

I Can Have Self-Discipline

TEXT: Daniel 1:1-21

LESSON OBJECTIVE

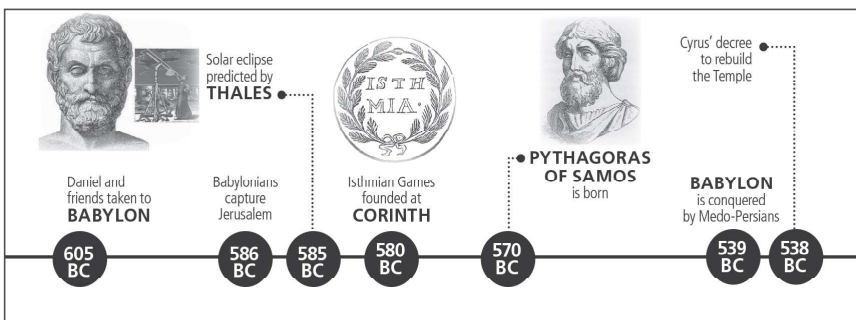
Know: Daniel and his friends showed self-discipline when they obeyed God's laws.

Think: Self-discipline is when we make ourselves do what we know is right.

Do: Choose to make right choices so others will see God living in you.

APPLICATION VERSE: Proverbs 20:11

THEME: Choosing Right in an Ungodly Culture



PREPARATION CHECKLIST

CONNECT

Option 1

TE 3-2

Option 2

Musical instruments

Baton or drumstick

LEARN

TE 3-3

TE 3-4

TE 3-5

EXPLORE

TE 3-1a

Field Notes OT-1

APPLY

TE 3-25

Eight paper plates

Marker

Beanbag

Painter's tape

RESPOND

Field Notes OT-1

Crayons

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

Day 1—Daniel 1:1-4

Day 2—Daniel 1:5-7

Day 3—Daniel 1:8-13

Day 4—Daniel 1:14-16

Day 5—Daniel 1:17-20

★ THE MORE YOU KNOW:

As we begin our study from the book of Daniel, we will look closely at Daniel and his godly characteristics starting with self-discipline. Self-discipline is making the right choice no matter how you feel and no matter what others choose to do.

Daniel loved and served the one, true God. Even as a young man he knew what he believed, and he was not afraid to stand up for those beliefs in order to keep himself pure. Without self-discipline, our spiritual walk is hindered, and we would be more likely to give in to temptation as well (1 Corinthians 7:5).

Self-discipline is a work of the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9). The Holy Spirit's presence provides believers with the power and the ability to exercise self-discipline (2 Timothy 1:7). Self-discipline is a gift of grace from God. What a blessing it is to know the Holy Spirit helps us respond in obedience with self-discipline!

Option 1

Items Needed: TE 3-2

Before class, cut apart the cards from TE 3-2. Choose a student to select a card from TE 3-2 and act out the actions of the animal for the other students to guess. Allow the student who correctly guessed the animal, choose the next card to act out the animal on his or her card. Another option is to just ask for another volunteer to act out the next card. Continue until all the animals have been acted out. **Just as you were able to guess the animals by their actions, others can tell a lot about us by our actions. Today we're going to begin learning about a man in the Bible named Daniel who was taken away from his family. Even though Daniel was far away from his parents, he still made good choices to honor God. We can make good choices like Daniel too.**

Option 2

Items Needed: Musical instruments (maracas, bells, drums, shakers, whatever is available)
Baton or drumstick (optional)


To introduce the characteristic of self-discipline, invite students to play in your "orchestra." Explain that students must watch you and only play when you move your baton. When the baton is still, they must keep their instrument quiet. Practice a few times with them starting and stopping. Then tell them they must play quickly when the baton moves quickly and reduce their tempo when the baton slows down.

To get students moving, invite them to walk in place quickly according to the fast movement of the baton, to walk slowly according to the slow movement of the baton, and to freeze when the baton stops. Gather the instruments.

It was hard to stop playing when I made the baton stop. But if everyone played when they wanted, the music wouldn't sound as pretty. You made the choice to obey me. Today we are going to learn about some Hebrew men who had to make an important decision that wasn't easy.

