



Living differently

Session ideas for children ages 11-14 based on Daniel 6

These activities and more can be found on the web pages of Scripture Union LightLive. www.scriptureunion.org.uk/lightlive . Resources for Sunday and midweek groups.

INTERFACE 1

Interactive Bible story

You will need:

- Bibles
- Sound effects for Bible story (optional)
- Interface 1 Daniel 6 pdf 2B (Download from AMD web page)

1. Explain to the group that they are going to find out more about the life of Daniel. Sadly, this story has been told so often that we can become immune to the severity of the situation Daniel was facing. Explain that you are going to read out excerpts of what happened but that you want them to imagine themselves as Daniel in the situation. Get the group to close their eyes and listen to the sound effects and Bible reading.

2 If you have the kind of group that would enjoy this activity, use the script below with sound effects (if you can source them) or read the story direct from the Bible.

Daniel had served the king for many years and so the king decided to promote him. The king placed 120 governors over all the country. He put Daniel and two other people in charge of these governors. The governors hated Daniel and tried to find a way to get rid of him. The trouble was, they couldn't find anything in his life or work that he was doing wrong. So they plotted together. (*Sound effect - whispering.*)

They went together to see the king and lied to him - saying that Daniel and the other two governors felt there should be a law against anyone praying to anyone except the king. They said that anyone who broke the law should be

thrown into a den of lions. They would be eaten alive. So the king made it against the law to pray to God. Daniel heard about the law and what the governors had done. But still he went upstairs (*Sound effect - footsteps.*), closed the door (*Sound effect - door closing.*) and prayed to God. He did this three times a day.

The governors dragged Daniel in front of the king. The king was heartbroken but, because he had made the law, he had to do what the law said. So Daniel was taken out and thrown into a den filled with lions (*Sound effect - lions roaring.*)

and a massive stone was rolled in front of the den, so no one could get in or out. (*Sound effect - stone rolling.*) Daniel was left there. (*Sound effect - lions. Allow this to go on for a while, then cut to silence.*)

The next morning the king rushed to the lions' den. He ordered the stone to be removed (*Sound effect - stone being removed.*) and there in the den was Daniel - surrounded by lions, but completely unharmed. The king had Daniel pulled out of the den. He turned on the governors that had lied to him and plotted against Daniel. He had them and their families thrown into the lion's den and they all died. (*Silence - allow a pause here.*)

The king issued another law that day. He ordered that everyone in the land should worship God because he knew it could only have been God that protected Daniel. There was no other way he could have survived a night in the lions' den.

When you have finished, ask the group:

- If you were in Daniel's situation, how would you have felt?

3. Split the group into pairs or threes and give each group a copy of 'Interface 1 Daniel 6 pdf 2B'. Get the group to choose three words or phrases from the list to describe the people who went to the king to get the decree issued and three words to describe Daniel. Discuss these answers.

4 Ask the group to think of any situations they face, or have faced, where they have to, or have had to, choose whether or not they will stay loyal to God. What tempts them to compromise?



5 Get the young people to look again at the list of words and phrases and invite them to choose one word or sentence to describe their ideal attitude towards staying loyal to God. Encourage them to discuss these words in their pairs or threes. You may like to use this as a basis for your worship time later on.

Practical

Telling others about Jesus

1 Remind the young people that one reason why Daniel got into trouble was because everyone knew that he was a follower of God. Explain that, together, the young people are going to decide on a way that they can be more open about their faith with their peers at school.

2 Encourage them to discuss together how they will do this. For example, they could wear a WWJD bracelet or a fish badge; they could tell at least one person that they have been to church or a Christian group this week. Be sensitive to the fact that some young people may find this more difficult than others and may need more support or may need to take smaller steps.

3 Agree as a group what you will do and also agree a suitable reward for next week if everyone manages to keep the agreement. If everyone does not keep the agreement, hold the reward over until the next week so that the young people will keep on trying. If appropriate, encourage the group to text or IM each other during the week to encourage each other.

