

LARGE GROUP

Today's Bible Story: Safe and Sound (Daniel Is Thrown into a Den of Lions) • *Daniel 6*

Today's Bottom Line: You can do what you should because God is with you.

Monthly Memory Verse: *Be strong and brave. Do not be afraid. Do not lose hope. I am the LORD your God. I will be with you everywhere you go.* Joshua 1:9b (NIRV)

Monthly Virtue: Courage—Being brave enough to do what you should do, even when you're afraid

Basic Truth: I can trust God no matter what.

VIDEO: Theme Loop

OPENER

LEADER: "Hello, everyone! I'm so glad to see you here today. We've had a great month so far talking about courage.

Video (Media Package): Theme Transition to Virtue

"Courage is being brave enough to do what you should do, even when you're afraid.

Video (Media Package): Virtue Transition to Theme

"Sometimes there's something that you know is the right thing to do, and you have to work up the courage to do it. But remember, you never have to face your fears alone. God is always there to help you!

"I don't know about all of you, but I'm feeling pretty courageous after we've faced our fears together over the past couple of weeks. We tackled the fear of public speaking and the fear of flying—no problem! At this point, I'm feeling like there's not much to fear at all.

Someone throws a plush cat at the Leader from off stage.

"(shrieking) Ack! A cat! (Realize it's a stuffed animal.) Oh, wait, it's not a REAL cat. Phew. Not that I'd be scared of a real cat or anything. I'm just saying, though—look up the relatives of your basic house cat and what do you find? LIONS.

"I hope I never come to face to face with a lion unless I'm behind glass at the zoo. (Look at the cat.) But

actually, this gives me a great idea for a game. It's a twist on 'Hot Potato.' We'll call it, 'Scaredy Cat.'

"We'll sit in a circle and pass the cat around while the music plays. When the music stops, if you're holding the cat, you're out, and you need to back out of the circle. The last person in the game, wins!"

Get everyone to circle up then sit down. When the music plays, begin passing the cat around the circle.

AUDIO: Fun music

As you play the game, stop and re-start the music at random intervals. (It'll be easier if you have someone else controlling the music so you can focus on the action of the game.)

Play until only one person is left. If time allows, you can play additional rounds.

"Nice job of showing that cat who's in charge! Now let's all hop up on our feet and have some fun worshipping God together!"

WORSHIP

LEADER: “If you want to live with courage, it’s so helpful to remember that you’re never alone! You can do what you should because God gives you the power. Let’s sing this song and thank God for giving us the power to NEVER give up.

Video: “The Power”

VIDEO: Theme Loop

“Awesome, everyone! Before we sing our next song, let’s watch this.

Video (Media Package): Live Loud Video from Get Reel

VIDEO: Theme Loop

“I am so thankful that **[Basic Truth] we can trust God no matter what.** God has the power to do anything! As Jesus, Himself, said, ‘All things are possible with God.’ (*Mark 10:27, NIV*) How great is it that we have that promise from Jesus? That’s something to celebrate! Let’s sing to Jesus and thank Him for making us brave.

Video (Media Package): “Brave” Dance Moves Music Video

VIDEO: Theme Loop

“Yes! We can be courageous because God is with us! Let’s dig into that some more with today’s Bible story. You can have a seat.”

BIBLE STORY

VIDEO: Bible Story (Story Lab)

VIDEO: Theme Loop

SETTING UP THE STORY

LEADER: (*Hold up Bible.*) “We’re diving back into God’s Big Story, which we’ve been going through for a few months now. Let’s recap where we’ve been so far.

If you’re using a Bible timeline on your wall, you can reference it here as you recap.

“God always had a plan to show love to the world. God promised to bless the whole world through Abraham’s family, the Israelites. God saved the Israelites when they were enslaved in Egypt and led them to freedom in the land of Canaan. God gave the Israelites kings to lead them. But while some kings, like David, listened to God, many of the kings ignored God and did things their own way.

“These kings even led people to worship false gods. Things got so bad that eventually, God allowed the Israelites to be conquered by other nations. Some of the Israelites were even taken into captivity to the land of Babylon.

