

BIBLE TRUTH 4, LESSON 1: PLANNER/OVERVIEW

GETTING STARTED: Welcome and Opening Songs (*introduce unit and get kids moving with these songs*)

Welcome to Praise Factory: PFI: Praise Factory Investigators Theme Song *PFI ESV Songs 8, Track 1*

Rules to Help Us Worship God and Love One Another: WoGoLOA Classroom Rules Song
PFI ESV Songs 8, Track 2

Big Question Under Investigation: Big Question 8 Songs *PFI ESV Songs 8, Tracks 3,4*

Big Question Bible Verse: 1 Chronicles 16:34 Song: *PFI ESV Songs 8, Track 5*

Extra Bible Verse: Lamentations 3:22, 23 Song: The Steadfast Love of the LORD *PFI ESV Songs 8 Track 6*

DIGGING DEEP DOWN: Key Concept and Story (*introduce the Bible Truth and tell the related story*)

Bible Truth 4: God Loves His People By Caring For Their Needs

Bible Truth Hymn: The King of Love, vs.1,4 *PFI ESV Songs 8, Tracks 14,15*

Bible Verse: Psalm 23:1-6

Bible Verse Song: The LORD Is My Shepherd *PFI ESV Songs 8, Track 16*

Extra Bible Verse Song: *If God Be for Us Romans 8:31-32,35,38-39, ESV, Songs 8, Track 17*

Extra Bible Verse Song: *Who Shall Separate Us? Romans 8:31-32,35,38-39, ESV, Songs 8, Track 18*

Lesson 1 Old Testament: The Case of the Unbending Knees *Daniel 3*

TAKING ACTION: Response Activities (*choose from among these activities*)

Snack and Discussion Planner: Eating Animal Feed

ACTS Prayer: Prayer Sheet

Bible Truth Review: Discussion Questions and Game: Beanbag Scramble

Bible Truth Hymn: The King of Love, vs.1,4 *PFI ESV Songs 8, Tracks 14,15*

Song, Sign Language and Song Game: Sign It, Say It, What Does It Mean **PFI ESV Songs 8 BOOK or ONLINE**

Bible Verse Review: Psalm 23:1-6 Discussion Sheet and Game: Cross the Raging River

Bible Verse Song: The LORD Is My Shepherd Psalm 23:1-6 *PFI ESV Songs 8, Track 16*

Song, Sign Language and Song Game: Pass the Secret Sign **PFI ESV Songs 8 BOOK or ONLINE**

Story Review: Discussion Questions and Game: Go Fish

Case Replay, Jr: Drama Activity for Youngest Children (children do same story actions together)

Case Replay, Sr: Drama Activity for Most Children (children re-tell story with individual parts)

Craft: Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the Fiery Furnace

VIPP (Very Important Prayer Person) Prayer Time: Coloring Sheets (back of book) and Game: Hit the Wall

TAKING IT HOME: Take Home Sheet for Review and Family Devotions

PFI Pronto: Bible Truth 4, Lesson 1 **PFI ESV Prontos 8 BOOK or ONLINE**

The Case of the Unbending Knees *Daniel 3* by Connie Dever**Our story is called:****The Case of the Unbending Knees.****As you listen to the story, see if you can figure out:**

1. Whose knees would not bend? Why?
2. What happened because they would not bend? Who rescued them?

This story takes place in Old Testament times, about 600 years before Jesus lived on earth.

Enemy kings with powerful armies surrounded the little land of Judah. King Asurbanipol of Assyria, King Nabopolassar of Babibli, Pharaoh Necho of Egypt, and King Kyaxares of Medes. They were all there and all hungry for more land, more peoples, more riches.

The people of Judah wondered what would happen to them. Would their enemies attack and destroy the Temple to the LORD? Would they carry them away as slaves? The people of Judah waited in fear to find out.

If the people had listened to the messages the LORD had sent through his prophets, Habbakuk, Urijah and Jeremiah, they would have known the answers to their questions. Hadn't Jeremiah stood right in the courtyard of the Temple and given them the LORD's final message: "If you don't follow My laws or listen to the words of My prophets, then I will have the Temple and this city destroyed," He warned.

Unfortunately, they didn't repent and now they faced the painful discipline of their loving God. "The armies of Babibli are coming," the LORD told through His prophets. "They will ruin your land and everything in it. They will take you away to be their servants. This is how I am disciplining you, my wayward, stiff-necked people! You will be the slaves of the king of Babibli. I want you to serve him and his people for seventy years. Do this and you will live," He urged them.

Yet even while disciplining His rebellious people, the LORD showed them great kindness: "At the end of the seventy years, I will rescue you. I will put my Spirit in you and you will live, and I will settle you in your own land again. Then you will know that I the LORD have spoken, and I have done it, declares the LORD!" (from Jeremiah 27:12; Ezekiel 37:13-14)

Before long, it all happened as the LORD had promised. Prince Nabu-kudur-ussur of Babibli with all his father's

armies, swept down into Judah and conquered the land. He told them to take all riches of Judah. "Take all the gold, silver and bronze things out of the Temple," he told them. "We will put them in the temple of Marduk, our god," the prince told them. "Then pick out the smartest, most handsome, young men from the best families in Judah. They will be servants to King Nabopalassar, my father," he said. So the soldiers loaded up carts of beautiful things from the Temple. They gathered up the best young men and set off across the hot, dry wilderness to Bababli.

Daniel, Amaziah, Hananiah and Mishael were young men picked out by the soldiers. How hard it must have been to be forced to leave their families, friends and homeland and become servants of their enemy, King Napopalassar! Yet, these men went bravely. Why? Because unlike many people of Judah, these men loved the LORD. They remembered His promises to take care of them, even in Babibli. So as they marched away into slavery, these men trusted the LORD to care for them.

And so the LORD did. The king took away their Jewish names and gave them new names to honor his gods. Daniel became Belteshazzar. Hanaiah became Shadrach; Mishael, Meshach; and, Azariah, Abednego. He made them go to school to learn about the customs of Babibli and train to be his servants. He even tried to make them eat the food from his table--food sacrificed to his gods. The king wanted them to forget the LORD and worship Marduk instead.

Daniel, Azariah, Mischael, Hananiah worked hard for the king, just as the LORD told them to, but never did they forget the LORD. They even chose to eat animal feed rather than the king's delicious food sacrificed to

Story-telling Tips

Ahead of time:

1. Read the Bible verses and story. Pray!
2. Create story cue cards on index cards (or highlight text).
3. Practice telling story dramatically, timing your presentation. Shorten, if necessary to fit your allotted time.
4. Decorate area with story props that help bring your story alive.

During your presentation:

1. Maintain as much eye contact as possible as you tell the story. Point to/use props at important points in the story. Include the kids in your story with a few questions about what they think will happen or words/concepts that might be new to them.
2. Watch the kids for signs that their attention span has been reached. Shorten, if necessary.

his gods. Even there, far away from home, did they forget the LORD's promise to rescue them. They kept on trusting on Him to provide everything they needed, and the LORD greatly blessed them.

While these young men were in school, King Nabopolassar died and his son, Nabu-kudurr-usur became king. Ashpenaz brought Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego before the new king to be interviewed. King Nabukudurr-usur was most impressed. These young men were ten times wiser than the wisest men who served him already! Daniel could even tell the meaning to dreams! He gave them some of the most important jobs in his whole government.