Chillzone

You will need:

- Relaxing music and something to play it on

Put on some relaxing music and allow the young people to talk honestly about how faithful they are to God. Discuss together the pressures they may feel to compromise and allow them to give each other advice on how to deal with this.



Creative

You will need:

- Paper
- Scissors
- Pens
- Art materials and glue
- Bibles

Creating a reminder of today's message

1 For this activity, the young people will need to cut out slips of paper shaped as lions or stones, as a reminder. Explain that we are going to make a sign to remind us to stay loyal to God at all times because he is capable of doing amazing things.

2 Read out Psalm 77:14. Encourage the young people to find the verse in the bible to read though again.

3 Encourage the young people to copy the verse onto the lion- or stone-shaped paper. Suggest that they personalise it with the art materials. Ask everyone to think about where they can put their reminder so that they see it every day.

Musical

You will need:

- A reflective worship song to play.

1. Ask the group to sit quietly. Start to play the song.

2 Encourage the group to close their eyes and to think of situations where they struggle to remain loyal to God. Encourage them to ask God to give them strength as they face these situations and to pray that God will show his glory in their lives and circumstances.



3 If you know the song, you could sing it together to finish off this activity. Otherwise, sing a song the group is familiar with, about being faithful to God through good times and bad.

GAME: Obstacle chain relay.

You will need:

- Various things to make an obstacle course, chairs, tables, sheets, play tunnels, etc.

1 Set up an obstacle course either in your meeting place or outside.

2 If you have a small group, race against the clock. If you have a larger group, divide the young people into teams of up to four people. Explain that the first player must complete the obstacle course, then run back, get the second player and complete the course again until the whole team has done the course together. Say that the team members must hold on to each other as they go through the obstacles and if at any point they let go of each other they must go back to the start.

God Slot

You will need:

- A shopping loyalty card
- A football team scarf/shirt
- A 'Forever Friends' card/bear
- Bible

1 Gather the group together and read out the script below. Make sure you're familiar with the script before you start, and adapt it to fit your style, if necessary.



Today, I want to talk to you about this. (Hold up a shopping loyalty card.) Any ideas what this is? (Get some answers.)

Sadly, it's not a magical card that will give me money on demand, it is in fact a loyalty card. What that means is that if I shop with [name of store] then they will eventually give me some great deal for sticking with them.

I don't especially want to talk about shopping, but I do want to talk about loyalty. How loyal are you?

I'm going to need three volunteers. The first volunteer needs to have something to do with this. (Hold up football scarf/shirt and get group to guess the link.) I need someone who is an avid football fan - you just love your team. (Select a volunteer.) What we want to do is find out how loyal a fan you are. (You can encourage other young people to add in their questions as you go along. Ask the following questions.)

Would you still support your team if:

- you were the only person in your school supporting them?*
- they were bought out by a millionaire who admits he hates football?*
- they haven't won a game in the last 15 matches?*
- it cost £500 to see them at a game and their games were never on TV?*
- if they dropped out of the bottom division?*

(Either congratulate or commiserate the person on their level of loyalty.)

I need two more volunteers now. These two volunteers are to do with this (Hold up 'Forever Friends' card/bear.) These two people need to be best friends.

We are going to find out how strong the loyalty between you is.

Would you still be best friends if:

- one of you had to move to the other end of the country?*
- if one of you suddenly developed an embarrassing lack of fashion sense?*
- if you stopped having things in common?*
- if one of you went out with someone the other person fancied?*

(Either congratulate or commiserate the person on their level of loyalty.)

It seems that, for all of us, our loyalty to other people or things can get put under a bit of pressure and it's quite natural sometimes to give in to that pressure.



There was someone in the Bible who was put under massive pressure to not stay loyal to his belief in God - his name was Daniel and you can read about him in Daniel 6. (Show place in Bible.) This man had his life threatened and was even sentenced to death because he would not stop praying to God. The really amazing bit is that the execution didn't exactly work and this man survived without a scratch on him. No one could understand how, without an act of God, he could have made it through.

If you want to know more about this 'great escape' ask me or one of the other leaders.

2 When you have finished, be ready to chat with any young people who would like to know more about Daniel, or about loyalty.