

***WHAT AM I
SUPPOSED TO DO?***



CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH

2020

Intro to the series: *What Am I Supposed To Do?*

The Old Testament tells the story of a teenage boy named Daniel who was taken captive and forced to serve the Babylonian King. I am sure Daniel wondered more than once, what am I supposed to do? What am I supposed to do when I find myself in a foreign land where I don't understand the language, culture, or customs?

It is not that different from the way many of us feel. This is a truly unique time and feels like a foreign land. We have new words like social distancing and COVID-19. Our culture is changing as schools and restaurants close. We even have new customs, just try and shake a stranger's hand.

It is a new reality that has many asking, "what am I supposed to do?" Considering everything happening in our world, we decided to change direction on Sunday and look at the life of Daniel. Through his life, we can learn what to do when we find ourselves in a strange land.

Introduction To The 4G Guide

GATHER – GOD – GROUP – GIVE

It's important that we GATHER each week as a church family. Still, God has so much more for us! He wants us to take what He's teaching and apply it to our lives. This is the heart of the 4G Guides. We've written these guides to encourage you in your personal GOD TIME and in your small GROUPS*. These are designed to help you understand and apply what God is saying to us. This then allows you to take what God is teaching and GIVE it to others.

Unless otherwise indicated, all scripture references are from the *English Standard Version* (ESV Text Edition: 2016) Bible.



USING THE 4G GUIDE

Each week is divided into four sections:



Gear Up

Each week starts with the Gear Up section. This section introduces the weekly topic and expounds on Scripture. Also provided are some practical steps to putting the subject matter into practice.



God Time

Personal time with God is vital to the Christian walk. Five daily devotionals are provided for each week's topic. This is your one-on-one time in a guided devotional format. At the conclusion, we encourage you to pray, seeking direction for the day and the rest of the week.



Group Time

We learn from one another! In small groups we meet to dig deeper into the weekly material. This booklet contains lesson outlines for discipleship discussion. For more information on available groups and forming a group, go to our Groups webpage:

cbcfamily.net/groups.



Family Group Time

Family worship glorifies God. Each week we have simple devotionals just for Families. Plan ahead though, as many of these lessons include fun experiments or video shorts to discuss.



Gear Up: Stay Faithful

Many of us have asked the question, “What am I supposed to do?” It often comes at a time of desperation, heartache, or immense struggle. What do we do when our world is falling apart? When we face job loss, illness, suffering loved ones, and when we can’t find answers?

What Am I Supposed to Do?

Daniel experienced a time of desperation and confusion when His world was falling apart. His people (the Jews) had been conquered by the Babylonians and Daniel and three of his friends had been taken captive.

Read Daniel 1:4-5.

⁴*[Bring me] young men without any physical defect, good-looking, suitable for instruction in all wisdom, knowledgeable, perceptive, and capable of serving in the king’s palace. He was to teach them the Chaldean language and literature. ⁵The king assigned them daily provisions from the royal food and from the wine that he drank. They were to be trained for three years, and at the end of that time they were to attend the king.*

The Babylonian king wanted what the world values: smart, handsome young men who could be assimilated into the Babylonian culture. He would have them trained for three years and then evaluate. He would even make sure they had the best, richest foods. But there was a problem with that—the king’s foods weren’t what God allowed His people to eat. Eating this way would have meant disobeying God.

Stay Faithful

The Bible tells us that Daniel resolved not to defile himself (compromise His holy standing with God), and so he asked the man in charge if he and his friends could abstain from eating the king’s way. (See Daniel 1:10-11) When that was agreed upon, Daniel told the man in charge:

Daniel 1:12-13

¹²*“Please test your servants for ten days. Let us be given vegetables to eat and water to drink. ¹³Then examine our appearance and the appearance of the young men who are eating the king’s food, and deal with your servants based on what you see.”*

The result? When the ten days were over, Daniel and his friends looked healthier than their peers. And three years later, when they all stood before the king, they were far wiser than all the king’s magicians and mediums (advisors). Trusting God had made all the difference!

Resolve to Be Faithful and Trust God to Bless

It would have been easy for Daniel to compromise his faith. We have the same temptation. When life gets tough, we sometimes want to fit in, resort to unhealthy types of self-protective behaviors, or just “be happy” whatever the cost. Daniel could have done that, too, but instead he resolved to be faithful, no matter what it cost him.

