

Template 2: Main Lesson, Activity and Discussion Questions | Ages 5 to 11, Read Aloud Lesson, Scripture Centered, Apologetics Rich, Christ Centered

WEEK 34 | SUNDAY, AUGUST 23, 2026

Daniel: Trusting God No Matter What

Primary Scripture: Daniel 6

BIBLE TIMELINE PLACEMENT

Many years have passed since we first met Daniel. Daniel was a young man when he was taken from Judah to Babylon, but by Daniel 6 he is probably an elderly man. Scripture never gives his exact age. He has spent many years learning to trust God through changing rulers, difficult seasons, and ordinary faithfulness.

BIG IDEA

We can trust God when we do not know what will happen next because the living God is faithful, and Jesus is always our hope.

1 OPENING BIBLE FOUNDATION

Before we begin, I want us to remember what we are holding when we open the Bible.

The Bible contains sixty six books written by more than forty human writers over many centuries, yet all those books fit together as one message because God is the true Author behind His Word.

Second Timothy 3:16 says, "All Scripture is God breathed."

That means these are not made up tales about people who never lived. The Bible tells us about real people, real places, real problems, and the real God who worked in their lives.

Daniel was a real man, Babylon was a real kingdom, and the kings and governments around Daniel belonged to the real ancient world.

We can ask good questions about the Bible, and we do not have to be afraid when someone else asks a hard question.

Here are three questions I hope you will learn to ask as you grow: What does the Bible really say? What do we know from history? What are we only guessing about?

Those questions will help us today.

2 MEMORY VERSE

Our memory verse today comes from something King Darius said after he saw what God had done.

MEMORY VERSE
Daniel 6:26
He is the living God.

Those five words are easy to say, but they tell us something wonderful about God. God is alive and real. He is not a statue or a false god made by people, because He sees us, hears us, knows us, and has power over everything He has made.

Daniel trusted God because Daniel knew he was not praying to someone who could not hear him. He was praying to the living God.

Let's say our memory verse together: "He is the living God."

Keep those five words in your mind because we are going to hear them again before this account is finished.

3 SETTING THE SCENE

Daniel has lived away from his homeland for many years, and once again a new ruler is in charge. His name is Darius.

Darius begins choosing leaders to help take care of the kingdom, and Daniel is given an important job.

Daniel 6:3 tells us, "Now Daniel so distinguished himself among the administrators and the satraps by his exceptional qualities that the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom."

A satrap was a government leader who helped take care of part of the kingdom. Daniel did his work so well that the king noticed, and he began thinking about giving Daniel even more responsibility.

That sounds like good news for Daniel, but for some other leaders it was not.

4 MAIN LESSON NARRATIVE

Some of the other government leaders became jealous of Daniel, which means they became angry because Daniel had something good that they wanted for themselves.

These men saw that the king trusted Daniel, and instead of being glad that Daniel was doing good work, they wanted to bring him down. They began watching him closely, looking through his work and searching for mistakes.

Daniel 6:4 tells us what they found: "They could find no corruption in him, because he was trustworthy and neither corrupt nor negligent."

Some of those words may sound unfamiliar. Corrupt means dishonest or crooked, while negligent means careless about something you are responsible for. These men looked for dishonesty and carelessness in Daniel's work, but they could not find it.

That does not mean Daniel was perfect, because only Jesus lived a completely sinless life. Daniel still needed God's grace just as we do, but he had been faithful with the work he was given.

Following God does not only matter while we are sitting in church. It matters when we are doing schoolwork, when Mom or Dad gives us a job to finish, when nobody is watching us, and when telling the truth would be harder than hiding something.

Daniel's enemies watched his life very closely, and they finally realized they were not going to trap Daniel by finding dishonesty. So they decided to use Daniel's love for God against him.

Daniel 6:5 says, "We will never find any basis for charges against this man Daniel unless it has something to do with the law of his God."

That is quite a thing for an enemy to say, because these men knew Daniel could be counted on to keep following God.

They went to King Darius with a plan and told him that he should make a new law. For thirty days, nobody would be allowed to pray to any god or person except the king, and anyone who broke the law would be thrown into a den of lions.

