



wonder
inspire. equip. support.

Bible Passage: Daniel 3:1–30
(In the Fiery Furnace)

REMEMBER VERSE

Jesus answered ... “Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.” John 14:9b

God Is the One True God

SERVICE SCHEDULE

Explore::

Welcome & Engage
10–15 minutes

Discover & Respond::

Large Group
30–40 minutes

Respond & Bless::

Small Group
20–35 minutes

ENVIRONMENT: MODELING

Biblical content needs a practical living expression in order for it to be spiritually impacting. This environment serves as a hands-on example of what it means for children to put their faith into action. Modeling puts flesh on faith and reminds us that others are watching to see if we live what we believe.

Inspire

When I first met Melissa, I was instantly drawn to her. She had a magnetic personality to everyone who came in contact with her. She was beautiful and kind, and had the ability to make every person feel like they were special and loved. Melissa also had a vibrant relationship with Jesus. She loved Him and she couldn't help but share what He had done in her life. Melissa was the kind of woman I strived to become—a woman full of grace with a love for God that shined through every part of her life.

At 20 years of age, Melissa was diagnosed with ovarian cancer. Her friends and family were devastated by the news. Somehow, Melissa remained joyful. She believed the God she served—the one true God—would use her cancer for His glory. She believed that if even one person came to know Jesus through her experience, it would be worth her life. Melissa believed no matter what circumstance she faced, God remained holy and worthy to be praised. She chose to worship Him with her entire life, regardless of its length.

God did use Melissa's cancer for His glory. Her friends and family were greatly impacted by her life. Through her life and faith, people who didn't know God saw Him. Melissa taught many people what it meant to love Jesus without fail. Her life modeled faith and reflected the Lord.

Melissa's fight with cancer ended the following year. She never gave up her belief that God is the one true God. My dear friend held fast to the truth that He alone is worth living and dying for. It's been 10 years since Melissa went to be with the Lord, yet God used her life to impact my life. Regardless of circumstance, He is God, and He is good. God is the one true God, and He is so worthy of my life and faith.

NOTES:



RaeLynn Lott

RaeLynn Lott
TruWonder Team

Equip

The Bible is full of rich accounts of those whose lives testify to faith in the one true God, regardless of their circumstance. One of those accounts began with the Babylonian Empire's invasion of Jerusalem in 597 B.C., taking young Hebrew men such as Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego, and Daniel into captivity. It was the goal to assimilate the Israelites into Babylonian culture. Hebrew names were changed and the men were educated in Babylonian customs.

As devout Jewish men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego believed in *Yahweh*, the one true God. They didn't desire to look like the world or culture where they lived, and this attitude made the young men stand out from everyone else. When the Babylonians dined on wine and "unclean" food from the king's table, the men chose to eat vegetables and water (Daniel 1). They didn't allow Babylonian culture to change their faith, regardless of the cost. They didn't want to dishonor God in any way.

When told to worship the statue that honored the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused. By doing so the young men put their lives at risk. But to bow down and worship anyone except the Lord God violated the command to worship *Yahweh*—the one true God.

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego had to have a deep sense of the God they served. When pressed, they chose to face a fiery furnace and death over disobedience to God. As they followed God together, these men were able to model what it meant to have a living faith to one another and the world around them. When God rescued them from death, King Nebuchadnezzar saw their faith and proclaimed that no one was permitted to speak ill of the God of these young men. Their example was a witness to the Babylonians, and to the entire world, of what it meant to fully worship and fully believe in the one true God.

Further Resources

Walton, John H. (ed.). 2009. *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary* (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel), vol. 4. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing.

Remember Verse Motions

Inspired by American Sign Language; demonstrated at www.signingsavvy.com and <http://www.commtechlab.msu.edu/sites/aslweb/browser.htm>

Support

“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength” (Deuteronomy 6:4–5).

This passage of Scripture is a prayer known as the *Shema*. It's a prayer declaring the existence of one God, and subsequent verses state the importance of modeling and passing down this belief from generation to generation. This prayer was recited by Jews twice a day and copied onto paper to be carried with them throughout the day. Jewish children knew the *Shema* as well as children today know their ABCs. For Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, this prayer was foundational to who they were as men; it was ingrained in their hearts.