King Nabopolassar had been great, but now his son, King Nabu-kudurr-usur, became even greater. His powerful army took riches and peoples from other countries and used them to make Babibli a very, very great city. He built splendid temples for all the gods of Babibli. Most magnificent of all was Etemenanki- the 300-foot-high ziggurat temple to Marduk. It towered over the city, just like Marduk's power was said to rule over all the other Babibli gods. Nabu-kudurr-usur felt this was a fitting temple for Marduk who he praised for giving him all his victories. The king also built many other great buildings all around his land. And on every brick used to build them, he had his name stamped on it so everyone would know that he, the great King Nabu-kudurr-usur built it.

But soon all this wasn't enough. King Nabu-kudurr-usur wanted all the peoples from all the lands he conquered to honor him and his god. So he made an image of gold, 90 feet high and 9 feet wide. Then he sent for all the important people who worked for him to come to the dedication of the image he set up, men from every nation that he had conquered.

Beneath that thin, ten story high, glittering, golden image- they all gathered, including Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. A herald announced the king's orders: "Peoples of every nation: When you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes and all kinds of music, you must fall down and worship the image of gold that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up. Whoever does not fall down and worship will immediately be thrown into a blazing furnace," he ordered.

The music sounded and all the important men fell face down and worshiped the image. All that is, except Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. these young men loved the LORD and would worship Him only. Some astrologers noticed what they were doing. and went to tell the king.

The king was furious. He ordered Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego be brought before him for questioning. "Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the image of gold I have set up? I'm giving you another chance. The musicians will play again, if you fall down and worship the image, very good. But if you don't, you will be thrown immediately into a blazing furnace. Then what god will be able to rescue you from my hand?"

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego could save their lives if they would worship the image, but they chose to keep on worshiping the LORD and trust Him to take care of their needs.

"O Nabu-kudurr-usur, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and he will rescue us from your hand, O king," they told the king. "But even if he does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold."

The king was furious! He ordered the furnace heated seven times hotter than usual (and that must have been very hot, indeed, for the furnaces of Babibli were known to be heated up to over 1000 degrees F!) Some of his strongest soldiers tied up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and threw them into the blazing furnace. The heat from the fire killed the soldiers, but what of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego? The king looked in the fire and in amazement at what he saw.

"Look! I see four men walking around in the fire, unbound and unharmed, and the fourth looks like a son of the gods." God had sent an angel—or perhaps Jesus Himself—to protect these men!

King Nabu-kudurr-usur then approached the opening of the blazing furnace and shouted, "Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out! Come here!"

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego came out of the

fire, and the king's important men crowded around them amazed: the fire had not harmed them at all—not their robes their bodies or even a hair on their head!

Then Nabu-kudurru-usur said, "Praise be to the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who has sent his angel and rescued his servants! They trusted in him and were willing to give up their lives rather than serve or worship any god except their own God. Therefore I decree that anyone who speaks against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego will be punished by me, for no other god can save in this way."

Cracking the Case:

It's time to answer our Case Questions.

1. Whose knees would not bend? Why? Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego's knees. They refused to bow down and worship the king's statue. They would only worship the LORD.

2. What happened because they would not bend? Who did they trust to rescue them? Did he? They were thrown into a fiery furnace to die. The LORD. Yes! He did!

Something for You and Me

Our Bible Truth is:

God Loves His People By Caring For Their Needs

Our Bible Verse is: Psalm 23:1-6

"The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever."

God took care of every one of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego's needs. By His Holy Spirit He strengthened their hearts to keep worshiping Him alone and to boldly proclaim Him as the one, true God. He took care of their bodies' needs with animal feed. He even rescued them from a fiery death.

But what about you and me? Can we trust God to take care of all our needs, too? If we are God's people—those who turn away from our sinful ways and trust in

Jesus as our Savior—then we, too, can know God will take care of our needs just exactly as is best, every, single day of our lives.

Let's praise God for loving His people and giving them what they need. Let's ask Him to help us, like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, to think first of all about honoring the Lord and trusting Him, as our loving Father, to take care of all our needs as He knows best.

Close in prayer.

NOTE

Since this is such a familiar story to most children, I used Babibli, the Babylonian word for Babylon; and Nabu-kudurru-usur, the Babylonian word for Nebuchadnezzar. Feel free to substitute back in the English versions, if you desire.

Closing ACTS Prayer

A God, we praise You for being able to perfectly care for Your people, no matter what.

C God, we confess that many times, like the people of Judah, we choose to rebel against You and Your good ways. We need a Savior!

T God, we thank You for always being with Your people, and always being able to care for their needs.

S God, work in our hearts. Help us to turn away from our sins and trust Jesus as our own Savior. Take care of our needs and help us to trust You and live for You, even when it is very hard.

Special Words

Babylon: A country that captured the lands of many other countries and became one of the greatest empires of ancient times.

Judah: The name for the southern part of Israel, where Jerusalem was.

ACTS PRAYER ACTIVITY

Use this sheet to write down your ACTS Prayer

Instructions:

Use this sheet to help the children apply the Bible Truth into a prayer. You can use the ACTS provided or even better, have the kids think of their own applications. Also have the children add their personal requests to the prayer, too. Lead the children in the prayer or let them pray sections, with your help. Never force a child to pray! Non-readers can participate by you whispering a section of the prayer into their ear and allowing them to pray it aloud for the group.

ADORATION:

God, we praise You for being so perfectly good, wise and powerful to always take care of all Your people's needs in the way that is best.

God, we praise You for being.....

Add your own Adorations:

CONFESSION:

God, we confess that we have worried that You cannot or will not take care of our needs. Confess that we have grumbled about ways that You has taken care of our needs that may be best for us, but that we don't like. We need a Savior!

God, we have sinned against You....

Add your own Confessions:

THANKSGIVING:

Thank You, God for all of our needs that You have taken care of already. Thank You for sending Jesus to take care of the greatest need of we have: forgiveness of sins through Jesus.

God, we thank You for...

Add your own Thanksgivings:

SUPPLICATION:

God, take care of our needs, according to what will bring You the most glory and will be wisest and best for us. Work in our hearts. Help us to turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Help us to love You and know You.

God, we need Your help...

Add your own Supplication:

SNEAKY SNACK

Can you figure out how this snack ties in with our case?

Snack: Eating Animal Feed

Granola-like cereal, or trail mix to represent the animal feed they ate.

This is only a suggestion. Feel free to modify. Be mindful of allergy issues among your children!

Case Tie-in: Daniel, Amaziah, Hananiah and Mishael chose to eat animal feed rather than pay honor to the gods of Babylon by eating the delicious food that had been sacrificed to them.

SOUL FOOD

Food for thought during snack time

1. What does the snack have to do with the story?

Choose a few questions from the other activity discussion sheets to talk about during this snack time.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

Directions: Read and discuss Bible Truth, using a FEW of the questions. Play game. Feel free to modify the game to fit your children.

God Loves His People by Caring for Their Needs

God is the most wonderful Father anyone could ever imagine. He is always good; always wise. He loves His children with the deepest of loves. He always takes care of their needs. When we turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as Savior, God becomes our heavenly Father and we become His adopted children.

God's people know that God has already taken care of their greatest need of all: He sent Jesus to die for their sins. When they remember that their loving Father was willing to give up even His own dear Son to save them, they know they can trust Him to take care all the rest of their needs, too.

God delights to hear His people ask Him for what they need; and, He delights to provide them with what they need. He always gives them what He knows is the very best for them.