In the end, Daniel was blessed. And while we can’t *earn* blessings, we can experience the blessing God gives to us of living in a relationship with Him and the benefits of walking in wisdom. We can always trust that God will always take care of His children and guide and protect us with His sovereign hand. Life is not easy and will not always go our way, but God is good, He is in charge, and we are eternally secure.

When life is hard and we don’t know what to do, there’s a few places where we can start being faithful. We can find someone else to bless, share the gospel message with someone, and stay connected with our spiritual families—we need them and they need us. Don’t be obsessed with worry or fear; reach out to others and be blessed to be a blessing!

God Time: Day 1

Read Daniel 1:1-2a and 3-4



¹ In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. ²And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand... ³Then the king [Nebuchadnezzar] commanded Ashpenaz, his chief eunuch, to bring some of the people of Israel, both of the royal family and of the nobility, ⁴youths without blemish, of good appearance and skillful in all wisdom, endowed with knowledge, understanding learning, and competent to stand in the king's palace, and to teach them the literature and language of the Chaldeans.



Sometimes we face unhappy surprises. What word does verse 1 use that illustrates this? Was God surprised? (See verse 2.)



Nebuchadnezzar ordered one of his chief officials to gather together the best youths. List what he was looking for and what his goal was (Verse 4):



Read Hebrews 13:8



Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

Read 1 Chronicles 16:34

Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.



According to the verse in Hebrews, what remains constant in uncertain times?

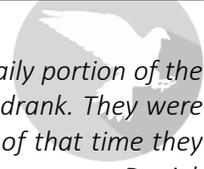


According to 1 Chronicles, what are we supposed to do? Why? Spend time doing that today.

Daniel and his friends were some of the youths taken. They were taken by surprise, into the uncertain unknown. One thing remained constant... God!

God Time: Day 2

Read Daniel 1:5-7



⁵ The king [Nebuchadnezzar] assigned them a daily portion of the food that the king ate, and of the wine that he drank. They were to be educated for three years, and at the end of that time they were to stand before the king. ⁶Among these were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah of the tribe of Judah. ⁷And the chief of the eunuchs gave them names: Daniel he called Belteshazzar, Hananiah he called Shadrach, Mishael he called Meshach, and Azariah he called Abednego.

The culture around us can function in a way that doesn't honor God. But we are called to be different. The Babylonians celebrated and idolized luxurious foods, beauty, youth, academic eliteness, and so on. God, however, looks at the heart.

Circle the words in verse 5 above that show what the Babylonian culture honored.

King Nebuchadnezzar wanted the Israelite youths to fit in with the kingdom's culture. What was his plan in verse 5?

Read Romans 12:2

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Who we are is important! Our beliefs are important! What does God tell us about being different from the world around us?

Name one thing you will do today to show that you are part of God's kingdom:

Pray and do it!

God Time: Day 3

Read Daniel 1:8-13



⁸But Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself with the king's food, or with the wine that he drank. Therefore he asked the chief of the eunuchs to allow him not to defile himself. ⁹And God gave Daniel favor and compassion in the sight of the chief of the eunuchs, ¹⁰and the chief of the eunuchs said to Daniel, "I fear my lord the king, who assigned your food and your drink; for why should he see that you were in worse condition than the youths who are of your own age? So you would endanger my head with the king." ¹¹Then Daniel said [...] ¹²"Test your servants for ten days; let us be given vegetables to eat and water to drink. ¹³Then let our appearance and the appearance of the youths who eat the king's food be observed by you, and deal with your servants according to what you see."



In verse 8, what did Daniel resolve not to do?

Daniel (and his friends) did not want to partake of the idolatrous, wayward culture around him. He resolved not to compromise his faith.



What did God give Daniel in verse 9?

What did Daniel propose to do in verses 12 and 13?

Daniel was determined to keep his identity as a Jew and not compromise or give in! He decided to try things God's way.

God blesses obedience with things like a peaceful heart in troubled times, increased faith, intimacy with God, and sometimes with outward, physical blessings.

Pray, asking God to help you do all things His way, even if you don't understand.