Daniel could have thought, "Maybe I can stop praying for just one month," but prayer belongs to God. Daniel could respect the king without pretending the king had taken God's place.

Darius signed the law, and Daniel had a choice. Daniel had served kings faithfully for many years, so he was not looking for an excuse to break laws or trying to start a fight. This law, however, was telling Daniel to stop doing something that belonged to his relationship with God.

Daniel 6:10 tells us what he did: "Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before."

Those final words matter. Daniel prayed "just as he had done before," which means he did not suddenly begin praying because somebody told him not to. Prayer was already part of his life.

Daniel had talked with God on ordinary days before there was ever a lions' den waiting for him. He did not wake up one morning and suddenly become brave enough to face lions, because he had spent years learning who God is.

Maybe that can help us think about our own lives. We learn to trust God when we pray about a bad dream, tell the truth after doing something wrong, thank Him for our food, or ask Jesus for help at school. Those moments may not look important, but our hearts are learning where to turn.

There is another part of Daniel 6:10 that I hope we notice. Daniel was giving thanks even though the law had already been signed.

That does not mean Daniel liked what was happening, and the Bible never tells us Daniel felt no fear. Sometimes Bible pictures make Daniel look as though he were smiling calmly while lions sat around him like house cats, but Scripture does not tell us exactly how Daniel felt.

That gives us one of our apologetics questions. What does the Bible really say? It says Daniel prayed and trusted God. What are we only guessing about? We would be guessing if we said Daniel felt no fear.

Courage does not mean you never feel afraid, because sometimes courage means doing what is right while your stomach still feels nervous.

Daniel's enemies knew where to find him. They watched him pray, hurried to the king, and told Darius that Daniel had broken the law.

Darius finally realized what these men had done. They had not really been trying to honor the king, because they were trying to destroy Daniel. The king was deeply upset and spent the rest of the day trying to find a way to save him.

Eventually Daniel was brought to the lions' den. Daniel is probably an old man by now, he has served kings for many years, and he has prayed thousands of prayers. Now he is walking toward a place filled with lions because he refused to stop praying to God.

The Bible does not tell us whether Daniel's hands shook, whether he cried, or whether he felt completely peaceful, so we will not add those things. What Scripture tells us is enough.

Before Daniel is placed inside, Darius speaks to him. Daniel 6:16 says, "May your God, whom you serve continually, rescue you!"

The word continually tells us something important. Even Darius had noticed that Daniel did not worship God only when things were easy, because serving God had become the pattern of his life.

Daniel was placed into the den, a stone was brought over the opening, and the king sealed it so nobody could secretly change what happened during the night. Then Darius returned to his palace, where the Bible says he would not eat, did not want entertainment, and could not sleep.

We know how the chapter ends, but Daniel did not. We can look ahead and see that Daniel survives, while Daniel had to live through the night without knowing what morning would bring.

Have you ever had to wait for something when you did not know how it would turn out? Maybe you had a doctor visit, were waiting to see whether a friend would forgive you, or knew that someone you loved was sick.

Waiting can be hard because we want to know the ending. Daniel did not know the ending, but he knew God.

Morning finally came, and as soon as there was light, Darius hurried toward the lions' den. Daniel 6:20 records the king calling, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to rescue you from the lions?"

There are our memory verse words: "the living God." Let's say them together: "He is the living God."

Then Daniel spoke. Daniel 6:22 says, "My God sent his angel, and he shut the mouths of the lions."

Daniel told the king what God had done. He did not say that he had been brave enough to defeat the lions or clever enough to tame them, because the rescue belonged to God.

When Daniel was lifted out, Scripture tells us that no wound was found on him because he had trusted in his God.

Daniel did not control God by trusting Him. Faith is not a magic button that makes God do exactly what we want, because Daniel trusted God before he knew whether God would rescue him from those lions.

The Bible tells us about other people who trusted God but still went through terrible suffering. Hebrews 11 talks about both kinds of people: some trusted God and saw amazing rescue, while others trusted God and suffered. God was faithful to both.