Understanding the Bible Truth

1. What kind of Father is God? *He is the most wonderful Father anyone could ever imagine: always good; always wise; loves His children with the deepest of loves; always takes care of all their needs.*
2. What is the greatest need we have? How did God take care of it for His people? *To be forgiven their sins so they do not have to face God's eternal wrath and punishment, but can know and enjoy God forever. He took care of this need by sending Jesus to suffer and die as the full payment for their sins.*
3. How do we become God's adopted children and He our Heavenly Father? *By turning from our sins and trusting in Jesus as our own Savior.*
4. Why does thinking about God giving His own Son to save them comfort God's people about His meeting the rest of their needs? *If He was willing to give up His dear Son, who He loves most of all, to take care of their biggest need, surely He will completely take care of all their other lesser needs.*
5. How does God feel about hearing about and providing for His people's needs? What does that mean? *He delights to hear about them and provide for them. That means it brings Him pleasure.*

Bible Truth Story Connection Questions

1. How did God care for Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego's needs? *He reminded them of the prophets' words; gave them strength to do what would honor Him, even if it meant they might be killed; Gave them words to say to the King; made their bodies very strong and their minds quick to learn; rescued them from death.*
2. What did Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego say to King Nebuchadnezzar that showed they knew God would take care of them in the way that was best? *They told the King they knew the LORD could save them if He wanted to, but if He did not, they would still honor Him, not the image.*

Bible Verse Connection Question

1. What does our Bible Truth have to do with our **Bible Verse: Psalm 23:1-6**: "The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever."?
The LORD is like a shepherd to His people. He is always with them, caring for their needs and guiding them. There will never be a day when He is not caring for them. Even when they face death, itself, He will be with them. They never need to fear. They can rejoice that even on that day He will take care of them and He will bring them to live with Him forever in heaven.

Life Application Questions

1. What are needs that people have? How does God meet these needs?
2. Has God ever cared for your needs in ways other than what you prayed for/expected? Who do you think He cared for them as He did? *He is all wise and know better than us what will ultimately be best for us.*
3. God loves His people by caring for their needs. How can we become God's people? *By turning away from our sins and trusting in Jesus as our own Savior.*

ACTS Questions

1. What is something we can praise God for from this Bible Truth? *Praise God for being the one true God who is able to take care all of our needs.*

2. What are sins we can confess to God because of this Bible Truth?

We have worried that God won't take care of our needs or can't take care of our needs, even though He has shown us in His Word, the Bible, that He will always take care of the needs of those who turn to Him and trust in Jesus as their Savior. We deserve His punishment! We need a Savior!

Thank God for ways He has taken care of our needs already. *We can thank Him for sending Jesus to take care of the greatest need of His sinful people: forgiveness of sins through Jesus. We can thank Him for sending Jesus to take care of the greatest need of His sinful people: forgiveness of sins through Jesus.*

4. What is something we can ask God for because of this Bible Truth?

We can ask God to take care of our greatest need: the forgiveness of our sins. We can ask Him to work in our hearts that we would want to turn away from disobeying Him and trust in this wonderful Jesus as our own Savior. We can ask Him to take care of other specific needs we/others have in a way that glorifies Him and is good for us.

The Gospel

1. What is every person's greatest need? What has God done to meet that need? What does He call us to do? What is the gospel?

God is the good Creator and King of the world. He made people to worship Him and live by His good laws. But we are all sinners who have rebelled against Him. We all deserve death--God's just, eternal punishment for our sins. How terrible! But God has good news for us. In His great mercy, God sent His Son Jesus to earth to save sinners. Yes, Jesus, the perfect Son of God, left His home in heaven and became a man. He lived the perfect life that pleases God. (He's the only one who has ever done that!) He offered it up to God His Father as the perfect sacrifice for sins when He suffered and died on the cross. Then, on the third day, Jesus rose from the dead in victory. He had fully paid for the sins of God's people, so they wouldn't have to! Now all who turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior will receive forgiveness of sins and eternal life with God. They will be His very own special people who will know Him and enjoy Him forever. We can be God's people, too, if we turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our own Savior.

Game: Beanbag Scramble

Materials

Beanbags, enough for all the children, minus 1
Drum, guitar or just your hands!
Tape
Small bowl or bag
Bible Truth Questions

Preparing the Game

1. Choose 20+ questions for your game from the Bible Truth Discussion Questions, or make up your own.
2. Write the Bible Truth questions on small thin strips of paper (or make a photocopy of the Bible Truth Discussion Questions and simply cut them into strips) and put them in the bag/bowl.

Playing the Game

Beanbags are placed in a circle on the floor, with children forming a circle just outside the beanbags. Tell the children that you will beat a beat on the drum, strum a strum on the guitar, or clap your hands and they are to march to the beat. As the beat gets faster, they march faster. As it gets slower, they march slower, etc. Suddenly stop the music and the children scramble for the beanbags. The child who has no beanbag picks a question for the class to answer.

Game continues as number of questions, time, and attention span allow.

Optional TAKING IT TO OTHERS Activity: Quiz Questions

Have the children choose a few of the questions from the game to ask the parents/other children during TAKING IT TO OTHERS time. Help pre-readers by whispering the question in their ear and letting them ask it aloud to the parents/other children. Make sure you read the Bible verse aloud before you ask your questions.

Directions:

1. Write words to song in large print before class.
2. Play the song for the children, helping them follow along on the song sheet.
3. Discuss the song, using a few questions from the discussion sheet. *Don't use them all!*
4. Introduce sign language for key words of your choice from sign language sheet for your song. Use as few or as many as you think the children can learn.
5. Sing and sign the song. Sign language as well as large format lyrics and sheet music are found in the PFI Unit Songbook or online.
6. If desired, play the Song Game.

Optional TAKING IT TO OTHERS Activity: Presenting and Singing the Song

1. Sing and sign the song, encouraging the watching children/parents to join in.
2. Ask the class some of the questions listed below. The Bible Truth Connection Question is particularly good to help them understand how the song ties in with the Bible Truth.

The King of Love

Verse 1

The King of love my shepherd is,
Whose goodness faileth never.
I nothing lack if I am His
and He is mine forever.

Verse 4

In death's dark vale I fear no ill,
With Thee dear Lord beside me.
Thy rod and staff, my comfort still,
Thy cross before to guide me.

Listen to it on PFI ESV Songs 8, Tracks 14,15

Understanding the Song

1. Who is the "King of Love"? Why is this a good name for Him? *The LORD. He alone rules with pure love in all that He does for His people.*
2. How is the LORD like a shepherd? *He cares and protects His people, as a shepherd cares and protects his sheep.*
3. What is the LORD's goodness like? *It never fails.*
4. What does "I am His and He is mine" mean? *I am one of God's people. He is my Savior.*
5. What will I lack if I am His and He is mine? *Nothing.*
6. How can we become His? *By turning from our sins and trusting in Jesus as our own Savior.*
7. What does "death's dark vale" mean? *A vale is a valley. Sometimes people talk about scary, lonely, hard times being like valleys and good, happy times being like mountain tops. Death can be the scariest, loneliest, hardest time of all.*
8. What does "ill" mean and why don't God's people need to fear it in death's dark vale? *Ill means something evil or bad (not sick). They need fear nothing evil or bad even when they are dying because they know that the LORD is with them, caring for them, helping them and guiding them.*
9. What does a shepherd use a rod and staff for? *Rod: ward off enemies; the staff to rescue a sheep from a pit.*
10. What are God's rod and staff? *Why are they a comfort in death's dark vale? God's protection of His people from evil that will harm them; God's rescuing power. There is no greater enemy than sin and death. God's people know that God has defeated sin and death when Jesus died on the cross for them. He rescued them so they will enjoy wonderful life with Him forever. They do not need to fear death.*
11. How is the cross a guide in death's dark vale? *A guide is something we can look up to know which way to go. God's people think about how Jesus died on the cross and remember that He has saved them from their sins. It guides them to keep trusting God to save them when they die, instead of fearing.*

Bible Truth Connection Question

1. How does this song relate to our **Bible Truth: God Loves His People By Caring For Their Needs**? *God's people praise God for loving them. and, like a good shepherd, for caring for His people's needs totally. They lack nothing; His goodness never fails them; even when facing death, they still fear nothing "ill" because He is with them. He knows God will care for him after death by taking him to heaven to be with Him forever.*

Story Connection Question

1. How does this song relate to our story? *Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego feared no ill because they knew God was with them. They didn't even lack anything when they ate animal feed instead of food at the king's table. They didn't fear death as they were thrown into the furnace for they knew He was with them.*

Bible Connection Question

1. What does this hymn have to do with our Bible Verse: **Psalm 23:1-6**: "The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever."?