God Time: Day 4

Read Daniel 1:14-16



¹⁴So he [the chief eunuch] listened to them in this matter, and tested them for ten days. ¹⁵At the end of ten days it was seen that they were better in appearance and fatter in flesh than all the youths who ate the king's food. ¹⁶So the steward took away their food and the wine they were to drink, and gave them vegetables.



The ten days were up and Daniel was ready to be tested. Circle what verse 15 tells us was better.

Though the text doesn't say, who could see this?

Our faith will affect our behavior. When we act differently than our culture, it serves as a witness to others. We don't have to be obsessed with worry, fear, or confusion; God is in control!



List three worries and pray about them today. Remember, God is in control!

God Time: Day 5

Read Daniel 1:17, 20



¹⁷As for these four youths, God gave them learning and skill in all literature and wisdom, and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams. ²⁰And in every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters that were in all his kingdom.



We are blessed to be a blessing. Daniel and his friends were used by God to make a difference in Babylon. Write three things you can do today to make a difference. Make sure to do them!

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Begin with prayer.

WEEK 1 – STAY FAITHFUL

Group Time

LOOK BACK:



1. Each participant shares one praise and one prayer request. (Commit these to prayer for the coming week.)

2. ENCOURAGEMENT 1-on-1 (See last page for directions)

Y/N	Y/N	_____
_____	_____	

3. Starting a new series.



What do you hope to gain from this series?

LOOK UP:

Ask: Have you ever witnessed someone compromise their integrity for expediency or because of a difficult situation?

Good News: *If we resolve to be faithful in difficult times, we can trust God to bless us.*

It's a unique time and situation in our world that leaves many of us asking, "What am I supposed to do in a world with no normal? What do I do when what God asks of me doesn't seem to work?" Like Daniel in his time, the answer is, "Stay Faithful!"

When life is difficult, it is easy to compromise, to express anger, to focus on self, and to seek security. But we must resolve to be faithful and trust God to bless us. We must resolve not to be changed by uncertainty. We need to find others to bless, to share the good news, and to stay connected.

LOOK IN: Discussion Questions

- Why is it easy to compromise in chaotic times?
- What are some ways people might compromise their faith when difficulty hits?

Read: Daniel 1

- Reread verse 8. Apply this verse to a present-day situation and discuss how we can be *resolved*.
- Share a recent example of how being *resolved* led to blessing.

LOOK FORWARD: Application

Point: *Resolve to be faithful and trust God to bless.*

- During this next week, who is someone you can bless? What is your game-plan?

- During this next week, who is someone you can tell the Good News? What is your game-plan? Need help with how to share?

Bonus Video: www.vimeo.com/389878453

- How will you stay connected to your spiritual family? What is your game-plan?

Pray for one another to work your plans. Be ready to share with your group what God does with your obedience.

Family Time



Big Idea:

When I don't understand why things are happening, I must stay faithful to God.



Key Verse: Proverbs 3:5-6 NIV

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him and he will make your paths straight.



Watch:



Set it Up: This week we are going to sing the memory verse together. If the kids want to get up and do the motions, please join them as a whole family.



Ask:

What does the word "trust" mean?

Look up "trust" on Google and write the definition:

Encourage:

List some ways that we trust God each day (Examples: food, jobs, money, etc.):

Is it easy to trust God with what is happening in the world today? Why or why not?

Challenge: Spend Some Time In Prayer

Today we are going to spend some time praying for different things. Have everyone in the family take a turn praying out loud.

Here are some examples of things to pray for:

- Safety
- Healing for the sick
- Our church
- People who have lost jobs
- Our President
- Our Pastors
- Understanding about what is going on
- Trust in God



Gear Up: Let God Answer Your Questions

We all have questions. Especially when it seems like our world (or *the* world) has gone haywire. When this happens, it's important to seek God and let Him answer our questions. But let's be real. Oftentimes, we look for answers in all the wrong places. We need to remember to turn to God *first* because He has all the answers we need.

Even in captivity, Daniel was blessed. He had established himself as a faithful servant of Nebuchadnezzar without compromising His faith or devotion to God. Yes, God blessed him, but this didn't mean that he wasn't still a slave in a foreign land serving an evil king. Like Daniel, we can experience God's blessings even if He doesn't solve all our problems the way we'd like for Him to.