Take a few minutes and read the words of the *Shema*. Then copy the words of this ancient prayer on a sheet of paper. Place the prayer in a location where you'll be sure to see it every day. Consider making several copies and placing them in strategic locations—places you'll see the prayer at various points throughout the day. Whenever you see the prayer, take some time to reflect on its meaning. Pray that God would impress the words and their meaning upon your heart.

“A very unforgettable lesson.”

—International Church of Las Vegas

Lesson Overview

Experience	Time	Summary	Supplies/Prepare (Master Supply List under Resource Tab)
Explore:: Welcome & Engage	10-15 min.	Exploration stations create space intended to transition children—to lead them from the external world into an environment where they can commune with God, just as they are with all that they are.	Focus Station: Real or Fake? (per table) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • real apple and toy apple • real clock and toy clock • real bracelet and toy bracelet • real flower and silk flower • optional: other real and fake pairs you have on hand • 3 clear plastic bins • Thumbs Up and Thumbs Down master (see Resource Folder) • clear tape (Optional) Station 2: What's Real and What's Pretend? (per table) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What's Real and What's Pretend? Cards (see Resource Folder) • resealable plastic bag
Discover:: Large Group	20-25 min.	Facilitate interactive games, songs, and storytelling, allowing children to participate in discovering God's Word.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chloe (puppet or person) • Chloe's Rules videos or scripts (see Resource Tab) • preschool program theme song • 2 upbeat worship songs (suggestion: "What Do You Know?" TruWorship <i>Songs from the Playhouse</i> and "My God Is So Big," Cedarhurst Kids <i>Bible Songs</i>) • optional: countdown video • Mail Time intro clip and image (see Resource Tab) • Remember Verse image and cards (see Resource Folder) • Mail Time envelope art printed and attached to a large envelope (see Resource Tab) • Bibles (your personal and large children's) • mailbox • Wardrobe of Wonder intro clip and image (see Resource Tab) • Wardrobe of Wonder • Wardrobe of Wonder sound effect (see Resource Tab) • optional: silly hats for prop/hat box • 2 small stools or chairs • What's It: The Number One (see image in Resource Folder) • The Big God Story intro clip and image (see Resource Tab) (Continued)

Lesson Overview

Experience	Time	Summary	Supplies/Prepare (Master Supply List under Resource Tab)
Discover:: Large Group			(Continued) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sound effects: #1 Statue Music, #2 Bad News, #3 Crackling Fire (see Resource Folder) • optional: rocking chair, stuffed armchair, or large beanbag (for Storyteller to sit in as she tells The Big God Story)
Respond:: Large Group	10-15 min.	Create space for children to respond to the Holy Spirit in worship and community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • title image (see Resource Tab) or worshipful video loop • worship song (suggestions: "Remember," TruWorship <i>Radio the World</i> or "He Is God," Jana Alayra <i>Believin' On</i>, www.janaalayra.com)
Respond:: Small Group	15-30 min.	Further process the story through discussion and interaction with others, and respond to God in worship through creative expression.	<p>Connect: Feelin' Hot, Hot, Hot (per small group)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • beanbag • fast-paced worship song: "Here We Go," <i>The People's Album, Vol. 3</i>; available on the Extras Tab for Premium, Unlimited, and Combo users; or iTunes • CD player <p>Create: My Number One (per table/small group)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number One Puzzle Template (see Resource Folder) • paper • crayons • glue sticks • marker • optional: scissors
Bless:: Small Group	5 min.	Bless the children that they may experience God fully and be a blessing to others.	<p>Wonder Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blessing/Remember Verse • HomeFront Weekly

Explore::

10–15 min.


Host/Small Group Leaders


Exploration stations create space intended for wonder—to pique children’s curiosity and allow them to engage in hands-on experiences as they begin their time in worship.



NOTES:

Invite children to participate at the Focus Station (or optional stations, if available). Explore the materials with the children and engage them in open-ended questions about their observations. This will encourage them to explore and form questions on their own throughout the lesson.

Station 1: Real or Fake?

The Jewish captives had to make the decision to assimilate to the Babylonian culture, which worshipped false gods, or stay true to their heritage or worshipping the one true God. Today children will have the opportunity to investigate various items. Kids will sort the objects based on their analysis of their authenticity.

