

Sunday morning
teaching plan

Date: 20th July

TITLE:	Daniel. Will you cross the line?
THEME:	Standing up for God has consequences
AIM:	Having faith means making tough choices but God is with us.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Daniel and his friends lived in a society that did not respect his beliefs, in fact some people went out of their way to make life difficult for him and his fellow Jews. Daniel and his friends had to make some challenging choices in their life. Stand up for what they believed and risk persecution and death or succumb to social pressure and fit in with everyone. There are three big lessons in Daniel. 1. We are living in exile as citizens of God's kingdom. 2. How can we influence the world around us for good? 3. Where we can see Jesus in the story of Daniel?

WARM UP

Play "fear of" pairs... a matching game that is about phobias... some pretty weird ones!

Teaching point: We are all fearful of something. That does not mean we run away. At some point we must face them. Daniel had to do this in order to maintain his faith in God.

MAIN TEACHING

Activity 1. Watch cheesy video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GYOpARvYcyw>

1. If someone asked you to state or explain the BIG THEME of Daniel, what would it be? Discuss in a group. Feedback
2. Read Ch1:1-20.
3. What things did Daniel and his friends accept and adapt to in Babylon (v4-5) and where did they draw the line?
4. In our world today, what are the things that are okay to accept and where should we draw the line as Christians?

Key teaching point: Living as an exile in a foreign land.

Daniel lived in a society that did not accept his faith. He had to adapt in order to fit in and thrive. However, there were some things he could not accept. (Food offered to idols, non kosher food) He made a stand and as a result thrived and God blessed him. It was a risky decision, not to blend in. In our world there are many things we can accept as God's citizens living in exile on earth, (clothing styles, food, working practices, most attitudes and values...) But where should a Christian draw the line? It will vary from person to person, but get them to focus on biblical ideas, truths, such as , integrity, faithfulness, truthfulness, holiness etc. What things bring glory to God? What reflect His character?

Activity 2. read the two summaries of ch 3 and ch 6 from the PPT

1. What are the similarities in the two stories?
2. How did Daniel and his friends influence the society around them? How did they change it?
3. How did the kings change?
4. What can you do to influence the people around you at school, college or in your family? How can you stand up for what you know to be right? How can you demonstrate your faith to others?
5. What are the risks you face if you do that? Will you always succeed or might you face opposition?

Key teaching point: We can influence our community for good!

Daniel and his friends just continued to do what God's teaching told them to do. In this way they stood out. They did not shout, scream, use violence, start a revolution or bring down a government. They just remained obedient to God. This brought them into conflict with others but they remained calm, faithful and trusted God. In our lives that is all we need to do. We must live a life that honours God. If it causes us to be in conflict with the world, then we may face consequences. We must take those consequences gracefully, whilst presenting the gospel of Jesus. God will be with us. In the end, people will see the truth, the world will eventually acknowledge the Lord!

Activity 3 Daniel and Jesus.

Read Luke 24:27.

1. If scripture points to Jesus, where do we see Him in the stories in Daniel?
2. Look up the following and see if you can link them to the stories in Daniel.

Mark 1:14-15 - Jesus proclaims the Good news. Daniel and his friends always lived their faith publicly

Matthew 4:1-11— Jesus resisted temptation to compromise. Daniel and his friends refused to as well

Matthew 28:20,- Jesus promises to be with us at all times. He was with Daniel and his friends in the fire and in the lion's den.

Hebrews 13:5-6- We don't need all the riches in life, God promises never to leave us whatever the circumstance

Luke 23:34.- Jesus overcame death. Daniel came out of the lion's den unharmed, as did his friends from the fire.

TAKEAWAY

1Peter 3:15 But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,

EXTRA INFORMATION