Read Daniel 2:1-4.

¹In the second year of his reign, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams that troubled him, and sleep deserted him. ²So the king gave orders to summon the magicians, mediums, sorcerers, and Chaldeans to tell the king his dreams. When they came and stood before the king, ³he said to them, "I have had a dream and am anxious to understand it." ⁴The Chaldeans spoke to the king... : "May the king live forever. Tell your servants the dream, and we will give the interpretation." ⁵The king replied to the Chaldeans, "My word is final: If you don't tell me the dream and its interpretation, you will be torn limb from limb, and your houses will be made a garbage dump. ⁶But if you make the dream and its interpretation known to me, you'll receive gifts, a reward, and great honor from me. So make the dream and its interpretation known to me."

The king's advisors wanted to listen to his dream and offer an interpretation. But the king upped the stakes by promising a good life for those who could tell him both what his dream was about *and* the correct interpretation. Everyone else faced death.

The king's advisors told him that he was asking the impossible.

They said that only "the gods" could do that. In turn, the king got angry and wanted to kill all the wisest men— including Daniel and his friends. So, Daniel went to the king and requested more time.

Then, Daniel and his friends sought God for answers. They sought God for mercy, and He revealed the mystery of the king's dream and its meaning in a vision during the night. Then Daniel prayed, praised, thanked God for who He is and what He'd done. Then, once he shared the result with Nebuchadnezzar, even this evil king praised God!

Read Daniel 2:47

The king said to Daniel, "Your God is indeed God of gods, Lord of kings, and a revealer of mysteries, since you were able to reveal this mystery."

God Has All the Answers You Need

Yes, God has all the answers, but that doesn't mean the answers are the ones you want or that life will be easy. But it does mean that there *are* answers if you are willing to listen. God provides these answers through things like **our leaders** - those appointed in positions over us. (We see that in Daniel's story). Leaders aren't always right, but God can use good or bad leaders to lead us to the right answers. God also gives answers through our **faith family**— other Believers who have His Spirit indwelling them. Foremost, He gives answers through **His Word**; in it, He shows what He wants for us and how to live godly lives.

What Are Your Questions?

Write down your questions and be specific. Then seek our leaders, your brothers and sisters in Christ, and most importantly, God's Word. God communicates with His children through all these avenues. Seek God and trust Him to provide the answers!

WEEK 2 – LET GOD ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS

God Time: Day 1

Read Daniel 2:1-4



¹In the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; his spirit was troubled, and his sleep left him. ²Then the king commanded that the magicians, the enchanters, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans be summoned to tell the king his dreams. So they came in and stood before the king. ³And the king said to them, "I had a dream, and my spirit is troubled to know the dream." ⁴Then the Chaldeans said to the king in Aramaic, "O king, live forever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will show the interpretation."



Look in verse 1 above and circle who King Nebuchadnezzar turned to. (Note: the "Chaldeans" were a group of expert magicians known for their ability to interpret dreams.)

Nebuchadnezzar turned to the people he considered wise, but they were not godly. He also didn't turn directly to God Himself, though he knew about Him.

Read Psalm 1:1



Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; (NKJV)

When we are troubled and seek answers, we must turn to God and not follow the advice of the ungodly.



Make a list of who (or where) people today tend to turn to when something troubles them.



Are you turning to God? If not, what will you do differently today?

God Time: Day 2

Read Daniel 2:5-6



⁵The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, "The word from me is firm: if you do not make known to me the dream and its interpretation, you shall be torn limb from limb, and your houses shall be laid in ruins. ⁶But if you show the dream and its interpretation, you shall receive from me gifts and rewards and great honor. Therefore show me the dream and its interpretation."

In these verses, King Nebuchadnezzar raises the stakes. What must the magicians tell him?



Circle what will happen to them if they don't.

Imagine how scared these "wise ones" must have been. Being without God is a frightening place to be— especially in troubled times. Who can you share God with today?

God Time: Day 3

Read Daniel 2:10a-11

¹⁰The Chaldeans answered the king and said, "There is not a man on earth who can meet the king's demand... ¹¹The thing that the king asks is difficult, and no one can show it to the king except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh."