God's people praise God for being the King of love. He is their king who they obey. It is delightful having Him as their king because all that He does comes from His heart of love for them and for the glory of His name. He takes care of them like a good shepherd does his sheep. Sheep are very stupid and need someone to take care all of their needs or else they will die. God does this for His people. They lack nothing; His goodness never fails them; even when facing death, they still fear nothing "ill" because He is with them. God's people know God will care for them after death by taking them to heaven to be with Him forever. We can become God's people when we turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior.

ACTS Questions

1. What is something we can praise God for from this hymn?

Praise God for being the King of Love who loves and cares for His people perfectly.

2. What are sins we can confess to God from this hymn?

That we have rebellious hearts who many times do not want to follow the LORD, even though He is the good and loving King of the world. We deserve His punishment! We need a Savior!

3. What is something we can thank God for from this hymn? *We can thank God sending Jesus to save His people from their sins. We can thank Him for ways we have seen Him care for our needs, even this past week.*

4. What is something we can ask God for from this hymn?

That God would work in our hearts that we might turn from our sins and trust Jesus as our Savior. We can ask Him to be our shepherd and help us to follow Him all the days of our lives.

Life Application Question

1. How can our lives be affected by the message of this song? *We can praise God for being the Good Shepherd of His people. We can ask Him to make us His people, giving us faith to turn from our sins and trust in Him. We can ask Him to help us to trust Him as the Good Shepherd that He is.*

Gospel Question

1. How can we know God as our King of Love who cares for all our needs? What is the gospel?

God is the good Creator and King of the world. He made people to worship Him and live by His good laws. But we are all sinners who've rebelled against Him. We all deserve death--God's just, eternal punishment for our sins. How terrible! But God has good news for us. In His great mercy, God sent His Son, Jesus to earth as a man to save sinners. He lived the perfect life that pleases God. (He's the only one who's ever done that!) He offered it up to God His Father as the perfect sacrifice for sins when He suffered and died on the cross. Then, on the third day, Jesus rose from the dead in victory. He had fully paid for the sins of God's people, so they wouldn't have to! Now all who turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior will receive forgiveness of sins and eternal life with God. They will be His very own special people who will know Him and enjoy Him forever. We can be God's people, too, if we turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our own Savior.

Song Game: Sign It, Say It, What Does It Mean?

Materials

Sign Language signs used in song, particularly choose words with important meanings you want the children to learn, such as “grace”, “redeem”, etc.

Bag or bowl

Preparing the Game

1. Cut out signs and put in bowl.

Playing the Game

1. Practice the song and signs until the children know them well. Then put all the signs we’ve learned in this bag/ bowl and mix them up.
2. Ask one of the children to choose a sign, but not show it to anyone...but you, if they need some help.
3. Ask the child to do the sign for the rest of the children and see if the other children can guess which one it is. Do the sign with the child, if desired.
4. When the children guess the sign, ask them the meaning of the word. If no one guesses the sign, put it back in the bowl to be picked again.
5. Choose another child to pick a new sign from the bag and continue.

NOTE: You might want to sing the song after you do each word or couple of words.

Game continues as number of questions, time, and attention span allow.

choose a FEW questions for discussion, then choose the game and/or music activity

Meditation Version: Psalm 23:1-6

"The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever."

Shortened Memory/Games Version: Psalm 23:1,6

"The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want...goodness and love will follow me all the day of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever."

Understanding the Bible Verse

1. What does a shepherd do for his sheep? *He takes care of their needs and protects them from enemies.*
2. How is the LORD like a shepherd? *He takes care of and protects His people.*
3. What does it mean to be "in want?" *To not have something you need.*
4. Why won't God's people be in want because He is their shepherd? *He is all powerful, all good, all wise. He doesn't just know what they need, but He can always give it to them.*
5. What needs would "green pastures and quiet waters meet for a sheep? *Good food and water for their body. A safe place to rest. The basic needs of life.*
6. What needs of God's people are like green pastures and quiet waters? *What they need to grow and live: food, drink, rest, a home, clothes, love, and other basic needs of life.*
7. What does it mean that God restores His people's souls? *To restore something means to take something weak and tired and make it strong and full of life again, the way it's supposed to be. When our souls are weak in faith, tired in trusting and obeying God, God can make them strong to keep believing and living for Him.*
8. How does God restore our souls? *By His Holy Spirit working in our hearts;; by reading/hearing His Word, the Bible; and by encouraging us through others.*
9. What are paths of righteousness and why does God guide His people in them? *Not a real road we walk on. This is the way to say He guides them in ways to live that please and honor Him. He does this for "His name's sake;" that is, He does it so that when others see us living in ways that please God, it helps them see what God is like and gives them reason to honor Him.*
10. Why is helping God's people walk in the paths of righteousness a way that God cares for them? *God's people want to honor and glorify God in how they live. They know that His ways of righteousness are always the best way to live. By guiding them in them, He is showing them the way to live that will make them happiest (in the long run, if not the short run.)*
11. What is the valley of the shadow of death? How does God help His people there? *Not a real valley we walk through, but a picture of going through something really hard, and that might even lead to death. He is with them; He helps them fear no evil.*
12. What is a rod and staff? What are God's rod and staff? Why are they comforting to God's people? *A rod is a weapon the shepherd uses against the sheep's enemies. A staff is a long stick with a hook on one end that the shepherd uses to rescue the sheep when they fall in a hole, etc.*
13. What does it mean that God prepares a table for His people in the presence of their enemies? *A table is where food is placed for us to eat and be filled up with the food we need to keep on living. An enemy wants to harm us. He wouldn't want us to have the good things we need. This verse is telling us that God promises to always give us what we need, even in the hardest times. Nothing or no one can keep Him from taking care of His people.*
14. What does having our head anointed with oil and our cup overflowing mean? *In Bible times, having your head anointed with oil meant having a bit of oil poured upon it. It was a way of showing someone favor. Having an overflowing cup what a way of saying you will have everything you need. These expressions are ways of saying that God always blesses His people with everything they need and more.*
15. What does it mean for goodness and mercy to follow you all the days of your life? *Not that they are really walking behind you but that God is always with His people showing them mercy and goodness in how He cares for their needs every day.*

16. What is the house of the LORD and Why will God's people dwell there forever? *God's house is heaven, where God's presence is and where God's people can have close fellowship with Him. Through faith in Jesus, God's people receive eternal life, which is dwelling with God forever.*

Bible Truth Connection Question

1. What does this verse have to do with the **Bible Truth: God Loves His People By Caring For Their Needs?** *God loves His people and cares for needs completely, just like a good shepherd takes care of his sheep.*

Story Connection Questions

1. How does this verse relate to our story? *God guided Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in paths of righteousness for His name's sake. They did not fear evil, even as they faced death. They knew God could rescue them and bring them into His house to live forever.*

Life Application Questions

1. If God's goodness and mercy is with His people all the days of their life, how well do you think God will be meeting their needs? *Perfectly well!*
2. How can we become God's people? *By turning away from our sins and trusting Jesus as our Savior.*

ACTS Questions

1. What is something we can praise God for from this Bible Verse?
Praise God for being the Shepherd of His People, all the days of their lives.
2. What are sins we can confess to God from this Bible Verse?
We have all turned away from God. We act like we do not want Him to be our shepherd. We want to live life our own way. We deserve God's punishment! We need a Savior!
3. What is something we can thank God for from this Bible Verse?
We can thank God for different ways we have seen Him meet our needs. We can thank Him for sending Jesus to meet the greatest need of His people: the forgiveness of sins for all who turn away from disobeying God and trust in Jesus as their own Savior.
4. What is something we can ask God for from this Bible Verse?
We can ask God to work in our hearts that we would want to turn away from disobeying Him and trust in this wonderful Jesus as our own Savior. We can ask Him to be our Shepherd: guide us and care for us, according to His perfect love and wisdom, all the days of our lives.

