

Special Times with God

Bible Verse:

Psalm 42:1

Extra Bible Verse:

Deuteronomy 16:17

Provide:

- Crackers
- Zip-lock bags, 1 per child

To Do:

- Place 7 to 10 crackers in each zip-lock bag.

Purpose:

Children can learn how to develop or improve the habit of daily personal devotions. The best time to have a personal devotional time, things you can do during the devotional time, and possible resources children can use will be included.

Bible Material:

Daniel Spends Time with God (Daniel 6:1-10)

Warm-up

Get-involved Activity
(10 minutes)

As group members arrive for today’s meeting, greet them with enthusiasm and direct them to WARM-UP.

Explain to the children that you are going to give them a challenge: to eat a certain number of crackers and then be the first one to whistle.

Divide the players into small groups. Assign one coach per group. Distribute baggies of crackers to each player. Tell the players to watch you for the signal to begin eating. Remind them that they must eat all of the crackers before trying to whistle. Explain that the coach in their group must be able to hear them clearly in order for them to be declared the winner of their group. Say: “Begin.”

Caution the coaches that cracker pieces will probably be blown in their faces and ears as the players try to whistle. Declare winners. Thank the children for being good sports. Direct the members to the water fountain if needed.

Workout

Group Study
(30 minutes)

1. Begin the meeting. Invite the children and coaches to be seated on the floor. Welcome and introduce the guests.

2. Demonstrate thirst. Ask: “Have you ever been thirsty? Sure you have. But have you ever been so thirsty that you thought you might faint? Let me show you what I mean.” Pretend to be thirsty, then to get thirstier. Ask for water. Fall to your knees. Say: “Won’t anyone bring me some water?”

Ask: “Have you ever been to the point that you were just desperate for some water? Probably not. Some of you think you have, playing a ball game or playing outside with friends. But not many of us can say we were truly desperate for water.”

Say: “Now think about being thirsty in a different way. Have you ever been thirsty to know God better? To know Him in a more personal way? To really want to meet Him face to face? But the point I want to get across is that sometimes we can become so thirsty to know God that it feels like desperation.”

3. Learn the Bible verse. Say: “There is a Bible verse that talks about a deer being thirsty for water. The Bible says that the deer was panting for water. *Panting* means longing for, desiring, really wanting something. The Bible verse then compares the deer panting to a person panting to know God better. Let me read the Bible verse to you.” Read or quote Psalm 42:1. Guide the children to repeat the Bible verse with you. Then lead them to say the Bible verse as a prayer to God. When you finish, say, “the people who get to know God better are the people who really want to know Him better.”

4. Tell the Bible story. Explain that today’s Bible story will take the form of an interview with Daniel.

Daniel Spends Time with God

Interviewer Donna: Daniel, before we begin the interview I would just like to say thank you for taking the time to share your story. I know you are a busy man.

Daniel: You are welcome, Donna. When I am interviewed, it’s usually about the king’s business. So it’s a nice change to be able to talk about my faith and commitment to God. What would you like to know?

Donna: I would like to go back to last year when you were working for King Darius as a supervisor of his kingdom. From what I understand, that was a heavy responsibility.

Daniel: Yes, it was.

Donna: Tell me, how did you get that important job?

Suggested prayer:

Dear God, I want to know you better and love you more, just as the thirsty deer wants to get some water.

Provide:

- Microphone
- 2 chairs

To Do:

- Set up an interview area with the chairs and microphone.
- Enlist 2 coaches to play the parts of Donna and Daniel.

Daniel: It all started when King Darius thought it would be a great idea to choose 120 governors to help him rule his entire kingdom. But he also needed some men to watch over them. The king then chose three men to serve as supervisors over the 120 governors. I was one of the three men. It was quite a job, but I was pleased that the king had so much confidence in me. Our main job was not only to supervise but to make sure that he was not being cheated.

Donna: Cheated? Do you mean that there were some officials who thought they could get away with cheating the king? I cannot believe it. What did you do?

Daniel: It happens, believe me. I worked hard to make sure that did not happen. And what I ended up doing was working myself into a new job—supervising the entire kingdom. I had no intention of doing that, but it happened. The king saw what I was doing and was pleased.

Donna: What was different about you, Daniel?

Daniel: King Darius saw that I was honest and looked out for his best interests. I kept my word, and he respected that. As a result, though, the other guys became very jealous.

Donna: Yeah. That is the part I want to focus on now. I understand that they tried to find ways to accuse you of doing something wrong to get you into trouble with the king and lose favor in his sight.

Daniel: That is right. They tried, but I simply kept on trying to do my job right. You see, I was the only one who did not cheat the king. Finally I realized that they were going to try to hurt me by attacking my faith in God.

Donna: Excuse me, Daniel, but how could they hurt you by attacking your faith in God?

Daniel: Those guys realized that the only way to hurt me was to find fault with my faith. They convinced the king to make a new law that everyone in the kingdom should pray only to him for the next 30 days. Anyone who worshiped any other god, including the One True God, would be punished by death. Well, you can see why the king thought this was a great idea and made it into a law. However, the guys wanted to make sure I got caught and would be sentenced to death. So they suggested to the king that if anyone was caught not praying to him, that person should be thrown into the lions' den. Well, obviously, no one should survive such an ordeal.

Donna: How true! It makes me nervous to just think about sharing the same space with lions. Then what happened?

Daniel: Well, the king officially made it a law by signing it. But I continued to do what I always do. Three times every day I opened my windows facing Jerusalem and got down on my knees. I prayed and thanked God for what He has done for me. Praying to God has helped me keep up my relationship with Him and get to know him better. You might say that I panted

to know God just as a deer pants for water.