That means we should never tell a child, "If you trust God enough, nothing bad will happen to you." The Bible does not promise that.

Maybe you have already prayed about something that did not turn out the way you hoped, and that can hurt. God is not angry with you because you are sad. You can tell Him when something hurts, when you are confused, and when you are afraid.

Trust does not mean pretending everything feels good. Trust means believing God is still good when we do not understand what He is doing.

After Daniel was rescued, Darius sent a message throughout his kingdom. Daniel 6:26 records the king saying, "For he is the living God and he endures forever; his kingdom will not be destroyed."

There is our memory verse again: "He is the living God."

Daniel had watched kings change, governments change, and Babylon itself fall, yet God had never stopped being God.

That brings us to an important question. Daniel was faithful, but what happens when we are not? What happens when we lie, disobey, or know the right thing and choose the wrong thing anyway?

Daniel cannot be the answer to that problem. Jesus is.

The Bible tells us that Jesus never sinned, yet people hated Him, lied about Him, and had Him arrested. Jesus was sentenced to die even though He had done nothing wrong, and after He died on the cross, His body was placed inside a tomb with a large stone across the entrance.

If that reminds you a little of Daniel, there is a reason. Daniel was placed behind a stone in a place where everyone expected him to die, while Jesus was placed behind a stone after He actually died.

Then morning came, and women went to Jesus' tomb and discovered that the stone had been moved. Jesus was alive.

Something much greater had happened than what happened to Daniel. Daniel was rescued from dying, while Jesus died and then rose again. Daniel needed someone to save him, while Jesus came to save us.

Sometimes we hear a lesson about Daniel and think the message is simply, "Be brave like Daniel." There is nothing wrong with wanting Daniel's courage, but when our sin is the problem, we need more than an example. We need a Savior.

Jesus is the answer.

Romans 3:23 tells us, "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Sin is choosing our way instead of God's way, and none of us can erase our sin by trying harder tomorrow.

That is why Jesus came. Jesus lived without sin, died on the cross and took the punishment our sins deserve, was buried, and rose again. Everyone who turns from sin and trusts Jesus can be forgiven.

That is why Jesus is our Savior.

There is another word we sometimes use for Jesus. We call Him our Sanctifier, which means Jesus does not only forgive us and leave us exactly as we are. Through the Holy Spirit, He keeps working in us and helping us become more like Him.

Jesus is our Healer too, so we can bring sickness, pain, fear, and hurt to Him because He cares about us and has the power to heal. We do not pretend that every prayer will be answered exactly the way we want, because we pray trusting His wisdom.

Jesus is also our Coming King. Daniel watched earthly kings come and go, but Jesus will never lose His kingdom. One day He will return, evil will not win, and everything God has promised will finally be made right.

Jesus our Savior, Jesus our Sanctifier, Jesus our Healer, and Jesus our Coming King. Every one of those truths brings us back to Him.

There is another truth about God that we are learning throughout the year. God is one God in three Persons. God the Father is God, Jesus the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God. There are not three gods, because the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are three Persons while there is only one God.

Let's say our simple sentence together: "God is one God in three Persons."

Daniel 6 tells us that God sent His angel to shut the lions' mouths. Sometimes someone may ask, "Was that angel Jesus?" That is a good question, and we can use our three questions.

What does the Bible really say? It says God sent His angel. Does the Bible say the angel was Jesus? No. So if we said it definitely was Jesus, we would be guessing.

We do not need to guess. God's Word is strong enough without us adding things to it, and that is part of learning how to defend the Bible.

Someone may ask an even bigger question: "Did Daniel and the lions really happen?" Again, we begin by asking what the Bible really says.

Daniel 6 says Daniel was placed among lions and that God sent His angel to shut their mouths. History tells us that Babylon was a real kingdom, that it eventually fell to Persian power, and that lions were known in that part of the ancient world. Ancient pictures and carvings show kings hunting lions.

That helps us understand the setting, but history cannot dig up the exact moment an angel shut the mouths of lions. A miracle is something God does by His power that goes beyond what normally happens.