SUPPLIES (per table)

- real apple and toy apple
- real clock and toy clock
- real bracelet and toy bracelet
- real flower and silk flower
- optional: other real and fake pairs you have on hand
- 3 clear plastic bins
- Thumbs Up and Thumbs Down master (see Resource Folder)
- clear tape

PREPARE AHEAD

Print Thumbs Up and Thumbs Down pictures. Use clear tape and attach the signs to the outside of two plastic bins. In the remaining bin, place all the supplies from the list above.

SET UP

Place the bins on the table with the unlabeled bin in the center.

ENGAGE

Welcome children to the Explore Station. Begin to engage them in conversation. **What do you see in the bin?** As you hold up each item, ask: **Is it real or is it fake?** As the children begin to identify the items as real or fake, encourage them to sort the items into the appropriate bins. Children can place the real items in the thumbs-up bin and the fake items in the thumbs-down bin. **What are some other things you’ve seen that look real, but aren’t? Is it always easy to tell if something is real? What do you use to help you decide if something is real? Your eyes? How it feels? How it smells?**

“The real vs. pretend pictures were great. We worked together to create a poster that I will bring out on our Remember & Celebrate weekend.”

—The Beacon

NOTES:



Transition Tips

To help transition the children between activities, consider giving them a five-minute warning. Choose something simple like flickering the lights or a sound signal such as a bell, rainstick, or music clip. When the five minutes are up, give the signal again along with two simple instructions to help them end their activity and move into the next. For example (cue signal): “Friends, it’s time to clean up. Please put all the toy animals and people into the Explore bin. Then line up quietly at the door.” This process will help children prepare and move through transitions with ease.

(Optional) Station 2: What’s Real and What’s Pretend?

There are many things in our world that appear to be the same, but have fundamental differences. What’s Real and What’s Pretend? is a fun spin on a popular matching game. After matching items that appear to be the same, children will then sort their matches into two piles: real and pretend.

SUPPLIES (per table)

- What’s Real and What’s Pretend? Cards (containing the following pictures: real banana, cartoon banana, real wristwatch, plastic toy wristwatch, real leaves on tree, cartoon leaves on branch, real flowers in field, pattern of hand-drawn flowers; see Resource Folder)
- resealable plastic bag

PREPARE AHEAD

Print, cut, and laminate (optional) the What’s Real and What’s Pretend? Cards from the Resource Folder. Place in a resealable bag.

SET UP

Set the cards facedown on the table.

ENGAGE

Welcome children to the Explore Station. Begin to engage kids in conversation. **What do you see on the table? How do you think these cards are used? Let’s play a game together.** Engage in the matching and sorting game with the children. **When you find the match, are they the same object? Are they *exactly* the same? How are they similar? How are they different? Which one is real, and which one is pretend?**

Discover::

20-25 min.

Host/Worship Leader/Storyteller



Children move into a large group setting and participate in discovering God's Word through storytelling, worship, and interactive experiences.

NOTES:

The following instructions have been condensed, but if you'd like more information about any of the components of the large group program, please see Putting It Together under the Resource Tab.

Ponder Point

God Is the One True God

Chloe's Rules

Host/Worship Leader

Begin large group by using Chloe (a puppet or person) to review the rules of your program. It's a great time to remind children how we can all be part of a loving community through the words we speak, sitting with our small group, and sharing. Add a theme song to your program for a fun way to help give identity to your large group program. Also choose two upbeat worship songs from a worship album that fits. The supplies you'll want to gather for this section are the Chloe's Rules videos or scripts (see Resource Tab), Chloe (a puppet or person), your preschool program theme song, worship music (suggestion: **"What Do You Know?"** TruWorship Songs from the Playhouse and **"My God Is So Big,"** Cedarhurst Kids Bible Songs), and a countdown video (optional).



Mail Time

Host/Worship Leader

Have children retrieve mail (the current Remember Verse from the Bible) from their mailbox. Review the meaning of the verse and any unfamiliar words with the children as they prepare to memorize it. Supplies to gather include the Mail Time intro clip and image, Remember Verse image (for projection and Mail Time envelope), Remember Verse cards (print and distribute along with HomeFront Weekly), Mail Time envelope art printed and attached to a large envelope, a Bible, a large children's Bible, and a mailbox.