“Today, we’ll look at the story of one of those Israelites who had been taken to Babylon. His name was Daniel. Even though Daniel was forced to live in a faraway land, he still loved God and prayed to God three times a day.

Hold up your phone.

“Now obviously when Daniel was alive, there were no smartphones. There weren’t even computers or typewriters! But just for fun, let’s imagine Daniel DID have a social media account. Maybe it would have looked a little something like this.”

SLIDE: Daniel’s Social Media #1: Daniel’s Profile

Note: There are some fun “Easter eggs” on the slide for the adults (and older kids) to laugh at. Let everyone look at the slide for a few seconds before you move on.

GOD BLESSES DANIEL

LEADER: “As I was saying, Daniel followed the One True God, even though he was living in Babylon.

Video: Theme Loop

“For example, one time, the king offered Daniel and his friends a banquet of really fancy food. But Daniel refused to eat the Babylonians’ food because it would have gone against what was in God’s law. Instead, Daniel and his friends only ate vegetables for ten days!

SLIDE: Daniel’s Social Media #2: Veggies

(Reading from the screen) “Day eight of veggies and water only. Feeling strong and lean! Hashtag, not an ad.

“That’s perfect!

SLIDE: Theme Background

“God blessed Daniel and made him strong and wise. That wisdom and courage gained Daniel a lot of respect. And he actually served as an adviser to several kings over his lifetime. One of them was King Darius, who conquered Babylon.

SLIDE: Daniel’s Social Media #3: New King

(reading from the screen) “Ah, yes. New king in town! I hear his name is Darius.

SLIDE: Theme Background

“When King Darius took charge, he placed 120 officials over the whole kingdom. Then he put three governors over those 120 officials. I bet you can guess who was one of the three governors in charge. *(Pause.)* Yep. Daniel. Daniel was so trustworthy and did such a good job that King Darius actually planned to put Daniel in charge of the other two governors!

SLIDE: Daniel’s Social Media #4: Promotion

(reading from the screen) “Is it go-ver-nor or gov’nor? Asking for a friend.”

SLIDE: Theme Background

AN EVIL PLAN

LEADER: “When the other two governors found out that the king planned to put Daniel in charge over them, they got really mad. They decided to find something wrong with Daniel so they could tell the king and get Daniel in trouble. But even though they spied on Daniel, they couldn’t find a thing that Daniel had done wrong!

“The men DID know that Daniel prayed to God three times a day. So they made a sneaky plan and took it to King Darius. They told the king that he should make a special command: for the next 30 days, no one in the whole kingdom could pray to anyone but him. If anyone prayed to someone other than the king, they’d be thrown in a den of hungry lions!

“King Darius gave orders for the law to be written, and he signed it at once. This law could not be changed, even by the king himself!

“When Daniel found out about the law, he could have stopped praying so that he wouldn’t get in trouble. But Daniel’s love for God was greater than his fear of lions.

SLIDE: Daniel’s Social Media #5: New Law

(reading from the screen) “Heard about the new law. But trusting my God is greater!

SLIDE: Theme Background

"The next morning, as he did every morning, Daniel knelt in his room and prayed to God.

SLIDE: Daniel's Social Media #6: Got to Pray

(reading from the screen) "I've got to pray just to make it today. Hmm, someone should write a song about that.

SLIDE: Theme Background

"Daniel went to his room to pray again at noon and in the evening, even though he probably knew the other governors were watching him. Sure enough, the other officials were delighted to find Daniel disobeying the king's law! They rushed off to tell the king as quickly as they could.

"The officials told the king that Daniel had broken the law by praying to his God three times a day. King Darius was very upset, because he didn't want Daniel to be harmed. But he had no choice. The law was the law. The king called for Daniel.

SLIDE: Daniel's Social Media #7: BRB

(reading from the screen) "Just got called in to see King Darius . . . BRB."

SLIDE: Theme Background

THE MAIN EVENT

LEADER: "Daniel was brought out and thrown into the lions' den! King Darius called out to Daniel . . .

Open the Bible to Daniel 6:16 (NIRV) and read.

"You always serve your God faithfully. So may he save you!"