If someone says, "Lions normally would hurt a man trapped with them," we can agree, because that is exactly why Daniel's survival was a miracle.

A thoughtful answer might sound like this: "You are right that lions are dangerous. The Bible says Daniel survived because God acted and shut their mouths."

We do not have to become angry when someone asks a hard question, and we do not have to make something up. We can tell the truth with kindness.

What does the Bible really say? What do we know from history? What are we only guessing about? Those three questions can help you for the rest of your life.

Now I want to bring us back to Daniel's room before there was ever a lions' den. An elderly man kneels to pray, probably something he had already done thousands of times.

Most of Daniel's faithful life was made of ordinary days. He worked honestly, prayed regularly, gave thanks, and kept trusting God through years of change. Then the dangerous day came, and Daniel continued doing what his heart had been learning to do for a lifetime.

Our lives are mostly made of ordinary days too. We learn to trust Jesus while telling the truth, praying when we are worried, admitting when we are wrong, showing kindness, and opening God's Word when nobody is applauding us.

Then a harder day comes, and we discover that Jesus has not suddenly appeared as a stranger. He is the Savior we have been learning to know all along.

Our memory verse reminds us, "He is the living God."

We do not know everything tomorrow will bring, but we know the living God who will be there. Because of Jesus, we also know something even greater than Daniel knew on that long night: death itself does not get the final word.

Jesus is alive, and that is our hope.

5 WHY WE CAN TRUST GOD'S WORD

When someone asks whether Daniel really happened, we do not need to panic because good questions are welcome.

We begin with what Scripture really says. Daniel 6 places Daniel inside a real ancient world with kings, government leaders, laws, Babylon, Persia, and lions.

History confirms that Babylon was real and that Persian power took control of Babylon during the period described around these chapters. History also shows us that lions lived in the ancient world Daniel knew.

Those things help us understand the setting, but they do not prove the miracle. The Bible says God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths, and that is a miracle.

There are also things historians still discuss, including exactly how one ruler named Darius should be identified outside the Bible. We do not hide that, because sometimes we do not have every answer about people who lived thousands of years ago.

Not having every answer does not mean the Bible has been proven wrong. It means we keep studying while trusting God's Word.

Here are our three questions again: What does the Bible really say? What do we know from history? What are we only guessing about?

A Christian does not need to make up evidence. Truth does not need our help becoming true.

6 WHAT THIS SHOWS US ABOUT JESUS

Daniel 6 gives us a rescue, but it also points our eyes toward a much greater rescue.

Daniel was placed behind a stone and came out alive, while Jesus was placed behind a stone after He had truly died. Daniel was rescued from death, but Jesus defeated death.

Daniel was a faithful man who still needed God. Jesus is God the Son who came to save sinners.

That is why the lesson does not end with Daniel. It ends with Jesus.

When we sin, Jesus is our Savior. When our hearts need to change, Jesus is our Sanctifier, which means He works in us through the Holy Spirit and helps us become more like Him.

When we are hurting or sick, we can pray to Jesus our Healer and trust His care. When the world around us feels uncertain, Jesus is our Coming King, and His kingdom will never end.

Daniel can show us what trust looks like. Only Jesus can save us.

7 GOD REVEALED AS TRINITY

The Bible teaches that there is one God, and it also teaches that the Father is God, Jesus the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God.

There are not three gods. God is one God in three Persons.

That is our simple sentence: "God is one God in three Persons."

We do not need an egg, water, or another picture to explain God because those pictures can teach things that are not true. We can stay with the words God has given us.

Daniel worshiped the one living God, and the whole Bible later helps us understand more fully that this one God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

8 LIFE APPLICATION

Daniel learned to trust God through many ordinary years before the night of the lions, and that gives us a simple place to begin.

You do not have to wait for something enormous to happen before you learn to trust Jesus. You can trust Him today.

If you are worried, you can pray. If you have lied, you can tell the truth and ask forgiveness. If someone is being unkind, you can ask Jesus to help you choose what is right.

If someone is hurting you or making you feel unsafe, trusting God does not mean keeping it secret. You can tell a parent, teacher, pastor, or another trusted adult who can help you.