REMEMBER VERSE

Jesus answered ... "Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father." John 14:9b

Remember Verse Motions

Jesus answered: Point to sky with both index fingers.

Anyone: Open arms across chest until extended at sides.

who has seen: Use index fingers to point to eyes.

me: Point to sky with both index fingers.

has seen: Use index fingers to point to eyes.

the Father: Point to sky with both fingers.

Wardrobe of Wonder

Storyteller/Host/Worship Leader

Hide the What'sIt connected to The Big God Story in the wardrobe. Together as a community, the children will discover the identity of this object as they begin to ask questions from their observations and experiences. You'll need to have ready a Wardrobe of Wonder, Wardrobe of Wonder intro clip, image, and sound effect (see Resource Tab), silly hats for the prop/hat box (optional), and two small stools or chairs. For this What'sIt you'll need a number one (see optional image to show or print in the Resource Folder).

What'sIt: The Number One

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego trusted and followed the Lord God—*Yahweh*, the God of Israel. They obeyed His Word and trusted in His character and power. God kept the young men safe while they were in the furnace. It was only by the power of the one true God that the men walked out unharmed. God showed the people that He is the one true God.

ASK

(Insert child's name), **what did you find in the Wardrobe of Wonder?** Ask the children: **When we start counting, what's the first number we come to? That's right, the number one! If we want to say someone is important, we say, "They're number one." Have you ever heard that? So, any ideas why there was a number one in the wardrobe?** Children answer. **Those are good ideas! Well, I think it's time we find out how the number one fits into today's portion of The Big God Story. Do you know what time it is?**

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Prayer of Release

A **Prayer of Release** is a time for children and leaders to pause, be still, and ask God to quiet their hearts and minds. As you pray, encourage children to hold their hands out in front of them as if releasing their worries and distractions. This posture also shows they're open to receive what the Holy Spirit might have for them.

NOTES:

Suggestion

Consider photocopying the storytelling section and inserting it in the pages of a giant Bible. Encourage your Storyteller to hold this as she does a dramatic reading of The Big God Story.

The Big God Story

Daniel 3:1–30

Storyteller

SUPPLIES

- The Big God Story intro clip and image (see Resource Tab)
- Bible (adult or children's to use during teaching)
- Wardrobe of Wonder sound effect (see Resource Tab)
- What'sIt: The Number One (see image in Resource Folder)
- sound effects: #1 Statue Music, #2 Bad News, #3 Crackling Fire (see Resource Folder)
- optional: rocking chair, stuffed armchair, or large beanbag (for Storyteller to sit in as she tells The Big God Story)

Hello, friends! It's good to see you today. Before we jump into The Big God Story, will you pray with me? Let's ask God to speak to our hearts and teach us today. (Lead children in a Prayer of Release.)

A long, long, long, long time ago ... even before Jesus was born, there was a king named Nebuchadnezzar. At this time, God's people, the Israelites, had been captured and taken to a different and faraway land that wasn't their own. They were taken to Babylon, where King Nebuchadnezzar ruled. He was a very strange king. He built a really big gold statue. He told all the people in his kingdom to come see the statue. The people traveled from far and wide just as the king commanded. One of the king's men said, "Everybody listen! When you hear music from these instruments (*Tech: Cue sound effect #1 Statue Music*), you must bow down and worship the statue. If you don't, you'll be in **big trouble!**" (*Tech: Cue sound effect #2 Bad News.*) So they played their instruments and the people bowed to the statue.

One day, some of the king's important men came to Nebuchadnezzar and said, "Long live the king! King, you've told all the people in your kingdom to bow down and worship the gold statue when we hear the music. But there are three young men who refuse. Their names are Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. You've made them important people in your kingdom, and yet they refuse to bow down to the gold statue. Not only that, they won't worship any of your gods!" Boys and girls, why do you think Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego didn't worship the king's gods? (Encourage kids to answer.) That's right. They didn't worship the gods of the king because those gods weren't real. They were fake! Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego knew the real God—the one true God. He was who they worshipped! Why didn't they bow down to the statue when the music played? (*Tech: Cue sound effect #1 Statue Music.* Allow children to answer.) That's right! They didn't bow down to

“The Big God Story went really well. It was easy to connect the number one with the lesson that God is the one true God. We talked about other things that are important to them in their lives, but they connected that God is always number one.”