Who do the Chaldeans say can do what the king has asked?

God can do the impossible! We can trust Him—even in hard times.

Read Proverbs 3:5-6

⁵Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. ⁶Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take. (NLT)



Name at least three things you will trust God with today.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

God Time: Day 4

Read Daniel 2:16-18a, 19



¹⁶And Daniel went in and requested the king to appoint him a time, that he might show the interpretation to the king.¹⁷Then Daniel went to his house and made the matter known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions, ¹⁸and told them to seek mercy from the God of heaven concerning this mystery... ¹⁹Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision of the night. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven.

Compare verses 16 and 19. How did Daniel show faith in 16?

Daniel knew he could be torn “limb from limb.” (See Daniel 2:5 and Week 2 Day 2) Regardless, he went and offered to show the interpretation to the king before he knew either the dream or its meaning. That is incredible and inspiring faith!



Circle what two things Daniel did in verses 17 and 18.

What were the two results in verse 19?

Read Psalm 50:15



... call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me.

Read 1 Peter 5:7

... casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.



Circle what God says to do in times of trouble in these verses.

Why should we do these?

Psalm 50:15 _____

1 Peter 5:7 _____

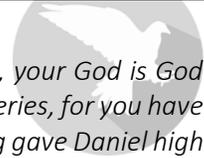


What is the end result?

(Answer: God is glorified!) Do this today. Share these verses with someone who needs this reminder.

God Time: Day 5

Read Daniel 2:47-40



⁴⁷The king answered and said to Daniel, “Truly, your God is God of gods and Lord of kings, and a revealer of mysteries, for you have been able to reveal this mystery.” ⁴⁸Then the king gave Daniel high honors and many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon and chief prefect over all the wise men of Babylon. ⁴⁹Daniel made a request of the king, and he appointed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego over the affairs of the province of Babylon. But Daniel remained at the king’s court.

Our faith is a witness to others. Circle how King Nebuchadnezzar acknowledges God in verse 47.

Also, notice the honors that Daniel and his friends received in verses 48 and 49. Their position allowed them to continue influencing a nation and beyond for a long time.

We can all influence others. Since our faith results in behaviors that can be seen, where we go for our answers is important. We must be seen and heard going to God! He has the answers we need, even if He doesn’t tell us directly, and even when life isn't easy.

God also uses our leaders, our faith family, and the Word of God to help us find answers. Though we may not always get the specific answers we’re looking for, we can still remain faithful to the God who is faithful to us!



Read Hebrews 10:23

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.

Write down questions you have regarding current troubling events. Ask, “What do our leaders say? What do your brothers and sisters in Christ say? What does God’s Word say?”



WEEK 2 – LET GOD ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS

Group Time

LOOK BACK:



1. Each participant shares one praise and one prayer request. (Commit these to prayer for the coming week.)

2. ENCOURAGEMENT 1-on-1 (See last page for directions)

Y / N	Y / N	_____
_____	_____	

3. Point: Resolve to be faithful and trust God to bless.



Review the previous lesson. What did you do to stay connected to your spiritual family this past week?

LOOK UP:

Good News: God has already answered your questions.

Last week we learned that if we resolve to be faithful, God will bless us. But just because He blesses us, it doesn't mean all our problems are solved. We may still feel lost or confused and needing direction during difficult times. So, where should we go for answers?

God has all the answers, but it doesn't necessarily mean He's going to tell you directly or that it will be easy. The first step to take is to be willing to listen. Whether they are right or wrong we need to listen to our appointed leaders have to say. We need to listen to the wisdom and experience of our faith family. And, we need to listen to the Word of God.

LOOK IN: Discussion Questions

- What questions are being asked in our community at this time? What uncertainties are there?
- Where are people looking for answers?

Read: Daniel 2:1-19 & 47

- In verses 14-19 we see Daniel process through the questions and uncertainties of his situation by going to his political leadership, his

faith family, and to God. Discuss how he did this and how we can follow his example today.

- How can we bless God in our current situation like Daniel did in his?

LOOK FORWARD: Application

Point: In these crazy times, where are you going for answers? God has all the answers you need!