If you have sinned, you do not need to hide from Jesus. You can come to Him.

Following Jesus does not mean becoming strong enough to handle everything by yourself. It means learning that you do not have to.

9 DEFENDING THE TRUTH

QUESTION

"My friend says lions would have eaten Daniel, so this could not have happened."

FIRST QUESTION

What does the Bible really say?

Daniel 6:22 says, "My God sent his angel, and he shut the mouths of the lions."

The Bible agrees that Daniel's survival was not normal. It says God acted.

SECOND QUESTION

What do we know from history?

Lions were real animals known in the ancient world around Daniel, and ancient pictures and carvings show people from this part of the world hunting lions.

THIRD QUESTION

What are we only guessing about?

We would be guessing if we claimed someone has found Daniel's exact lions' den. We would also be guessing if we claimed we knew exactly how Daniel felt that night.

A SIMPLE ANSWER

You could say, "You are right that lions are dangerous. The Bible says Daniel survived because God performed a miracle and shut their mouths."

REMEMBER

We do not have to be rude to defend the Bible. We can be kind, thoughtful, and truthful, because questions are not our enemy.

10 DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

CORE QUESTIONS FOR ALL AGES

Why were some leaders jealous of Daniel? Suggested Answer: The king trusted Daniel and planned to give him more responsibility.

What did Daniel's enemies discover when they looked for dishonesty? Suggested Answer: They could not find corruption or carelessness in Daniel's work because he was trustworthy.

What law did the men convince Darius to sign? Suggested Answer: For thirty days, nobody was allowed to pray to anyone except the king.

What did Daniel do after he learned about the law? Suggested Answer: He kept praying to God just as he had done before.

Does the Bible tell us Daniel knew God would save him from the lions? Suggested Answer: No. Daniel trusted God before he knew how the night would end.

Who rescued Daniel? Suggested Answer: God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths.

What does our memory verse say? Suggested Answer: "He is the living God."

What does trusting God mean? Suggested Answer: Trusting God means believing He is good and dependable even when we do not know what will happen next.

Does trusting God mean nothing painful will ever happen? Suggested Answer: No. Christians still experience hard and painful things, but God remains faithful and stays with His people.

How is Jesus greater than Daniel? Suggested Answer: Daniel was rescued from death, but Jesus actually died for our sins and rose again. Daniel needed rescue, while Jesus is our Rescuer.

OPTIONAL DEEPER QUESTIONS

Why do the words "just as he had done before" matter? Suggested Answer: They show that Daniel had been learning to trust God long before the lions appeared.

Why is "He is the living God" a good memory verse for this lesson? Suggested Answer: Because Daniel trusted the real and living God, who remains faithful no matter what happens around us.

What should we ask when someone gives us a strange claim about the Bible? Suggested Answer: What does the Bible really say? What do we know from history? What are we only guessing about?

Why is it okay to say "I do not know"? Suggested Answer: Because being honest is better than inventing an answer God did not give us.

If history cannot prove the miracle, why do Christians still believe it? Suggested Answer: History can help us understand the people, places, and world around the event, but Scripture tells us what God did. Miracles are acts of God and do not always leave something archaeologists can find.

What do we need from Jesus that Daniel cannot give us? Suggested Answer: We need Jesus to forgive our sins, change our hearts, stay with us, and give us eternal life.

11 HANDS ON ACTIVITY

ACTIVITY NAME

What Do We Know?

PURPOSE

Help children begin thinking carefully about Scripture by learning the difference between what the Bible says, what history can help us know, and what we should not pretend to know.

SUPPLIES

Three pieces of paper, markers, and tape if available.

PREPARATION

Write one phrase on each paper: THE BIBLE SAYS, HISTORY HELPS, and WE DO NOT NEED TO GUESS.

HOW TO PLAY

Place the three papers in different parts of the room. Explain that you will read a statement, and the children will decide which place it belongs. After they choose, talk briefly about why.