—International Church of Las Vegas

NOTES:

the gold statue because it wasn't God. It was just a fake. They knew their God, the God of Israel, was the one true God.

Do you think King Nebuchadnezzar was happy when he heard the news? (Children respond.) No! He was *really* mad! Let's pretend to be the king and be *really* mad. Wow! Those are some mad faces. The king called Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to his palace and asked, "Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you don't respect my wishes, and you don't bow to the gold statue I've built? Well, I'll give you a second chance. Starting now, if I find out you're not bowing to the gold statue when you hear the music (*Tech: Cue sound effect #1 Statue Music*), I'll be very angry and I'll throw you into a furnace filled with fire!"

What do you think happened next? (Children respond.) Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego said, "King, your threats mean nothing to us! Our God is bigger than that. He can save us from the fiery furnace! Even if our God doesn't save us from the fire, we *still* won't worship your gods or bow to your statue!" Why didn't the young men bow to worship the statue? (Kids answer.) Because God is the one true God.

This made King Nebuchadnezzar even *more* angry! He ordered his servants to turn up the fire seven times hotter than it had been. (*Tech: Cue sound effect #3 Crackling Fire.*) Wow! That must have been really hot! Then the king ordered some strong men to take Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, tie them up by their hands and feet, and throw them into the fire. (*Tech: Cue sound effect #2 Bad News.*) That doesn't sound good. What do you think happened to the three men? (Children answer.) Did the fire burn them? Let's wait and see.

(*Tech: Cue sound effect #3 Crackling Fire.*) The king looked and saw four men walking around inside the fiery furnace. "Wait a second!" he thought. "Didn't we throw just three men into the fire?" (Count on fingers.) One, two, *three!* Wait ... one, two, three, *four!* Boys and girls, that's amazing! Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were walking around in the fire without being hurt at all! Who do you think was the fourth person in there with them? (Children answer.) Some people think this was Jesus Himself. How cool is that? God protected the young men. Could anyone else have saved Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego? (Children answer.) No! Only God could have protected them in the fire. He is the one true God!

The king couldn't believe his eyes. He called out to them, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego! Servants of the high God, come out here!" So, they walked out of the fire. Everyone was amazed because the three men hadn't been burned or touched by the fire. Their clothes didn't even smell like smoke. When the king saw this, he said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego! He rescued His servants, who trusted in Him!" The king saw how the young men refused to worship

“I liked the sound effects and the focus of this Big God Story that God is the one true God. I feel like the Holy Spirit really opened up the kids' understanding of why they didn't bow down to the statue and why they chose to worship God only.”

—Mt. Paran North Church of God

“The Big God Story was written really well. The kids loved the sound effects.”

—Good Shepherd Church

NOTES:



anyone but the one true God. King Nebuchadnezzar then said that if anyone said anything bad about the God of these young men, they would be in *big* trouble.

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego knew that God is the one true God. (*Tech: Cue Wardrobe of Wonder sound effect.*) What does that sound mean? That's right! We've found our What'sIt. What was in the wardrobe today? The number one, that's right. And today we've heard over and over that God is the *one* true God. They trusted in Him alone. King Nebuchadnezzar sent the three young men into the fire to punish them. But when God protected them in the fire, the king saw that the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego is greater than any fake god! God showed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego the very best way to live and how to follow Him. When they chose to obey God, other people saw how they lived their lives, through the things they said and the things they did. The people were able to see that the God of Israel, the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, is the one true God. Friends, there is no one like God. He is the one true God!

The Big God Story is written for a 3 1/2- to 6-year-old audience. It can be told in its entirety for an older audience, but may need to be shortened if your group is on the younger side.


**Large
Group
SECTION**

Respond::

10–15 min.

Worship Leader



Children have the opportunity to respond to God and to what they have heard and experienced through His Word. Special attention should be given to create space for the Holy Spirit to minister to each child.

“It was great hearing the children tell me the meaning of the one true God.”

—The Beacon

NOTES:



Note

We've provided two song suggestions for today's worship response. As you transition from storytelling, you may sense the need for a celebratory response. In this case, "He Is God" is a good fit. If the tone is more reflective, consider using "Remember" as a song of response.

