

Alley SG—July 3rd-5th, 2021

Today's Bible Story: Just Like Fire (Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego) • Daniel 3

Today's Key Question: When are some times you need to trust God?

Today's Bottom Line: Trust that God is always with you.

Monthly Memory Verse: *Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.* Philippians 1:6 (NIV)

1. Just for Fun

What You Need: Stack of coins, spatula, and clip board (1 set per group)

What You Do:

- Stack up to 10 coins on a hard, flat surface such as a clip board.
- Challenge kids to take turns using the spatula to push, slide, or quickly knock out the coin on the bottom of the pile without causing the rest of the stack to fall.
- If successful, they can continue until there is only one quarter left in the stack.
- Restack the pile and give kids as many turns as time allows.

2. Take a Snapshot

What You Need: No supplies needed

What You Do:

- Together as a group, create simple gestures to represent each of the words below:
 - FIRE
 - WIND
 - WATER
- Practice the gestures until all the kids can do them quickly.
- Invite two kids to stand back-to-back, about several feet apart.
- Explain that, at your signal, they should turn around, face the other kid, and immediately do one of the motions.
- Use the following chart to determine the winner:
 - Fire defeats Wind
 - Wind defeats Water
 - Water defeats Fire
- Ask the winners of the round to share their answer to one of the questions below.
 - When FIRE wins ask: When do you *really* want to know that God is with you?
 - When WIND wins ask: Even though you can't see God, how can you know He's always with you?
 - When WATER wins ask: Why does it help you to know that God is always with you?
- Repeat and continue until all the kids have shared at least a couple times.

3. Bible Story Extension

What You Need: Bibles, Markers, "Acrostics" Pages (1 set per group per service)

What You Do:

- Place the "Acrostics" in four different areas of your small group space.
 - Depending on your environment, the Acrostics can be attached to a wall, placed on a table, or attached to a clip board and set on the floor.
- Open four Bibles to Daniel 3 and place one next to each Acrostic page.

- Give each kid a fine tip marker.
- Show kids the location of each Acrostic.
- Explain that they will move around to each Acrostic page, filling it in with a word, phrase, or sentence related to the Bible story.
 - They can describe a person, emotion, place, action, event—really anything that connects to the story in a clear way.
 - Kids can choose any of the letters in no particular order as long as it is the first letter in whatever they write.
 - As soon as they fill in one of the letters, they can move to a different Acrostic.
 - They can return to the same Acrostics as many times as they like until all the letters are filled in.
 - If kids get stumped, they can use the Bibles beside each Acrostic to look for ideas.
- Tell kids to put their initials in front of each line they write to see who fills in the most.
- Review the story by reading the completed Acrostics.
- Use the following to prompt discussion of the story:
 - What do you think was going through the minds of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego as they waited to be thrown into the furnace?
 - We don't find any indication that the men went into the furnace kicking, screaming, or putting up a fight. What do you think was the basis for their confidence and peace in this horrible situation?
 - Why do you think God chose to not rescue Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego *before* they went into the furnace?
 - ***[Make it Personal] (Share about a situation in your life that you asked God to change, but instead, He didn't change or fix the situation but allowed you to go through it and experience it. What do you think He wanted you to learn about trusting Him by that you wouldn't have learned if He had kept it from happening?)***
- Encourage kids to choose a word from one of the acrostics to be their one-word-takeaway from today's story.
- Challenge them to remember the word and use it this week as a reminder that God is always with them.

4. Discussion Questions

- In what ways should believing God is always with us affect the everyday life of a Jesus follower?
- The faith of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego impacted Nebuchadnezzar and his whole kingdom. How can knowing God is always with you impact the lives of those around you?
- When are some times you need to trust God or you *have* needed to trust God?
- How can you remember to trust God when you experience a situation that hurts your confidence in yourself or in Him?

5. Verses to Take with You

What You Need: Bibles, paper (3 per group per service), pens, masking/painters tape (1 roll per group)

What You Do:

- Form teams of three kids.
- Make sure each kid has a Bible.
- Assign one of the verses below to each kid on the team to look up.
 - Joshua 1:9
 - Matthew 28:19-20
 - Isaiah 41:10
- Ask:
 - What promise do you read in the verse you looked up?
 - When might remembering this promise from God give you confidence?

- Challenge each team to find one four-letter word that is in all three verses then be the first to spell out the word on the floor using strips of tape. (*Kids should discover that the word "WITH" is found in all three verses regardless the translation.*)
- Discuss.
 - How would you define the word, "WITH?" If someone asked, "How can I know God is always with me?" what would you tell them?
- Encourage kids to choose one of the three verses to read each day and memorize this week.

6. Make it Personal with Prayer

What You Need: No supplies needed

What You Do:

- While the verses from the previous activity are still fresh in their minds, invite kids to think of a time in the coming week when remembering that God is with them will be especially helpful.
- Ask kids to suggest a few ideas of things they can do to that will help them remember that God is with them such as bookmarking and memorizing Joshua 1:9, Matthew 26:19-20, or Isaiah 41:10.
- They might consider writing the word WITH on a card or (with permission) use tape to spell it out on their bedroom floor as a reminder that God is always with them.
- Provide a few minutes for kids to share specific challenges they are facing in which they need to remember that God is with them.
- Encourage kids to take turns praying for one another then close with prayer.

What You Say:

"Dear God, thank You for Your promise to be with us. You have reminded us over and over again in Your Word that You will never leave us. Help us to remember that this week when we feel alone, afraid, or overwhelmed. If You can save Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego from a fiery furnace, we know that You can help us through the problems we face this week. In Jesus' name, amen."