Daniel prayed after the law was signed. Answer: THE BIBLE SAYS

Babylon was a real kingdom. Answer: HISTORY HELPS

Daniel was exactly eighty three years old. Answer: WE DO NOT NEED TO GUESS

God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths. Answer: THE BIBLE SAYS

Lions lived in the ancient world around Daniel. Answer: HISTORY HELPS

Daniel was never afraid. Answer: WE DO NOT NEED TO GUESS

Someone has discovered Daniel's exact lions' den. Answer: WE DO NOT NEED TO GUESS

Daniel's enemies could not find corruption in his work. Answer: THE BIBLE SAYS

DEBRIEF

Ask why it is important that Christians tell the truth about what we know. Suggested Answer: Because God's Word does not need us to make things up.

Ask whether saying "I do not know" means we do not trust the Bible. Suggested Answer: No. Sometimes Scripture does not tell us every detail, and we can be honest about that while trusting what God has told us.

FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN

Use only four statements and walk with the children to the correct sign. Explain each answer in one simple sentence.

FOR OLDER CHILDREN

Allow them to make up a question someone might ask about Daniel 6, then use all three categories to build an answer together.

12 OPTIONAL REVIEW GAME

GAME NAME

Before the Lions

PURPOSE

Help children remember that Daniel had been learning faithfulness long before the night of his rescue.

HOW TO PLAY

Read each statement. If it happened before Daniel entered the lions' den, children place their hands together as though they are praying. If it happened after Daniel entered the den, children point upward to remember that God rescued him.

Daniel worked honestly for the king. Answer: Before the lions.

Daniel prayed three times a day. Answer: Before the lions.

The jealous leaders made a plan against Daniel. Answer: Before the lions.

Darius realized the men had tricked him. Answer: Before the lions.

God sent His angel. Answer: After Daniel entered the den.

The lions' mouths were shut. Answer: After Daniel entered the den.

Darius hurried to the den in the morning. Answer: After Daniel entered the den.

Daniel came out without a wound. Answer: After Daniel entered the den.

Darius called Daniel's God the living God. Answer: After Daniel entered the den.

FINAL QUESTION

What was Daniel doing long before he ever saw the lions? Suggested Answer: Daniel had been learning to trust God.

MEMORY VERSE REVIEW

Teacher asks: What did Darius learn about Daniel's God? Children answer: "He is the living God."

13 TEACHER CLOSING

Daniel 6:26 gives us five simple words to carry home: "He is the living God."

Now we understand why those words matter. Daniel's trust did not begin when he entered the den, because it had been growing through many ordinary years as Daniel prayed, worked honestly, gave thanks, and kept walking with God.

Then a frightening day came. Daniel did not know how it would end, but he knew the living God.

Some of you may have something in your life right now that you do not understand. Maybe you are worried, someone you love is hurting, or you have asked God a question and the answer has not come yet.

You do not have to pretend that those things are easy. You can bring them to Jesus.

Jesus does not only tell us to be brave. Jesus saves us. He died for our sins and rose again, stays with His people, and gives us the Holy Spirit to help us grow. We can pray when we hurt, and one day Jesus our King will return and make everything right.

That is why our hope is bigger than Daniel's lions' den. Daniel came out of the den alive, while Jesus came out of the grave alive. Because Jesus lives, everyone who belongs to Him has hope that even death cannot take away.

Let's say our memory verse one final time: "He is the living God."

We may not know what tomorrow will bring. We know Jesus, we know the living God, and He is enough.

PRAYER

Father, thank You for being the living God who never changes. Thank You for Daniel and for the many ordinary years when he learned to trust You before the lions appeared.

Help us learn to trust You on our ordinary days too. Thank You for Jesus, who died for our sins and rose again so we can be forgiven.

Holy Spirit, help us tell the truth, ask good questions, obey Your Word, and become more like Jesus. When we are frightened, help us remember that we can talk to You, and when we do not understand, help us remember that You are still good.

When someone asks us a hard question about the Bible, help us answer with truth and kindness. Thank You that Jesus is our Savior and our Coming King.

In Jesus' name, amen.

14 TAKEAWAY TRUTH

He is the living God, and I can trust Him even when I do not know what will happen next.