



FIRE & FAITHFULNESS

STUDY GUIDE

WEEK 1



MAIN SCRIPTURES:

Daniel 1

MAIN POINT:

As believers, we can still live and thrive in a world that hates God by trusting God is in control.

JESUS CONNECTION:

Daniel is awesome, but he isn't the hero of the story: God is. God is the hero of our stories too.

@HopeHSM

1. READ

The Bible

Yessss! We are glad you are here because taking time on your own to study God's word is an amazing way to grow in your relationship with Him. Life with Jesus is the best life! Take a moment to pray and ask God to lead you as you study this Scripture; then read the Scripture (*from your Bible or it's on the back*).

2. OBSERVE

The Straight Facts

Who: _____

What: _____

Where: _____

Why: _____

How: _____

What is Repetitive?

Highlight it

What is Contrast?

Underline it

3. INTERPRET

What Does the Text Mean?

Research answers using trusted sources like a Study Bible, BibleProject.com, BlueLetterBible.org, and/or Bible.org

What is the historical and/or cultural context of this Scripture?

What else do I know about the author, audience, or context of this passage?

What do key words mean in their original language?

What other Scripture might help me interpret this text?

What is this text's clearest meaning?

4. APPLY

Getting Personal

How do you relate to any of the characters, events, or words in this Scripture?

What truth(s) from this Scripture can you apply to your life right now?

What is God saying to you through this Scripture?

NOTES

1 “In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. 2 And the Lord delivered Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, along with some of the articles from the temple of God. These he carried off to the temple of his god in Babylon and put in the treasure house of his god.

⁶ Among those who were chosen were some from Judah: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishaël and Azariah. ⁷ The chief official gave them new names: to Daniel, the name Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishaël, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abednego.

⁸ But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine, and he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way. ⁹ Now God had caused the official to show favor and compassion to Daniel, ¹⁰ but the official told Daniel, "I am afraid of my lord the king, who has assigned your food and drink. Why should he see you looking worse than the other young men your age? The king would then have my head because of you."

¹¹ Daniel then said to the guard whom the chief official had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, ¹²“Please test your servants for ten days: Give us nothing but vegetables to eat and water to drink. ¹³Then compare our appearance with that of the young men who eat the royal food, and treat your servants in accordance with what you see.” ¹⁴So he agreed to this and tested them for ten days.

¹⁵ At the end of the ten days they looked healthier and better nourished than any of the young men who ate the royal food. ¹⁶ So the guard took away their choice food and the wine they were to drink and gave them vegetables instead. ¹⁷ To these four young men God gave knowledge and understanding of all kinds of literature and learning. And Daniel could understand visions and dreams of all kinds.

¹⁸ At the end of the time set by the king to bring them into his service, the chief official presented them to Nebuchadnezzar. ¹⁹ The king talked with them, and he found none equal to Daniel, Hananiah, Mishaël and Azariah; so they entered the king's service. ²⁰ In every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king questioned them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in his whole kingdom.

²¹And Daniel remained there until the first year of King Cyrus.”

DOODLES



JESUS CONNECTION:

Daniel is awesome, but he isn't the hero of the story: God is. God is the hero of our stories too.

NOTES

WHAT are we talking about and WHY does it matter to me? (2-4 min)

- What are some issues that can cause division between Christians and common culture today? (Give students a few minutes to answer or prep a short story to share on this)

- As believers, our loyalty, sacrifice, and obedience to God can be seen as strange because the standards of the world are often different from the standard God has for his people. This tension can leave many people wrestling with pressure to compromise their beliefs to avoid uncomfortable and difficult circumstances.

- So how do we stand firm in our faith when pressure from our culture feels too heavy? In this series, we're going to hear from author and Duck Dynasty star Sadie Robertson Huff as she helps us answer the question, "How do we live well in a world that hates God?"

So WHAT does this mean for my faith and life with God? (6-8 min)

- Before viewing the session, here are a few important things to look for in Sadie's teaching. As you watch, pay attention to how she answers the following questions.
 - What caused Daniel's circumstance?
 - How did Daniel react to the king's new rules?
 - What did God do for Daniel and his three friends, and how did it benefit them?
- **Watch Session 1: God's in Control (7 minutes).**

[illegible]

NOTES

- Daniel is awesome, but Daniel isn't the hero of his story. God is the hero. God rescues and saves Daniel and his friends.
- Don't miss this: the same is true for us. We aren't the heroes of our story. God is the hero of our story and of our lives.
- God sent His son Jesus to rescue and save us from sin and death. We can only live faithful lives to God after we first put our faith in Jesus, in His loving grace.
- Once we take that first step, then we are called to a life of faithfulness. A life where we walk trusting God is faithful to us, even in the fire.