- List ways you have seen God answer your questions through...
 - Our Leaders: _____
 - Our Faith Family: _____
 - His Word: _____
- List ways you can find answers this week and at the same time bring blessings to God through...
 - Our Leaders: _____
 - Our Faith Family: _____
 - His Word: _____
- Continue your commitment to stay connected to one another during the coming week. How will you do this? _____

Pray for one another to do these. Be ready to share with your group what God does with your obedience.

Family Time



Big Idea:
Let God answer your questions.



Key Verse: Daniel 3:16-17
Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered and said to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. If this be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of your hand, O king.



Watch:



Set it Up: We are going to watch the story of how Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered the king's requests even when they didn't have all the answers from God.



Ask:
Where can we go when we are looking for answers to our questions?

How have you seen God answer a question you had by using someone else?

How can we as a family be the answer to a question that another family might be having right now?

Family Activity:

As a family, call another family and ask them if there is anything that you can pray for them about. While you have them on the phone, put it on speaker and pray as a family for them.

When you are finished, ask the family if there is anything that they need that you might be able to provide for them. Then figure out how you can help.

What will you do?



Gear Up: Prayer Always Wins

We've all felt helpless at one time or another. You know the feeling—when it seems that no matter what you do you just can't make things better or that what you have just isn't enough. But it's often in these moments that we discover the power of prayer. This is what happened in Daniel's situation.

The Power of Prayer

Even in captivity, Daniel continued to faithfully serve his king. As time passed, he rose in significance and authority and eventually became a very powerful and trusted official. The result? His co-workers became jealous of him.

Read Daniel 6:4-5

⁴The administrators and satraps, therefore, kept trying to find a charge against Daniel regarding the kingdom. But they could find no charge or corruption, for he was trustworthy, and no negligence or corruption was found in him. ⁵Then these men said, "We will never find any charge against this Daniel unless we find something against him concerning the law of his God."

It's amazing that Daniel's co-workers could find no fault in him. For most of us, the same could not be said. The only "problem" with Daniel was that he loved and followed God! So, the other officials had to come up with a plan based on that.

Read Daniel 6:7

All the administrators of the kingdom — the prefects, satraps, advisers, and governors — have agreed that the king should establish an ordinance and enforce an edict that, for thirty days, anyone who petitions any god or man except you, the king, will be thrown into the lions' den.

The officials figured out a plan that would play on the king's weakness: pride. Do you see it? "If anybody prays to anyone or anything other than *you*, O King, then throw them to the lions!"

But Daniel kept praying. He knew about the document and that it had been signed into law by the king, but he did what he always did— he spent time in prayer! He prayed three times a day, giving thanks to God... just as he had always done. (See Daniel 6:10)

It may seem strange to us today, but in that time and in that place, the law couldn't be changed. There was no going back on his word. The King had no choice but to throw Daniel, his trusted official, in the lions' den. When he did, the king said, "*May your God, whom you serve continually, deliver you!*" (Daniel 6:17)

Most of us know the end of the story. The king came in the morning to see if Daniel's God had been able to save him. When he cried out to ask, Daniel replied: "*My God sent his angel and shut the lions' mouths; and they haven't harmed me, for I was found innocent before him. And also before you, Your Majesty, I have not done harm.*" (Daniel 6:22)

Prayer Positions You for God's Provision

Daniel had made prayer a normal, daily part of his life. It looked like prayer led to the moment of his greatest defeat. Instead, it led to his greatest victory— it positioned him for God's provision! Daniel could have stopped praying or found a private place, but he continued praying the same way he always had.

Daniel prayed to honor God, seek God, and follow God. He knew, prayer always wins— even if the outcome doesn't look like we hope. (If the lions had eaten Daniel, he would have entered God's presence. Still a win!) When we pray, we position ourselves for God's provision in our lives. He will do what He knows is best, and He will be victorious. When you don't know what to do, pray!

God Time: Day 1

Daniel had been living in a God-honoring way, which God blessed. Daniel rose in significance and authority, and eventually, his co-workers became jealous of him.

Read Daniel 6:4-5



⁴Then the high officials and the satraps sought to find a ground for complaint against Daniel with regard to the kingdom, but they could find no ground for complaint or any fault, because he was faithful, and no error or fault was found in him. ⁵Then these men said, “We shall not find any ground for complaint against this Daniel unless we find it in connection with the law of his God.”