"A stone was placed over the opening of the den. We don't know exactly what Daniel felt, alone in that deep, dark place with prowling lions. But in the palace, the king was so sick with fear that he couldn't sleep! As soon as the sun rose, he hurried back to the lions' den. Listen to what happened next.

Open the Bible to Daniel 6:20 (NIRV) and read.

"When [the king] got near it, he called out to Daniel. His voice was filled with great concern. He said, 'Daniel! You serve the living God. You always serve him faithfully. So has he been able to save you from the lions?'"

SLIDE: Daniel's Social Media #8: About Last Night

"Daniel was like . . . (reading from the screen) 'About last night . . .'

"Daniel was safe, because God had protected him from the lions!

SLIDE: Theme Background

"Daniel told the king . . .

Open the Bible to Daniel 6:21-22 (NIRV) and read.

"Your Majesty, may you live forever! My God sent his angel. And his angel shut the mouths of the lions. They haven't hurt me at all. That's because I haven't done anything wrong in God's sight. I've never done anything wrong to you either, Your Majesty."

"The king had Daniel lifted out of the den, and it was clear that Daniel was completely unharmed! The king was so amazed that he wrote a letter to everyone in the kingdom, declaring that everyone should respect and honor Daniel's God. Check it out.

Open the Bible to Daniel 6:26-27 (NIV) and read.

"I order people in every part of my kingdom to respect and honor Daniel's God. He is the living God. He will live forever. His kingdom will not be destroyed. His rule will never end. He sets people free and saves them. He does miraculous signs and wonders. He does them in the heavens and on the earth. He has saved Daniel from the power of the lions."

WRAPPING UP THE STORY

LEADER: "Daniel continued to serve the king. And because of Daniel's courage, every person in the land heard about the One True God!

SLIDE: Daniel's Social Media #9: Meet Simba

"What do we have here? *(reading from the screen)* I did a thing. Meet Simba—just adopted him from the royal shelter!

"Ha! I don't think Daniel actually adopted a lion from the den.

SLIDE: Theme Background

"All jokes aside, though, Daniel DID face a pretty scary situation when he had to face the lions. But he was able to keep praying and trusting God because he knew that God was with him.

"That's true for you and me, too. We can keep doing what we should do, because we know that God is with us.

"Remember . . .

SLIDE: Bottom Line

[Bottom Line] "You can do what you should because God is with you.

"Let's talk to God about that now."

VIDEO: Theme Loop

PRAY

LEADER: "Dear God, thank You for being with Daniel in the lion's den and for bringing him through that scary situation. We know that Daniel was able to stay strong because You were right there with him. We know that You're here with US, too. And we are so thankful! Help us have courage, no matter what we face in life, because You're there to help us. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name.

Amen.”

CLOSER

LEADER: “Daniel must have been scared of the lions. I mean, who wouldn’t be? But he trusted that God was with him.

SLIDE: *God’s Big Story Timeline*

SLIDE: *Week 3 Timeline Image*

If you’re making a timeline of printed images on your wall, take this moment to place today’s timeline image on the clothesline.

“Daniel knew something that we should remember, too. He knew that he could **[Basic Truth] trust God no matter what.**

“God is with each of us, no matter what challenges and scary situations we might have to face in life.

SLIDE: *Bottom Line*

[Bottom Line] “You can do what you should because God is with you. Say that with me.”

LEADER and KIDS: **[Bottom Line]** “You can do what you should because God is with you.”

LEADER: “Maybe that means you stand up for someone who’s being picked on or you get the courage up to talk to an adult that you trust about something that’s bothering you. Maybe you tell the truth about something, even if it means you might get in trouble.

“I remember when . . .

Share an age-appropriate example of a time you were scared to do something but you did it because you knew that God was with you.

“God was with me then, and I know God is with me today. God is with you, too! Don’t forget that when you believe in Jesus and follow Him, you have God’s Spirit to help you face anything that comes your way.

(Hold up the plush cat from the Opener.) “Now let’s head over to Small Group, but watch out for all the ferocious felines on the way!”

Dismiss kids to their small groups.

VIDEO: *Theme Loop*