The worship response time in large group varies from week to week. Some weeks the children will respond in worship through music, while other weeks are designed for more specific interactive expressions of response. This time is intended for children to freely express their worship as God's Spirit leads them.

SUPPLIES

- title image (see Resource Tab) or worshipful video loop
- worship song (suggestions: "Remember," TruWorship *Radio the World* or "He Is God," Jana Alayra *Believin' On*, www.janaalayra.com)

Worship-through-Response

In this part of The Big God Story, we heard that God is the one true God. Can anyone tell me how we know that God is the one true God today? Allow children to respond. We know that God is the one true God through His Word, the Bible. How else do we know that God is the one true God? Allow children to respond; interact with their responses.

When we worship God, we honor Him. Sometimes we do this with our bodies through our postures of worship. Some of the postures we've tried as we respond to God have been with our eyes closed, bowing down on our knees, sitting quietly and talking to God, and raising our hands in the air. We can also have a posture of celebration to God as we worship Him for who He is and all He has done! Today, we're going to stand and worship God, just like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego chose to stand and worship God! As the worship song is playing, you may choose to stand as you praise God, or you may choose to practice another posture of worship before Him. I think I'm going to practice standing while I worship God. This will be my way of honoring God and showing Him He is the one true God in my life!

Lead children in the worship song "Remember" or "He Is God."

To streamline large group dismissal, try dismissing one age group at a time. Give the children and leaders cheerful reminders of exit doors as they're preparing to leave. This could be a fun time to bring Chloe back to help with moving into small groups. Use her to remind little ones to stay with their Small Group Leaders, wait patiently for their friends as they walk out together, etc.


 Small
 Group
 SECTION

Respond::

15-30 min.

Small Group Leaders



Children have an opportunity to reflect (within the faith community) on what they have heard, and to respond to God individually or corporately. This time is focused on the wonder of God and the foundational Truth of His Word.

“Feelin’ Hot, Hot, Hot worked well. We used a little bean-stuffed animal since we didn’t have a beanbag.”

—Impact Christian Church

“They loved the game. It brought a lot of energy to the room and connected to The Big God Story very well.”

—International Church of Las Vegas

NOTES:

Your small group time is designed to encourage conversations between you and your children about what God is doing in them. Some children will be more responsive when they're engaged in something artistic. Others will be more open once their bodies get moving. Choose from the options given here or use your own ideas. The Wonder Questions may be used to start conversations during any of these activities or in a quieter, more contemplative time.

Connect: Feelin’ Hot, Hot, Hot

(Optional Game: 5–10 min.)

After a time of responding to God on a personal level, increase the energy by allowing time and space for children and leaders to connect with each other in a lively large-motor-skills activity. Fun challenges foster unique opportunities for conversation and help to develop your faith community.

SUPPLIES (per small group)

- beanbag
- fast-paced worship song: “Here We Go,” *The People’s Album, Vol. 3*; available on the Extras Tab for Premium, Unlimited, and Combo users; or iTunes
- CD player

SET UP

Have the children sit in a circle.

ENGAGE

Today in The Big God Story, we heard how Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego chose not to worship King Nebuchadnezzar’s statue. What did the king do? Allow children to respond. That’s right! He had them put in the fiery furnace. But what did God do? What happened to them while they were in there? Were they burned?

Allow children to respond. **No! They weren’t! God protected them and showed King Nebuchadnezzar that He is the one true God. Today, we’re going to play a fun game much like Hot Potato. We’re going to sit in a circle and pass the beanbag around the circle. Make sure to pass it to your neighbor as quickly as you can. Remember ... we’re pretending it’s really hot! We’ll pass the beanbag until the music stops. If you’re holding the beanbag in your hands when the music stops, you’ll say loudly, “God is the one true God!”** Once they’ve played a few rounds, have the children stand and shuffle around, finding new spots to sit in the circle. Or, have them scoot back, expanding the size of the circle. Play a few more times before moving on to Create.

NOTES:



“I traced a number 1 onto paper before I cut it out, so the children had an outline of the puzzle. If I did this again, I might even use a copy of the puzzle for the younger children to match their puzzle-piece shapes and glue them right on top.”