Circle all the words that point to Daniel’s character.

Why could Daniel’s enemies not find fault with him? (Hint: look in verse 4)

All of us can say we have faults. Though Daniel surely wasn’t perfect, his enemies knew that the only fault they could find would be in connection with the “*law of his God.*”

Read 1 Peter 1:15-16

¹⁵but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, ¹⁶since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.”

Read Psalm 119:1

Blessed are those whose way is blameless!

Followers of God are called to a high standard— a blameless life. But we can’t achieve this alone! Instead, we have God’s spirit to partner with, working in us. This is called sanctification.



Do you live a God-honoring life? If not, what do you need to change today?

God Time: Day 2

Read Daniel 6:7



All the high officials of the kingdom, the prefects and the satraps, the counselors and the governors are agreed that the king should establish an ordinance and enforce an injunction, that whoever makes petition to any god or man for thirty days, except to you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions.



The officials came to Nebuchadnezzar with a plan to harm Daniel and stroke the king’s ego at the same time. Circle the words in verse 7 that play to the king’s pride.

We all must be careful of pride. We’re prideful when we think *more highly* of ourselves than we ought, but also when we think of ourselves *more often* than we ought. In troubled times, we must remember our neighbor and steer away from pride and self-centeredness.



List two things you can do for others this week:

1. _____
2. _____

God Time: Day 3

Read Daniel 6:10



When Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he went to his house where he had windows in his upper chamber open toward Jerusalem. He got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he had done previously.



Circle the words “*knew that the document had been signed.*”

Daniel was in the habit of daily prayer. Even when the king established an ordinance against praying to God, Daniel continued to follow his normal routine.



Knowing Daniel’s faithfulness and prayer routine, list two things you will do this week to exhibit devoted faithfulness to God:

1. _____
2. _____

God Time: Day 4

Read Daniel 6:16-17



¹⁶Then the king commanded, and Daniel was brought and cast into the den of lions. The king declared to Daniel, "May your God, whom you serve continually, deliver you!" ¹⁷And a stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet and with the signet of his lords, that nothing might be changed concerning Daniel.



Daniel's situation appeared absolutely hopeless. Circle all the things that were done to ensure his death.

Though death seemed imminent, we know that Daniel made it out alive and that he didn't give up his faith or his hope.

When the situation looks dire, God is able. When the need is great, God provides. When hopelessness abounds, God Himself is our hope!



Read Romans 15:13

^{13a}May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, ^bso that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.



According to this verse, God is the God of what?

What will He fill us with? In what? (Verse 13a)



What is the result of being filled? Whose power does this result come by? (Verse 13b)



Write Romans 15:13 in your own words and thank God for the hope He gives.

Do you feel hopeless today? Remember that God Himself is your hope. You can abound in hope by believing in Him!

God Time: Day 5

Read Daniel 6:19-22



¹⁹Then, at break of day, the king arose and went in haste to the den of lions.²⁰ As he came near to the den where Daniel was, he cried out in a tone of anguish. The king declared to Daniel, "O Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?" ²¹ Then Daniel said to the king, "O king, live forever! ²² My God sent his angel and shut the lions' mouths, and they have not harmed me, because I was found blameless before him; and also before you, O king, I have done no harm."



The king seemed genuinely concerned with the fate of his faithful official. As we knew would happen, Daniel survived. Look in verse 22 and circle the reasons why God worked a miracle on his behalf.

All of this started with Daniel in prayer. Sadly, his faithfulness led to what looked like utter defeat. But that moment paved the way for God's miracle—witnessed by many!



Prayer will position us for God's provision. How did God provide for Daniel (specifically) in verse 22?

Daniel prayed to honor, seek, and follow God. He also seemed calm and unafraid. Regardless of the outcome (which could have been death), Daniel was confident. He knew God and he knew his eternity.



When chaos, fear, and confusion run rampant, let's remember to pray. Make a list of what you are praying about today.

WEEK 3 – PRAYER ALWAYS WINS

Group Time

LOOK BACK:



1. Each participant shares one praise and one prayer request. (Commit these to prayer for the coming week.)

2. ENCOURAGEMENT 1-on-1 (See last page for directions)

Y / N	Y / N	_____
_____	_____	

3. **Point:** *In these crazy times, where are you going for answers? God has all the answers you need!*



Review the previous lesson. How did you find answers this past week?