The Gospel

1. How can we dwell with God forever in heaven? What is the gospel?
God is the good Creator and King of the world. He made people to worship Him and live by His good laws. But we are all sinners who have rebelled against Him. We all deserve death--God's just, eternal punishment for our sins. How terrible! But God has good news for us. In His great mercy, God sent His Son Jesus to earth to save sinners. Yes, Jesus, the perfect Son of God, left His home in heaven and became a man. He lived the perfect life that pleases God. (He's the only one who has ever done that!) He offered it up to God His Father as the perfect sacrifice for sins when He suffered and died on the cross. Then, on the third day, Jesus rose from the dead in victory. He had fully paid for the sins of God's people, so they wouldn't have to! Now all who turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior will receive forgiveness of sins and eternal life with God. They will be His very own special people who will know Him and enjoy Him forever. We can be God's people, too, if we turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our own Savior.

Game: Cross the Raging River

Materials

Bible verse written up in large print so that all can see
Two yardsticks or long pieces of rope

Preparing the Game

Make up some questions about the verse and/or story (use the Bible verse Discussion and Story Review Discussion Questions).

Learning the Verse

Some or all of your children may be non- or early readers. Teach the verse in sections, having them say it after you. Repeat a few times. Add clapping or other movement as they say it.

Directions

1. If desired, lead the children in a discussion of a **FEW** of the most important questions before beginning game.
2. Explain the game to them as follows:
Have the children line up in a straight line behind the leader. Explain to them that there's a river to cross and they get to jump the bank without getting wet. Each child will say the verse and then jump across the two yardsticks/ropes lying next to each other on the floor. After each round, the sticks/ropes will be separated by more space, making it a wider river to jump across. As the river gets wider, some children will not make it but "fall in". Explain to them that they are stuck in the river unless they can answer a question (that you make up) about the Bible verse or the story. Feel free to let a child "stuck in the river" ask another child for a "lifeline" and help them answer their question.

Game continues as time and attention span allow.

Caution: Avoid accidents by not letting the "river" get too wide.

Optional **TAKING IT TO OTHERS** Activity: Quiz Questions

Have the children choose a few of the questions from the game to ask the parents/other children during **TAKING IT TO OTHERS** time. Help pre-readers by whispering the question in their ear and letting them ask it aloud to the parents/other children. Make sure you read the Bible verse aloud before you ask your questions.

Directions:

1. Write words to song in large print before class.
2. Play the song for the children, helping them follow along on the song sheet.
3. Discuss the song, using a few questions from the discussion sheet. *Don't use them all!*
4. Introduce sign language for key words of your choice from sign language sheet for your song. Use as few or as many as you think the children can learn.
5. Sing and sign the song. Sign language as well as large format lyrics and sheet music are found in the PFI Unit Songbook or online.
6. If desired, play the Song Game.

Optional TAKING IT TO OTHERS Activity: Presenting and Singing the Song

1. Sing and sign the song, encouraging the watching children/parents to join in.
2. Ask the class some of the questions listed below. The Bible Truth Connection Question is particularly good to help them understand how the song ties in with the Bible Truth.

The LORD Is My Shepherd

The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.
 He makes me lie down in green pastures,
 He leads me beside quiet waters, He restores my soul,
 He leads me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake.
 Even though I walk through the valley of death, I will fear no evil,

Why? For You are with me. Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me, in the presence of my enemies,
 You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.
 Surely goodness and mercy will follow me, All of the days of my life,
 And I will dwell in the house of the LORD, forever and ever and ever.
 Psalm Twenty-three.

Listen to it on PFI ESV Songs 8, Track 16

Song Game: Pass the Secret Sign**Materials**

Sign Language signs used in song, particularly choose words with important meanings you want the children to learn, such as "grace", "redeem", etc.

Bag or bowl

Blindfold

Preparing the Game

1. Cut out signs and put in bowl.

Playing the Game

1. Practice the song and signs until the children know them well.
2. Have all the children stand in a tight circle, except one, "It" who will stand in the middle of the circle, blindfolded.
3. Have the children in the circle to put their hands behind their backs. Choose a sign from the bag and hand to a child in the circle, still keeping hands behind their backs, not looking at the sign.
4. When "It" says "Pass the Secret Sign", the children will begin to pass the sign around behind their backs.
5. When "It" says "Stop the Passing!" the child who has the sign freezes with the sign behind his back.
6. The child with the sign brings it around and looks at it. You can help the child practice the sign.
7. Then take the blindfold off of "It", watch the child with the card do the sign, then have "It" guess the name of the sign. (If desired, "It" can ask another child in the circle for help with their guess.)
8. The holder of the sign then becomes "It." Sing the song with all the signs, then repeat.

STORY REVIEW

Directions: Read and discuss Bible Truth, using a FEW of the questions. Play game. Feel free to modify the game to fit your children.

General Story Questions

1. Who were the Israelites worried about? *The enemy kings and their armies that surrounded them.*
2. What did the LORD tell them they needed to do before He would protect them from the enemy armies? *Turn away from idol worship and follow Him again.*
3. What did the LORD tell them would happen when they chose not to turn back to Him? *He would lovingly discipline them by allowing the Babylonians to destroy their lands and carry them off to serve them in Babylon for 70 years, then He would change their hearts by His Spirit and bring them back home.*
4. Why were Daniel, Azariah, Mishael, and Hananiah chosen to go to Babylon? *They were very handsome, smart and from the best families. The King of Babylon wanted to train them to serve him.*
5. Did the Israelites turn back to the LORD or did they keep on worshiping idols? *They kept worshiping idols.*
6. Why did the king change the four men's names? *They all had the name of the LORD in them. He gave them new names with the names of their gods in them. He wanted them to worship them and serve them instead.*
7. What were the four men to learn in their training? *Babylonian literature and language.*
8. Why did the four men not want to eat from the king's table? *Because the food from the king's table would have been offered to their gods and they didn't want to honor their gods that way.*
9. How did God meet the four men's need to learn Babylonian literature and language? *He made them 10 times more knowledgeable than even the wise men the king used already.*
10. How did God bless Nebuchadnezzar? *He allowed him to have many victories.*
11. What did Nebuchadnezzar do to Babylon? *Build it into a great city.*
12. Who did Nebuchadnezzar want to have join him and his people in honoring and worshiping? *All the peoples of all the lands he conquered.*
13. Why didn't Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego bow down? *They worshiped the LORD only.*
14. What did the three men say to King N. when he gave them another chance to bow down? *They said they would only worship the LORD. He could save them from the fires of the furnace if He wanted to.*
15. Did the three men know that God would save them from the fires? *No. They knew He COULD save them, but they trusted that He would save them only if it was best.*
16. How did God help the three men as they went to the furnace? *By His Spirit, He gave them courage to bravely face death. In the furnace, He protected them from the fires completely. He even had angel or maybe even Jesus appear with them in the fire.*

Bible Truth Connection Questions

1. What does this story have to do with our Bible Truth? *Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego chose to worship the LORD and trust He would take care of their needs; and He did.*

Bible Verse Connection Question

1. What does the story have to do with our **Bible Verse: Psalm 23:1-6**: "The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever."?
Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego trusted the LORD to be their shepherd who would lead them and take care of them. They did not even fear evil when they faced death in the hot furnace. They knew that the LORD could rescue them and even if He did not, that they would dwell with Him forever.

