears when they experience them.

**Activity Wrap-Up:** God stands with us in our fears. No matter what we are afraid of, it matters to God. When we are afraid we can trust that He is with us. We can talk to Him in prayer. We can ask Him for help and direction. He can give us the courage we need to be strong when we are afraid.

**Younger Kids Becoming Experience (Option 2)**

**Goal:** For kids to learn to follow Jesus by applying faith to their lives

**Title:** Picture Hunt

**Learning Styles:** Move, Solve

**Supplies:** Printable page, Bible, envelopes (one per group of 3-4)

**Prep:** Print and cut pictures. Prepare one per group of 3-4. Place images in envelopes and hide envelopes around the room for kids to find.

**Instructions:**

1. Split kids into groups of 3- 4.
2. Have kids search for the hidden envelopes around the room.
3. Have kids return to the common area with all the images when they have found them.
4. See which group can put the images in the order they happened in the story the fastest.
5. Review the story one more time using the images.
6. **Discuss:** How do you think Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego felt when they were supposed to bow down? How about when they were going in the fiery furnace?
7. **Discuss:** They trusted God would be with them no matter what happened. How do you think they knew that?
8. **Read:** Isaiah 41:10.
9. **Discuss:** How can this verse help us trust God and do the right thing when we are afraid?

**Activity Wrap-Up:** Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego stood up for what they knew was right. They did not know what was going to happen, but they still chose to honor God and who He is. We might not have to face being put in a fiery furnace but we will still face times when we need to stand up for what is right and stand up for God. He is always with us in these times and gives us the courage we need to get through those situations.

**Small Group Wrap-Up**

**Supplies Needed:** Take-Home page (1 per kid), coloring utensils

**Prep:** None

**Me Question – Younger Kids**

**Say:** We are going to take a few minutes to think about what we have learned today about Jesus. God wants us to love Him even more as we learn more about who He is.

*Pass out the Take-Home page. Instruct kids to think about what they’ve learned about God today and draw/write an answer to, “What does God want me to know about Him?”*

**Choose Your Challenge**

**Say:** We want to respond to God and remember what He has taught us today. During the coming week we also want to use what He’s taught us. As we become more like Jesus, our lives change!

*Read the challenges from the Take-Home page aloud. Ask kids to mark which one they want to choose for this week.*

**Prayer:** Thank You, God, for the story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Thank You for showing us that You are always with us even when things become hard and scary. Help us to remember to lean on You and to look for the reminders that You are always with us each day. Give us courage to stand up for what is right when we have the opportunity to.

**Say Goodbye**

*Tell kids goodbye and thank them for being a part of your group.*

* *As kids wait to be picked up, encourage them to complete the activities on the back of the Take-Home page. As kids work, ask relationship-building questions, such as, “What are you looking forward to this week?” or “What do you do for fun?”*
* *As parents pick up their kids, look for opportunities to connect with them, pointing out the Take-Home page their kid is bringing home.*