- So what does this all mean for us in our lives now?

NOW that I know, HOW can I live this out? (2-4 min)

- God is always in control, even when it doesn't look like it.
- Like Daniel, we may find ourselves in situations that are out of our control, feeling the pressure to conform to the world's standards. But Daniel and his friends showed us that it is possible to trust that God is still on our side when he seems absent and our circumstances are tiresome.

- Trusting God's faithfulness despite our feelings is the first step on the journey to our faithful obedience.

- Close your time together in prayer.
- Pray that God would help you release whatever you might be trying to control in your life. Thank Him for being in control and ask Him to help you surrender.

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FIRE & FAITHFULNESS DISCUSSION GUIDE — WEEK 1 —



MAIN SCRIPTURES: Daniel 1

MAIN POINT:
As believers, we can still live and thrive in a world that hates God by trusting God is in control.

JESUS CONNECTION:
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LEADER CORNER

GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

For students to know God is in control and they can trust Him in both good and difficult times.

THINK ABOUT THIS

The world puts a lot of pressure on students on who they should become and that doesn't always line up with who God created us to be. One of the best things you can do as a leader is help students MOBILIZE THEIR FAITH by having a real, growing relationship with God where they trust Him over anyone or anything else.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide is a suggestion, not a formula. Adjust the questions and activities as needed, and don't feel like you need to do, or ask, everything you see here. Let the students and the Holy Spirit guide the conversation, too.

CONVERSATION GUIDE

GET THEM TALKING

What are some issues that can cause division between Christians and common culture today?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What stood out to you from the video?
2. Sadie began the session by asking if it's possible for believers to thrive in our world today, considering how our culture hates God. How would you answer her question? How has it been easy or difficult for you to live life as a Christian in our culture?
3. What do you think of Sadie means by her statement: "We can trust everyday wisdom and guidance that we find in the Word of God. This Word is faithful because God is faithful."

READ DANIEL 1:1-7 and answer the following questions:

4. Daniel and his friends were forced from their families, to learn a new culture, eat new food, and even had their names changed (which stripped them of their Hebrew identity.) In what ways have you felt the culture today try to shape your identity? In what ways, if any, do you struggle to guard your identity in Jesus from the world?

READ DANIEL 1:8-21 and answer the following questions:

5. What happens in these verses?
6. In what ways does the outcome of Daniel's test display God's control?
7. On a scale from 1-10, how easy is it for you to surrender and give God control in your life?

GIVE STUDENTS A FEW MINUTES TO REFLECT AND WRITE THEIR ANSWERS TO:

1. What areas of your life might be harder for you to surrender to God?
2. Write down three ways you could choose to surrender these areas to God and fully trust Him to be with you no matter what.

NEXT STEPS

BIBLE STUDY CHALLENGE: Take a STUDY GUIDE to re-read and study Daniel 1 on your own this week. Take note of anything that may seem important or you'd like to share in next week's small group.

PRAYER CHALLENGE: Pray every day this week that God would help you release whatever you might be trying to control in your life. Thank him for being in control and ask him to help you surrender.

PRAYER GUIDE

Ask your students to share their prayer requests and close your time together in prayer.

MAIN SCRIPTURES

Daniel 1 NIV

¹ “In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. ² And the Lord delivered Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, along with some of the articles from the temple of God. These he carried off to the temple of his god in Babylon and put in the treasure house of his god.

³ Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, chief of his court officials, to bring into the king’s service some of the Israelites from the royal family and the nobility— ⁴ young men without any physical defect, handsome, showing aptitude for every kind of learning, well informed, quick to understand, and qualified to serve in the king’s palace. He was to teach them the language and literature of the Babylonians. ⁵ The king assigned them a daily amount of food and wine from the king’s table. They were to be trained for three years, and after that they were to enter the king’s service.

⁶ Among those who were chosen were some from Judah: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. ⁷ The chief official gave them new names: to Daniel, the name Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abednego.

⁸ But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine, and he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way. ⁹ Now God had caused the official to show favor and compassion to Daniel, ¹⁰ but the official told Daniel, “I am afraid of my lord the king, who has assigned your food and drink. Why should he see you looking worse than the other young men your age? The king would then have my head because of you.”

¹¹ Daniel then said to the guard whom the chief official had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, ¹² “Please test your servants for ten days: Give us nothing but vegetables to eat and water to drink. ¹³ Then compare our appearance with that of the young men who eat the royal food, and treat your servants in accordance with what you see.” ¹⁴ So he agreed to this and tested them for ten days.

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