Life Application Questions

1. Who knows what we need best of all? *God does.*
2. Who can trust that God will completely care for their needs? *God's people—those who have turned from their sins and trusted Jesus as their Savior.*

ACTS Questions

1. What is something we can praise God for being that we learned in our story?

Praise God for being the Great Lover and Savior of His undeserving people.

2. What is something we can confess as sin that we learned in our story?

Confess that many times, like the Israelites, we grumble against God, even though He has treated us so much better than we deserve. We deserve God's punishment. He has given us a Savior!

3. What is something we can thank God for that we learned in our story?

We can thank God for promising to send a Savior to save all those who turn from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior.

4. What is something we can ask God for that we learned in our story?

We can ask God to work in our hearts, helping us to turn away from our sins and trust Jesus as our own Savior. We can ask Him to fill our hearts with love for Him and all He has done for His people.

The Gospel

1. Like the Israelites, we are sinners who do not deserve God's love. Is there any hope for us? What is the gospel?

God is the good Creator and King of the world. He made people to worship Him and live by His good laws. But we are all sinners who have rebelled against Him. We all deserve death--God's just, eternal punishment for our sins. How terrible! But God has good news for us. In His great mercy, God sent His Son Jesus to earth to save sinners. Yes, Jesus, the perfect Son of God, left His home in heaven and became a man. He lived the perfect life that pleases God. (He's the only one who has ever done that!) He offered it up to God His Father as the perfect sacrifice for sins when He suffered and died on the cross. Then, on the third day, Jesus rose from the dead in victory. He had fully paid for the sins of God's people, so they wouldn't have to! Now all who turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior will receive forgiveness of sins and eternal life with God. They will be His very own special people who will know Him and enjoy Him forever. We can be God's people, too, if we turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our own Savior.

Game: Go Fish

Materials

Broom stick or pole
String
U-shaped magnet
Paper clips, 1 per question
Construction paper
Scissors
Basket/Pail
Story Review Questions

Preparing the Game

1. Choose 20+ questions for your game from the Story Review Discussion Questions, or make up your own.
2. Cut out fish (different sizes and shapes, if desired), one per question. Write a question on each fish. And assign a point value to each fish based on difficulty. Attach a paper clip to the mouth of each fish. Place the fish in the basket. Attach the magnet to one end of the string and the pole to the other end.

Playing the Game

Divide the children into two teams. Teams will take turns catching fish by hooking them with the magnet and the paper clip. The question is then read to the child/team. A correct answer is worth as many points as is indicated on the fish. If answered incorrectly, the question goes to the other team for a possible one point.

Play continues as questions last, or as time and attention span allow.

Non-competitive Option

Don't split into teams. Have the children take turns catching fish and answering the questions together.

Optional TAKING IT TO OTHERS Activity: Quiz Questions

Have the children choose a few of the questions from the game to ask the parents/other children during TAKING IT TO OTHERS time. Help pre-readers by whispering the question in their ear and letting them ask it aloud to the parents/other children.

CASE REPLAY ACTIVITIES

Use this guide to review the Case Story and act it out for others to enjoy!

CASE REPLAY, JR: YOUNGEST CHILDREN

Description: The children will act out the story together, everyone doing the same action/sound effect at the same time. This activity is most suitable for kindergarteners.

Materials

The Case RePlay, Jr. script for younger children

Preparation

1. Read through the script and write in the blanks along the side possible actions/sound effects the children could do to act it out.

Instructions

1. Tell the children that they will be re-enacting the story together as you tell it.
2. As you read the script, lead the children in actions/sound effects to do with you.
3. If desired, you can read the script and stop at certain sentences and ask them what a good action/sound effect would be to act out what you just read.
4. Repeat the re-enactment one or two times more.

CASE REPLAY, SR: OLDER CHILDREN

Description: The children act out the story as a three-scene play. You will narrate it using the Case RePlay, Sr. script and they will act it out (no spoken words, for the most part), with each child assuming a different character's role. This activity is most suitable for first grade and up. You will review the story, then practice it a few times before performing it for others.

Materials

The Case RePlay, Sr. script
White board or other large format paper
Costumes and props

Preparation

1. Prepare for the play by choosing costumes and props for each character in the story. Decorate the area with any scenery props.
2. Write the words "Beginning," "Middle," "End" on a large piece of paper/whiteboard with plenty of space under each heading. You will use this paper to help the children think about the story as a three-scene play, as it is presented in the script.

Instructions

1. Tell the children that they will get to act out the story as a three-scene play, with a beginning, middle and end section. Tell them that before they can act it out, they need to think it out. as you narrate it with your script.
2. Take the children's answers as they recount the story, helping them put key incidents in the right order.
3. If desired, when they have filled in their Beginning, Middle, End, read through your whole (real) script, so they hear exactly what you will have them act out.
4. Then tell the children that it's time to practice acting out the story.
5. Assign parts to each child. If you are using costumes, do NOT give them out at this point. They will be a distraction.
6. Have all the children sit on the floor or in chairs on one side of the "stage," then call the characters up in place as their part in the story comes.
7. As you read the script, guide the children in where you want them to move or do to act it out.
8. After going through the whole script once, give out any costumes and props and act out the script once or twice more.

Optional TAKING IT TO OTHERS Activity: Re-enacting the Story

Read the script as the children act out together (younger) or assuming different roles (older) as the other children or the parents watch.

CASE REPLAY, JR--YOUNGER KIDS (KINDERGARTEN) P.2

“Welcome to our play! The name of our story is called: The Case of the Unbending Knees.

This is an Old Testament story. It starts out about 600 years before Jesus lived on earth.

And now we present: “The Case of the Unbending Knees.”

Scene 1:

Actions:

Israel was frightened by the powerful kings and armies that surrounded them. Through His prophets the LORD told the people of Israel that He would protect them if they turned away from their idols and obeyed Him again. But if they did not, in love, He would discipline them. He would allow the armies of Babylon to attack them. They would ruin their lands and the Temple. They would take people back to Babylon to serve them for seventy years. Then the LORD would change their hearts by His Holy Spirit and bring them back home to Israel at the end of the seventy years. The people of Israel refused to turn back to the LORD and so, the LORD allowed Prince Nebuchadnezzar’s armies attack to Israel. The land was destroyed. The beautiful things from the Temple were taken and put in Marduk’s temple instead. Many people were taken to Babylon, including the handsomest, smartest young men who were forced to serve the king in Babylon. Among them were Daniel, Azariah, Mishael, and Hananiah.

Scene 2:

Daniel, Azariah, Mishael, and Hananiah and the others were brought to chief official Ashpenaz. They were renamed Belteshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego after the Babylonian gods. They would learn Babylonian literature and language for three years; and, they would receive food from the king’s table. The four men did not like their new names or that they had to learn about Babylon, but they refused to eat food from the king’s table because much of it had been sacrificed to their gods. God helped the four men learn. At the end of three years, King Nebuchadnezzar found they knew ten times more than the rest. He gave them very important jobs in his government.

