

June 13, 2021 – Daniel 1:8-21 – Staying True/Not Conforming

Opening Activity: Walk the line

Supplies – blind fold & painters or masking tape.

Using tape, make a straight line, as long as possible in your house. One by one have each player put on the mask and then try to walk on the line with other players being silent. Take off their mask at the end and see how close or far they are from the actual line. Next round, have non-walking players coach the walker by saying things like, “A little to your left.” Or “Two inches to your right.” See how much closer each person got with good coaching.

Ask: Was it easier to stay on the line when someone was coaching you? Why? We trusted that we were going to give each other good directions, but what if someone had given bad directions?

Say: We can see why it’s important to know who you can trust.

Lesson:

We’re continuing to look at the story of Daniel today.

Ask: Who remembers our story from last week? (God had promised to protect and bless his people as long as they obeyed him, and he promised to punish them if they didn’t obey him. Even when they didn’t obey, God sent many prophets to warn them and try to get them to turn back to him. Finally, he kept his promise of punishment and allowed them to be taken captive by the Babylonians. Daniel, his friends, and others who loved and obeyed God didn’t deserve the punishment, but they continued to trust that his plan was perfect, so they continued to obey him.” The king of Babylon, King Nebuchadnezzar, ordered his chief of court officials to bring the most handsome and intelligent of the captive to be trained to work for him. Daniel and his friends were among those chosen.)

Say: Now Daniel finds that he and his friends, having been chosen to be trained to work for the king, must go through a lot of physical and mental training. They needed to become very strong, and also to learn the ways of the Babylonians. Part of their physical training meant that they were to eat the food from the king’s table. Unfortunately, God did not approve of the king’s food, so Daniel and his friends didn’t want to eat it. Daniel did something very brave.

Read: Daniel 1:8-10

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

Ask: Why was it brave of Daniel to decide not to eat the king’s food? Why was the official afraid?

Ask: Can you think of a time when you stood up for your beliefs when someone or something tried to steer you away from God? Why do you think you didn’t give in? How did you feel?

Say: Let's see what happened next.

Read: Daniel 1:11-14

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

Ask: What do you think will happen? No milk, no meat, no dessert?! Do you think you could eat only vegetables and water for 10 days?

Read: Daniel 1:15-17

¹⁵ At the end of the ten days they looked healthier and better nourished than any of the young men who ate the royal food. ¹⁶ So the guard took away their choice food and the wine they were to drink and gave them vegetables instead.

¹⁷ To these four young men God gave knowledge and understanding of all kinds of literature and learning. And Daniel could understand visions and dreams of all kinds.

Ask: What did God give them in addition to health? Do you think these four men were surprised at how healthy they were or that God gave them knowledge and understanding? Why or why not?

Read: Daniel 1:18-21

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

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

Ask: Why do you think the king found these four ten times better than the others? Do you remember God's promise to his people that we talked about last week? (If they obeyed him he would bless and protect them; if they disobeyed him he would punish them.) How do these four show that God keeps his promises?

Pray: Dear God, we are so grateful that you always keep your promises. We want to be like Daniel and his friends and obey you no matter the circumstances or people around us. Help us to grow in wisdom and knowledge by reading your Word. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

CRAFT – Homemade Compass

Supplies – needle (1- 1 ½”), magnet, shallow dish, slice of cork (must be real cork)

1. Hold the needle and stroke the magnet down the length of the needle 50 times (if it's a weaker magnet it may need more). Only stroke one way (ie don't rub back and forth).
2. Important - take note of which side of the magnet you were using. Flip the needle around so you are holding the other end, and flip over the magnet so you are using the other side of the magnet. Now repeat on the non-magnetized end of the needle.
3. Cut a cork so it is about 1 to 2 cm thick.
4. Carefully push the needle through the cork. This is best done by an adult with a pair of pliers. You want the cork to be centered on the needle.
5. Set out your bowl and fill it with a few inches of water.
6. Place your cork and needle in the water and see how it moves. It should align itself so it points north.
7. Bonus - Create a second compass and add it to the same bowl of water. What happens? What happens if you bring your magnet near the water? What happens if you spin the compass?