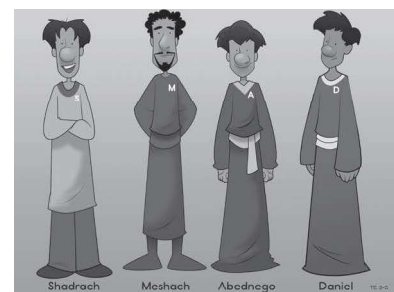


TE 3-2

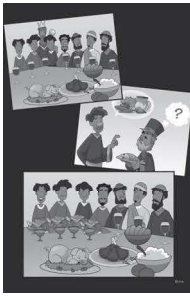
 Daniel and his friends learned to trust God and stand for the truth at home demonstrating **God established the home to make disciples and transfer the faith.**

Items Needed: TE 3-3—TE 3-5

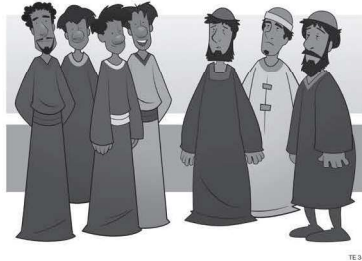
This month we are going to be studying the book of Daniel from the Old Testament. Display TE 3-3. Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were taken captive by the king of Babylon, King Nebuchadnezzar. Say his name after me. Allow the students to repeat the king's name after you. The king wanted the young men to



TE 3-3



TE 3-4



TE 3-5

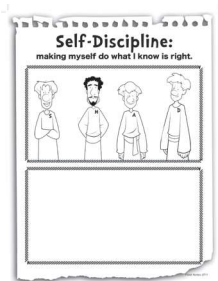
work for him. Display TE 3-4 and point to the different pictures. **The king provided food (meat and wine) from his own table. But Daniel and his friends knew the king's food was shared with false gods, and they only worshiped the one, true God. So Daniel asked the man in charge if he and his friends could eat vegetables and water instead. The man in charge was afraid the king would be angry with him if they weren't as strong as the other young men. But Daniel asked the man in charge to let them eat only vegetables and drink only water for ten days to see how they would do, and the man in charge agreed. Display TE 3-5. At the end of the ten days, Daniel and his friends were stronger and healthier than all the other men. The king chose them to be some of his wise men. The choices Daniel and his friends demonstrated showed others they were followers of the one, true God. They remained true to Him even though they were far from their families and home. Daniel and his friends knew what they believed, and they were not afraid to stand up for it. They kept their hearts and bodies pure. God blessed their choices by giving them strength, wisdom, and favor with the king.**

Daniel and his friends are an example to us of what a follower of God should do. In the next few weeks we will see how Daniel did great things for God and how God rewarded Daniel for his wise choices.

EXPLORE

Items Needed: TE 3-1a

Field Notes OT-1

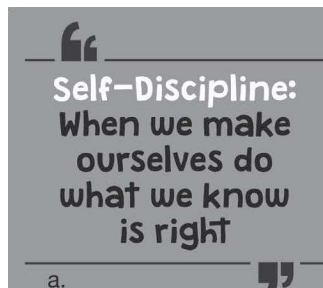


Field Notes OT-1

Before class, copy *Field Notes* OT-1 for each student. Distribute *Field Notes* OT-1 to the students. Have them look at the word *self-disciplined* and the definition at the top of the page. **Do any of you know what it means to be *self-disciplined*? Encourage response. You may have heard the word *discipline* before. Your parents discipline you at times. They are in charge of you and teach you how to live for Jesus. Display TE 3-1a. To be *self-disciplined* means we make ourselves do what we know is right. You do the right thing even when your parents aren't watching. You do your work when your teacher steps out of the room. You do the right thing even when no one is around.**

Did Daniel and his friends have self-discipline? Encourage response. **Yes, they had self-discipline. They knew God's rules, and they wanted to obey God.**

Do you think it was easy for Daniel and his friends to stand against what everyone else was doing and ask for vegetables and water? Encourage response. **No, it wasn't easy. It would have been easier for them to just go along with what the other young men were doing. Is it easier to eat candy or vegetables?** Encourage response. **Is it easy to sit on the couch every day or exercise?** Encourage response. **Is it easier to do our homework or watch TV?** Encourage response. **It is not always easy to do what is right, but it's the choice we should make.**



TE 3-1a

Items Needed: TE 3-25

- Eight paper plates
- Marker
- Beanbag (see sidebar)
- Painter’s tape (optional)

Before class, divide the application verse into eight sections, and use the marker to write the words from each section onto the paper plates. **This month, we are going to learn a Bible verse to help us learn how important it is to do what is right and pure.** Display TE 3-25 and introduce the verse to the students by reading it to them and having the students repeat it after you several times.