Scene 3

God blessed Nebuchadnezzar and allowed him to conquer many lands, taking their riches and forcing their people into his service. The king built up Babylon to be a very great city to honor himself and his gods, especially Marduk. The king decided he wanted all the peoples from the other lands to honor him and worship his gods as his people did. He built a 90’ X 9’ golden image and called all the men to stand before it, including Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. A herald ordered them to bow down before the image when the musical instruments played. Whoever didn’t would be thrown in the furnace. Everyone bowed down, except the three men. God gave them strength to worship Him, not the image. Some astrologers told the king what they had done. He gave the men another chance to bow down, but they did not. They told him that their God would save them from the furnace if He wanted to. The king had the fire made very, very hot. Soldiers took the men and threw them in the furnace. God kept the fire from hurting the men. An angel (or perhaps, it was Jesus!) appeared with them in the fire. When they came out of the fire, the king said that no one should ever speak against the LORD for no other god could save that way.

Bible Truth Tie-In:

The Bible Truth we are learning is: **God Loves His People By Caring For Their Needs.** Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego chose to worship the LORD and trust He would take care of their needs; and He did.

CASE REPLAY, SR--OLDER KIDS (1ST GRADE AND UP) P.3

"Welcome to our play! The name of our story is called: The Case of the Unbending Knees.

This is an Old Testament story. It starts out about 600 years before Jesus lived on earth.

The characters in our story are: King of Edom, the Israelites, Moses, Jesus, Nicodemus, and Joseph of Arimathea

Kings and armies; Prophet Jeremiah; Nebuchadnezzar and army; Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, Azariah and other young men of Israel; Ashpenaz; Guards; Officials from various countries; Astrologers; and the fourth person in fire (Jesus?).

And now we present: "The Case of the Unbending Knees."

Scene 1: (Beginning)

Israel was frightened by the powerful kings and armies that surrounded them. Through His prophets the LORD told the people of Israel that He would protect them if they turned away from their idols and obeyed Him again. But if they did not, in love, He would discipline them. He would allow the armies of Babylon to attack them. They would ruin their lands and the Temple. They would take people back to Babylon to serve them for seventy years. Then the LORD would change their hearts by His Holy Spirit and bring them back home to Israel at the end of the seventy years. The people of Israel refused to turn back to the LORD and so, the LORD allowed Prince Nebuchadnezzar's armies attack to Israel. The land was destroyed. The beautiful things from the Temple were taken and put in Marduk's temple instead. Many people were taken to Babylon, including the handsomest, smartest young men who were forced to serve the king in Babylon. Among them were Daniel, Azariah, Mishael, and Hananiah.

Scene 2:(Middle)

Daniel, Azariah, Mishael, and Hananiah and the others were brought to chief official Ashpenaz. They were renamed Belteshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego after the Babylonian gods. They would learn Babylonian literature and language for three years; and, they would receive food from the king's table. The four men did not like their new names or that they had to learn about Babylon, but they refused to eat food from the king's table because much of it had been sacrificed to their gods. God helped the four men learn. At the end of three years, King Nebuchadnezzar found they knew ten times more than the rest. He gave them very important jobs in his government.

Scene 3: (End)

God blessed Nebuchadnezzar and allowed him to conquer many lands, taking their riches and forcing their people into his service. The king built up Babylon to be a very great city to honor himself and his gods, especially Marduk. The king decided he wanted all the peoples from the other lands to honor him and worship his gods as his people did. He built a 90' X 9' golden image and called all the men to stand before it, including Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. A herald ordered them to bow down before the image when the musical instruments played. Whoever didn't would be thrown in the furnace. Everyone bowed down, except the three men. God gave them strength to worship Him, not the image. Some astrologers told the king what they had done. He gave the men another chance to bow down, but they did not. They told him that their God would save them from the furnace if He wanted to. The king had the fire made very, very hot. Soldiers took the men and threw them in the furnace. God kept the fire from hurting the men. An angel (or perhaps, it was Jesus!) appeared with them in the fire. When they came out of the fire, the king said that no one should ever speak against the LORD for no other god could save that way.

Bible Truth Tie-In:

The Bible Truth we are learning is: **God Loves His People By Caring For Their Needs.** Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego chose to worship the LORD and trust He would take care of their needs; and He did.

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the Fiery Furnace

Description

Children will make a picture of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the fiery furnace using colored pencils/markers and tissue paper.

Materials

White Paper or (preferably) Cardstock
Yellow, Red, Orange Tissue Paper
Colored Pencils or Markers
Glue Sticks
Gold Glitter

Preparing the Craft

1. Make a copy of the picture onto white cardstock, 1 per child
2. Use Pattern #1 as guide to cut out tongues of fire from the three different colors of tissue paper.
3. Set out glue sticks and markers.

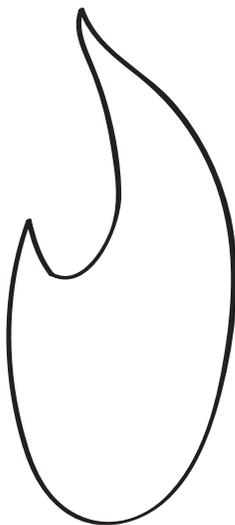
Making the Craft

1. Show the sample of the craft you have made.
2. Have the children color in their pictures.
3. Have the children glue in place the tongues of fire over their pictures.
5. Decorate the "Son of God" with glitter (for glory)

Optional TAKING IT TO OTHERS Activity: Craft Presentation

If you are presenting the craft to other children or parents the children can hold up their crafts (or your model craft) and read their Bible Truth Connection answers to explain the importance of the craft.

Craft Pattern #3: Flame Shape



CASE CRAFT**Discussion Guide****Instructions:**

As the children are settled into making their craft, ask them these questions to help them understand the craft's significance. Use the answers provided to guide the children's answers.

Discussion Questions

1. Where were Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego taken when the armies attacked Jerusalem? *To Babylon to serve King Nebuchadnezzar.*
2. What did King Nebuchadnezzar build in his honor? What did he order all the people to do? *A huge, golden image. Bow down and worship it.*
3. What did the King do to Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego because they wouldn't bow down and worship? *Have them thrown into the fiery furnace to die.*
4. What is the Bible Truth that we are learning? *God Loves His People By Caring For Their Needs .*
5. What does our craft have to do with our Bible Truth: God Loves His People By Caring For Their Needs? *Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego chose to trust God to meet their needs and rescue them as He saw fit rather than to worshiping the image and rescue themselves.*
6. What can this craft help us remember? *It is always best to keep worshiping God and trusting Him to take care of our needs.*