Donna: Fascinating. Daniel, we know everything turned out OK for you because you are here with us today, and we are happy for you. But I am sorry to say that our time has run out. Thank you for being with us today!

Daniel: God has always been good to me and taken good care of me. Thank you for the opportunity to tell you a little bit about my life and my relationship to God.

—Based on Daniel 6:1-10

5. Display Bible study resources. Talk with the children about your personal quiet time with God. Share what resources you use, when you talk to God, and how often you talk to Him. Explain that spending time in your relationship with God is just as important as spending time with your family and friends. Share that the only way you get to know God better is by spending time with Him. Say: “One way you show you love someone is that you want to spend time with that person. It’s the same way with God. If you love Him, you like to spend time with Him.”

Direct the children's attention to the display table you have set. Briefly give an overview of the resources and tell them how they can obtain such resources for themselves.

6. Make a commitment. Distribute an index card and pencil to each child. Ask the children to think of the best time of each day in which they could have a quiet time with God. Caution that the time frame they choose should be a period when they will not be interrupted by anyone. Ask group members to record a time on the card.

7. Pray. Lead the children to pray the Bible verse as their prayer of commitment to God.

Stretching

Activity Page Time
(20 minutes)

Answers for activity pages are found on the last page of this meeting. You may choose to provide photocopies of this page to the STRETCHING coaches.

The Tournament

Games and Activities
(20 minutes)

Blow the whistle to start THE TOURNAMENT time. Choose from the following games or activities.

Provide:

- Bible
- *Bible Express* devotional guide
- *Holman Student Bible Dictionary*
- Notepad
- Pen
- Other resources that would help children begin a productive quiet time with God

To Do:

- Set up a display of various resources that members can use to begin a quality quiet time with God.
- Be familiar with each resource so as to give a good but brief description of each.

Provide:

- Index cards
- Pencils

Provide:

- A whistle

Provide:

- Cloth or plastic strips

Nine-Leg Relay

You need plenty of room to play this game. Divide the group into teams of eight. Each team needs a coach to help the players tie their legs together. Place five players on one side of the playing area and the other team members opposite them.

From the five players' side, direct two participants to tie their legs together (left leg of one player to the right leg of the second player). On the go signal, these two race three-legged to the other side, where the other three players are located. Upon reaching the other side, they add a player by tying one of his legs to a player. The now four-legged group returns to the opposite side to pick up another partner.

Eventually all eight players are tied together and must return to the opposite side as a nine-legged group. The first team to successfully complete this relay wins.

Say: "Just as your group got larger and larger as you added people so will your knowledge of the Bible as you develop a daily devotion time. You will add more and more knowledge and understanding of how God wants you to live by reading your Bible."

Provide:

- Whistle

Fast-Slow Tag

Tell the players that this game of ankle tag will be played in a regular fast pace and in slow motion. Someone is chosen to be *It*. When a coach blows the whistle one time, players begin to avoid being tagged by finding a partner and grabbing the other partner's ankle. Players keep trying to find different partners without being tagged.

When the coach blows the whistle two times, everyone is to move in slow motion (to exaggerate movements). Even talking or yelling must be done according to the motion of the moment.

At intervals, blow the whistle three times for a brief "no motion" time. At these times, the coach points to a player to share a praise, to thank God for something, to tell of an answer to prayer, to give a prayer request (coach leads that prayer), or for the player to say a sentence prayer.

Provide:

- Chairs, one per player, minus one

To Do:

- Set chairs in a circle.

Flip-Flop Birthdays

This game is similar to Fruit Basket Turnover, but with a twist. Set the chairs in a circle, one for every player except one, who will play *It*. A coach will call out a month of the year. Players born in that month scramble to exchange places. *It* attempts to get an empty chair during the shuffle. The player left without a seat then becomes *It*. The coaches may call out two or three months for players to exchange seats.

Some other things to call out are:

1. Two numbers (1-31) and players born on those dates exchange chairs
2. A month and day (August, 29)

3. A month and year (March, 200_)
4. A month, day, and year (November 7, 200_)
5. Saying “Happy Birthday” means for everyone to exchange places.

Play until time for refreshments. Ask the children to group by birthday months and to pray. Suggest that the children ask God to help them to develop a devotion time at home this week.

Cool Down

Refreshments and Conclusion
(10 minutes)

Enlist the coaches to help you serve refreshments. Explain to the children that they will have a choice of refreshments to eat and that these are items that you would probably drink water with. Quickly share that there are no crackers for them to eat during COOL DOWN!

Dismiss the children by grades to get their snacks. Encourage the coaches to sit among the members to dialogue about their commitment to having a quiet time with God.

Close in prayer, asking for God’s blessings and help for each member to succeed this week in having a personal quiet time with God.

Provide:

- Bread
- Chocolate and vanilla pudding cups
- Spoons
- Ice cream
- Bowls
- Napkins
- Marshmallows

Note: These items appear not to have anything in common. You are right. These are items that you want to drink water with. You may think of other items as well.

To Do:

- Set up a buffet-style refreshment table.

Meeting 6: Answers to Activity Books

Grade 1–3

Vowel Outage

Pray

Read the Bible

Learn from Bible stories

Praise God for His goodness

Worship God at church and at home

Thank God for good people in your life

Learn Bible verses

Be loyal to God

Grade 4–6

Keep a Daily Appointment with God

Why

cat

tub

mitt

stop