Listen to the following situations and think about what the right thing to do is in each one.

Gabe’s mom said, “I want you to put all the books and toys away before you do anything else.” At first, Gabe was on a roll, but then he found a video game under his bed that he hadn’t played in so long. He thought he could just play for a little bit and then finish cleaning up his room. What is the right thing to do? Encourage response.

Elise’s Sunday School teacher challenged them to spend time in God’s Word every day this week. She told herself she would do it every morning before school, but every morning she was running late. So then she changed it to every night before bed, But she forgot ball practice started this week and every night she was too tired to read it. What could she do? How could she show self-discipline? Encourage response.

Sam’s friends played outside most afternoons until dinner. One afternoon the kid who just moved in down the street came out to watch them. He was in Sam’s class at school, but he seemed really quiet. The other kids just pretended they didn’t see him. What could Sam say or do? Encourage response.

Self-discipline also involves making the right choice over and over. When you are tempted to say you are sick because you don’t want to go to school, instead you get up, get dressed, and go to school. When your teacher asks if you brought your homework and you forgot to do it, you tell the truth. When your friend bullies someone, you stand up for the one being bullied. When your parent tells you to do something, you do it right away. Let’s do an activity to help us learn and remember our application verse. Explain the activity before putting the plates down or the students will be distracted and not understand how it works. A student will toss the beanbag on to one of the plates, and then pick up the plate. The class will then say the application verse together, including the missing words. The next student will toss the beanbag again and remove the plate on which it landed. Say the verse together again as a class. Continue the activity until all of the plates have been removed.

If you do not have a beanbag, you can quickly make one by pouring dry beans into a tube sock (filling it about four inches) and knotting it. be sure the sock is tight woven or double sock it. Another option is a sponge. A ball is not recommended because it will bounce around too much for this activity. Use the painter’s tape to secure the plates to the floor if needed.

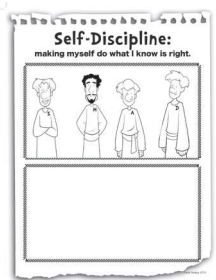


TE 3-25

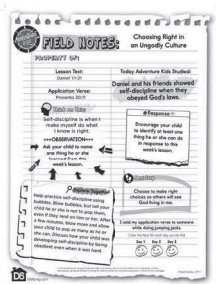
Notes

Items Needed: *Field Notes* OT-1
Crayons

What are some characteristics we have learned that Daniel and his three friends were known for? Encourage response. They were known as smart, obedient, respectful, and self-disciplined. What are some ways Daniel and his friends were self-disciplined and what was the result? Encourage response. King Nebuchadnezzar said Daniel and his friends were ten times wiser than all the others. Their words and their actions showed they were devoted to God. They obeyed God’s laws even if it meant they might be punished. They made good choices about taking care of their bodies. And as they kept making good choices, they were known as people who loved God and served well. We can follow their example in our choices to show our love for God and to serve Him well. Allow the students to look at *Field Notes* OT-1. Distribute crayons to the students and allow time for them to color the picture of Daniel and his friends at the top of the page. Then have the students draw pictures of themselves in the bottom frame. Encourage the students to hang their picture somewhere they will see it as a reminder to have self-discipline just like Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego did.



Field Notes OT-1



Field Notes OT-1

Christians have the Holy Spirit living inside and He can help you. Say a prayer right where you are and ask for His help. When you know what the right thing is, do it even if you don’t feel like it. Do it no matter what others are doing. We can learn from Daniel’s example how to choose to make the choices that honor God. It’s not always easy, but God is with us and He will honor our choices. As we continue to make right choices, we will be known for the good we do, just like Daniel. Have the students refer to the *Next Step* section on their *Field Notes*. Your *Next Step* is to choose to make right choices so others will see God living in us. Close with a prayer requesting God’s help for you and your students to be self-disciplined.



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