LOOK UP:

Ask: How has your prayer life changed over the past month?

Good News: *When we pray, we can't lose.*

We all come to a point in life or face a situation where we feel helpless. No matter what we do or what we have, it isn't enough. It is often in these moments that we discover the power of prayer. The story of Daniel and the lion's den is one many of us have known since childhood, but it continues to be an excellent illustration of faith and provision during very dark circumstances. During our own difficult times, we need to put into practice Daniel's example of prayer in order to honor, seek, and follow God. Others are watching.

LOOK IN: Discussion Questions

- How would you answer a stranger asking, "Why do you pray?"
- When do we pray the most? What drives us to pray?

Read: Daniel 6

- Reread verse 10. How do the words "as he had done previously" give us a lesson for our own prayer life?

- Because of Daniels relationship with God, what was the result of the events of chapter 6 (see verses 25-28)?
- What similarities are shared between the result of Daniel's story and Joseph's words in Genesis 50:20? This Biblical pattern should give us comfort in the difficulties of today's events!

LOOK FORWARD: Application

Point: *Prayer positions you for God's provision. In these crazy times, don't forget prayer.*

- List ways in which prayer helps us to...
 - Seek God: _____
 - Honor God: _____
 - Follow God: _____
- What provision should we be seeking as a result? Remember, others are watching.

- What will you do this week to grow your prayer life? What is your game plan?

- Continue your commitment to stay connected to one another during the coming week. How will you do this?

Pray for one another to do these. Be ready to share with your group what God does with your obedience.



Family Time



Big Idea:
The Power of Prayer Will Change Your Life.



Key Verse: 1 Chronicles 4:10

And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh that Thou would bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that Thine hand might be with me, and that Thou would keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me! And God granted him that which he requested.

Set it Up:

Jabez' prayer is composed of four parts:

1. Jabez asks God to bless him.
2. He asks God to enlarge his territory or increase his responsibility.
3. He prays that God will be with him and stay close.
4. Jabez asks that God keep him from harm so that he will be free from pain.

The Prayer of Jabez reveals that Jabez understands what many people do not — there is only one God and He should be the center of our work. Jabez wants to succeed and increase his sphere of influence for God. The specific sphere of influence is not important. What is important is that we reach for goals and accomplishments that God approves of.



Encourage:

Jabez clearly knows and prays specifically to the One who can protect him, God. At the end of the verse it is also clear that God approved of this faithful prayer by granting it.

Finally, it is important to see that Jabez was passionate in his plea to God: *“He cried out to the God of Israel.”* God wants to hear, through passionate prayer, that we need Him.



Family Activity:

As a family, come up with a list of people that you can be praying for in each of the four areas. When you have done this, make sure to add your family to each area and spend some time in prayer together.

1. Ask God to bless.

2. Ask God to enlarge territory/responsibility.

3. Pray God will stay close.

4. Ask God to keep from harm.

The 3-Step “Encouragement 1-on-1” Process

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

Hebrews 10:23-25

1. Choose partners: Partners should be of the same gender. If there is an odd number, triplets are OK, but you need to work swiftly.
2. Partners ask each other these five questions:

	1) “Did you spend specific personal time in the BIBLE <u>each day</u> this past week?”	These are “Yes” or “No” questions. Any hesitations or “Well...” responses are circled “No.”
	2) “Did you spend specific time in PRAYER <u>each day</u> this past week – not just for meals?”	
	3) “Did you do something specific to show Godly LOVE to someone this past week?”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If so, the partner briefly shares the encounter(s) with their partner and, on the provided line, writes the name(s) of the person(s) they showed love to, shared the gospel with, or disciplined. • If not, leave the line blank.
	4) “Did you intentionally share the GOSPEL with anyone this past week?”	
	5) “Did you DISCIPLE anyone this past week?” (Sharing with others from any of the Gathering, God, Group, or Family Times)	

3. To finish, each partner prays for the other: No matter how or what the partner has done over the past week, this is an intentional prayer of **encouragement** for the coming week!