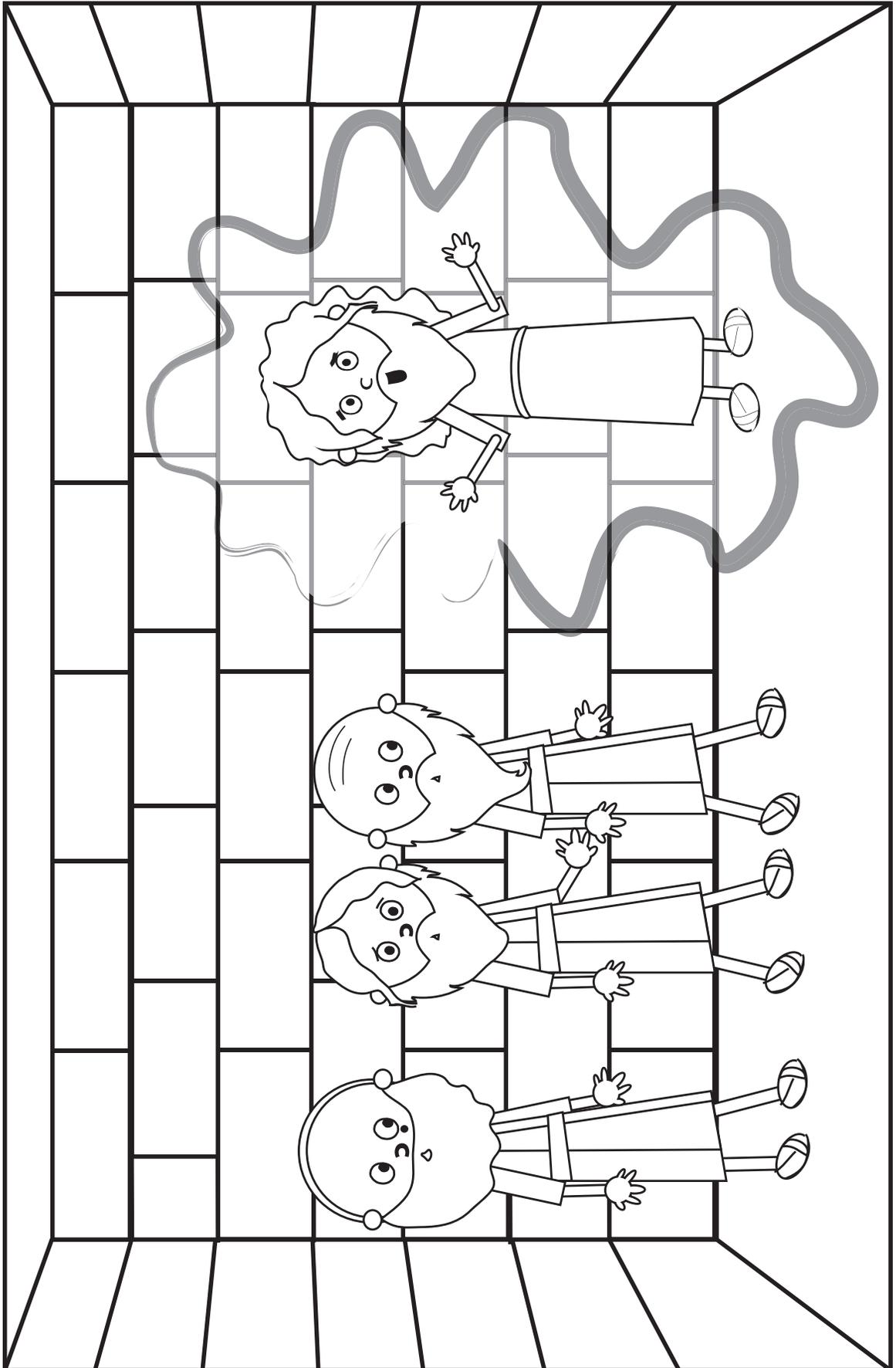
TAKING IT TO OTHERS**Craft Presentation****Instructions:**

Have children hold up your model craft/their crafts. Choose five children (or you say) the five sections below to explain the craft's importance.

Presentation:

1. Our craft is: The Bronze Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the Fiery Furnace.
2. In Babylon, King Nebuchadnezzar threw Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego into the fiery furnace because they would not bow down and worship the image he had made.
3. Bible Truth 4 is: God Loves His People By Caring For Their Needs .
4. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego chose to trust God to meet their needs and rescue them as He saw fit rather than to worshiping the image and rescue themselves.
5. Our craft can help us remember that it is always best to keep worshiping God and trusting Him to take care of our needs.

Note: Even non-readers can participate in presenting the craft, if you will whisper what they are to say in their ear and let them say it aloud for the others to hear.



BEFORE CLASS:**1. PICK YOUR PERSON**

VIPPs can be anyone in your church! Typically, they fall into 6 categories: Church staff, Elders, Deacons/deaconesses, Special Volunteers (people who aren't paid, but spend a lot of time helping out in particular ways), Supported Workers (aka missionaries), and Church Members.

2. GATHER YOUR FACTS

Use the VIPP Information Sheet to write down the facts about your VIPP. The information on this worksheet is used in the VIPP activities, listed in the "Choose an Activity" section below.

DURING THE ACTIVITY:**1. INTRODUCE YOUR VIPP**

Introduce your VIPP to the children, using the VIPP Information Sheet. Fill in a set of VIPP Clue Cards with the information for your VIPP. If desired, you can even have the actual person come into class for the children to meet.

Need help describing what someone does for the church in a kid-friendly way? Check out the list of common VIPPs on the Praise Factory website in the PFI resources. There are lots of kid-friendly descriptions for common VIPP's, such as pastors, elders, deacons and a lot more.

2. PRAY!

Lead the children in praying for the VIPP. Ask the children if they would like to pray for one of the VIPPs prayer requests. Even non-readers can pray for the VIPP if you whisper the prayer request in their ear, then let them say it aloud. Never force a child to pray!

3. CHOOSE AN ACTIVITY

There are two activities you can use to help the children learn about the VIPP:

VIPP Clue Cards: These are nine coloring sheets in which children fill in the nine things they learn about the VIPP from the VIPP Information Sheet. Photocopy a set of each child. Use as few or as many of these Clue Cards as you desire.

VIPP Game: This is a game that uses a set of Clue Cards for one or two VIPPs.

Choose a VIPP and fill in his/her information on the VIPP Information Sheet. Fill in a set of VIPP Clue Cards with the information for your VIPP. Tell the children about the VIPP, having them fill in the VIPP Clue Cards with the key facts as they learn them. Write any words the children need to write on a white-board or other piece of paper so they can see how to spell them. Help younger children write these words on their clue cards. Ideas for how to tell the children about many common VIPPs are listed at praisefactory.org with the resources for this Bible Truth.

Optional TAKING IT TO OTHERS Activity: Introduce and Pray for the VIPP

If you are presenting the VIPP to other children or parents you can assign children to hold up the 10 clue cards and say what each card tells about the VIPP. (Or, you can have the children hold them up as you tell what each one means.) Then lead the children in praying for the VIPP.

Game: Hit the Wall

Materials

Information Sheet for one VIPP

2 Set of Clue Cards

8 8.5" x 11" Manilla Envelopes

Nerf Ball or other soft ball for indoor use

Preparing the Game

1. Fill in one set of clue sheets for the VIPP you are using.
2. Tape the other (blank) set of Clue Cards to the outside of the manilla envelopes.
3. Put the filled-in clue cards in the corresponding envelope.
4. Tape the envelopes to the wall.

Playing the Game

Reveal: Tell the children about the VIPP, showing them your filled-in clue cards as you tell about them.

Review: Have the children take turns trying to hit an envelope with the ball. The teacher (or the child) tells the Clue Card category. The other children try to remember what the VIPP's answer was. Open it up and see if they got it right. If they did, the Clue Card is retired. If not, it can be added back into the Clue Cards to be aimed at.

VIPP INFORMATION SHEET

VIPP NAME:

WHAT VIPP LOOKS LIKE

Man or Woman? _____

Hair color? _____

Eye color? _____

FAVORITE ANIMAL

FAVORITE FOOD

FAVORITE FREE TIME ACTIVITY

WHAT VIPP DOES DURING WEEK

VIPP GROUP OF SERVICE:

Church Member

Deacon

Elder

Church Staff

Special Volunteer

Supported Worker
(Missionary)

3 WAYS VIPP SERVES CHURCH

3 WAYS TO PRAY FOR THE VIPP
