

Living Holy in a Godless World

The Life of Daniel

by Annette Gullick 12/1/2001

Lesson Seven: Trust in God

Bible Passage: Daniel 3:16-18

Bible Truth: The key to Daniel's life is that he trusted in God

Lesson Objective: That students base their life and actions on trust in God.

Before You Begin:

- ◆ “Do You Trust Me?” game pieces,
- ◆ table or platform 3-5 feet high
- ◆ chalk/white board & chalk
- ◆ copies of bookmark “Keys...”

Opening:

Before class, prepare the "Do You Trust Me?" game as follows: you need one "game" for each group of 4-6 students. Cut pieces of blank paper into small strips. You will need 12 strips for each group of kids. On six of the strips write a "person" from the list below, then on the remaining six write an "activity." Place each "people" pile in one small bag and each "activity" pile in another so that each group of kids will have two bags of paper slips; one with the names of each "person" who appears in the list below under "PEOPLE" and one pile with the names of each "ACTIVITY".

<u>People</u>	<u>Activity</u>
Mechanic	Fix your car
PHD in Chemistry	Create a new medicine
Friend	Go to the mall with you
God	Die for your sins
German teacher	Tutor you in German
Waiter	Serve you food

Divide students into groups of 4 - 6 and give each group a bag of "people" and each a bag of "activities". The first person should pull out one strip from the "people" bag and one from the "activity" bag and tell the rest of the group whether or not they trust that "person" to perform that "activity. (For example, "Do I trust a mechanic to die for my sins?" "No") then they should return those slips to their respective bags and pass the bags to the next person and so on until everyone has had a chance to draw. Then they should, as

a group, match up the "PEOPLE" with the "ACTIVITY" they are trusted to do. When they have finished ask,

- ◆ *Who do you trust to create new medicine? Why do you trust them instead of a mechanic?*
- ◆ *Every time we get on a bus we trust the driver to take us along the stated route and every time we get medicine at the pharmacy we trust that they have given us the right medicine. How do we decide who to trust and with what?*

Today we are going to learn more about trusting God and each other.

Interactive Learning

Trust Fall: (a minimum of seven people is needed for this activity). Ask the students to take off their glasses and watches, stand up and form two lines facing each other. Have them stretch their arms out in front of them, palms facing up, ready to catch a falling person. They should alternate arms with the person across from them, but should not lock arms. Emphasize that it is very important that the person who is falling must remain totally stiff. If they bend at the waist all of their weight will go to one or two people and they might hit the floor.

The first person climbs up on a table or platform that is 3 to 5 feet high and falls backward into the arms of the group. (If your group has never done something similar before you may need to go first to show them that if they stay stiff they will not touch the floor.) Then he or she joins those catching and someone else falls backward until all of the students have fallen. Encourage all students to participate, but do not force them.

- ◆ *Did anyone have a hard time convincing yourself to participate? Why?*
- ◆ *How did you feel about doing this?*
- ◆ *Did you trust that the group would catch you? Why or why not?*
- ◆ *Would it be harder or easier to do it again and why?*

This morning we have seen that we trust people based on our knowledge of who they are and our assessment of their skills. And we have felt that it is easier to trust people after you have personally experienced trusting them and finding them trustworthy. In this last study from the book of Daniel we are going to look at what is possibly the most important key to living a successful Christian life: trusting in God. (write at the top of the board, "Trust in God")

Bible Application

Over the past six lessons we have studied the main events in the life of Daniel. Lets take a few minutes to review how Daniel trusted God and time and time again experienced that God was faithful. (Write on the board: Daniel and his friends in training)

- ◆ *Who can remind us what Daniel and his friends did while they were in training for the king's service that required faith in God? (They trusted that God could keep them as well nourished and healthy as their classmates even if they didn't eat the royal food and wine.)*
- ◆ *And how did God prove himself trustworthy? (He not only kept them healthy, but they were more healthy and God blessed them with knowledge and understanding.) (Write on the board: "the king's first dream")*
- ◆ *What did Daniel trust that God would do as a result of his and his friend's prayers? (Tell him the meaning of the king's dream.)*
- ◆ *What was at stake for Daniel? (his life) (Write on the board: "the king's second dream")*
- ◆ *Did Daniel have to trust God to tell the king that God was going to make him live like an animal for 7 years? Why or why not? (Write on the board: "Daniel in the lions' den.")*
- ◆ *What did Daniel do to get thrown in with the lions? (He didn't stop praying even when it was against the law.)*
- ◆ *What do you think Daniel was thinking when he decided to pray, knowing that the other rulers were trying to trap him? (He trusted that God would take care of him.)*

The Bible doesn't record exactly what he was thinking or what he said. But I think it is safe to say that he was probably thinking the same thing as his friends Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego when King Nebuchadnezzar told them that if they didn't bow down before an image of him made of gold that he would have them thrown into a fiery furnace. Let's read together Daniel 3: 16-18.

- *What does this passage say about trusting God? (God is able to rescue and save. Even though he might not save people the way they are hoping, he is the only one worthy of being worshiped.)*
- *Why do you think that Daniel and his friends had so much faith in God that they were willing to trust him with their lives? (Because they had experienced that he was faithful in the past.)*
- *What makes it difficult for us to trust God?*

Commitment

Erase the board except for where it says, "Trust in God" across the top.

Even though we don't feel like our lives are on the line every day, we all face difficult situations where we have to decide if we can trust God or not. For example, you may think that if you obey God by not cheating in school that you might fail. We are going to call these difficult situations "fiery furnaces."

Have them break into groups of four and come up with a list of "fiery furnaces" that they face. When they have finished come together as a large group again and make a list on the board of their answers.

- ◆ *In which of these "furnaces" do you think faith in God can make a difference?*
- ◆ *Why do you think God allowed Daniel and his friends to be put in such difficult circumstances?*
- ◆ *Why do you think God allows us to be put in "fiery furnaces"?*
- ◆ *Do you think God will always deliver us in the same way that He delivered Daniel's friends? Can we still trust Him even if He chooses not to deliver us in the way we wanted to be delivered?*

Closing

Pass out the bookmarks "Keys..."

I hope you use this bookmark in your Bible or in some other book you use frequently as a reminder of some of what we have learned together over the past few weeks.

Have the students read out loud what is written of the bookmark. Then say,

To conclude our study of these keys that help us live a successful Christian life I want each of you to choose one of these areas where you want God to give you strength. Then tell this and your name to your neighbor on your right. For example, "my name is X and I want God to help me be proactive in my neighborhood for him."

Then go around the room having each student pray for the person on their right.

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