—The Beacon

“Kids really enjoyed decorating and putting together the number 1. We had great God conversations while the kids created their piece.”

—Mt. Paran North Church of God

Create: My Number One

Create is more than just a time to make a craft. It's a hands-on opportunity for children to give artistic expression to what God is doing within them. What is created can then become a physical reminder of time spent responding to God.

SUPPLIES (per table/small group)

- Number One Puzzle Template (see Resource Folder)
- paper
- crayons
- glue sticks
- marker
- optional: scissors

PREPARE AHEAD

Print one puzzle per small group. Cut the puzzle pieces apart and place in a resealable bag.

SET UP

Set out materials. Give each child a puzzle piece.

ENGAGE

Today we learned that God is the one true God. How do we know that? Allow children to respond. **That's right! God saved Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego from the fiery furnace because they chose to worship only Him! There are lots of parts in The Big God Story where God shows us that He is the one true God. What are some other parts of the Bible that show us God is the one true God?** If children are having trouble getting started, help guide them by reminding them of parts of The Big God Story they've heard before. For example: God made a covenant with Noah, and He always keeps His promises. The rainbow is one way they can see God always keeps His promises. As children recall ways that God is the one true God, write their responses on their puzzle pieces. Encourage children to decorate their puzzle piece. **When we're finished coloring our pieces, we're going to put this puzzle together. Each time we see the number one, it can help us to remember lots of ways that God is the one true God!** Be sure to save your finished puzzle to display in your Create gallery for the upcoming Remember & Celebrate weekend.

Alternate instructions: Print one puzzle per child. The children may color the puzzles while engaging in the discussion. Allow older children to cut out their own puzzle pieces after coloring them. Give them a blank piece of paper to glue their puzzle pieces to when they're finished. Or, encourage them to wait to cut out their puzzle when they get home.

Small Group Enhancements

Premium, Unlimited, and Combo users can find a quarterly TruWonder Timeline and images of people corresponding to each week's lesson on the My Lessons page under Extras > Small Group Enhancements. As you place the weekly people squares on the timeline, invite children to help you storytell. The provided questions will prompt further conversation about what children have been experiencing. They'll enjoy watching as the timeline fills week to week and their knowledge of The Big God Story grows.

NOTES:



Wonder Questions

Discuss the following questions with the children. Wonder Questions are meant to prompt further conversation about what children have been experiencing. They also invite children to ponder this truth and dwell with the wonder of God. Be sure to pause long enough after each question to allow the children time to wonder. Encourage them to share their unique perspectives with the group.

In this part of The Big God Story, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were told to worship a fake god. But they would only worship the one true God. God protected them in the fiery furnace. When they chose to obey God, other people saw how they lived their lives, through the things they said and the things they did. God is the one true God.

I wonder ... How hard was it to choose not to bow down and worship other gods?

I wonder ... What would it have been like to be with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego when they did not bow down? And then in the furnace?

I wonder ... How does God show us today that He is the one true God?

I wonder ... How do I feel about the one true God?



Bless::

5 min.

Small Group Leaders



A blessing can be a prayer of commission, a portion of Scripture, or words of encouragement and guidance. A blessing can be offered in order to ask God's Spirit to overflow from the child's life in such a way that blesses others, while it can also be prayed over a child for the purpose of declaring God's protection, joy, or wisdom.

The Power of Blessing

Use this time to allow both volunteer leaders and parents to participate in blessing each child before they conclude their time together. Invite parents into the time of blessing at the end of the service, and encourage them to continue to bless their children throughout the week.

Today, send your little ones out with a blessing by praying Scripture over them. The time of blessing is an opportunity for children to practice another physical posture of worship. Have children place their hands out in front of themselves, palms up as if cupping them together to hold water. This is a posture that demonstrates our expectancy in receiving what God has for each of us. Read the Remember Verse over the children and then close your time with a prayer of blessing. (You may choose to read through the Scripture more than once as God's Spirit leads you.)

(Name of child), **God is the one true God. He has made a way for you to be with Him forever. Jesus is the very best example of how to know, love, and follow God. May you trust in Him with all of your life.** (reference John 17:3)

Jesus answered ... "Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father." John 14:9b

home|front

HomeFront Weekly: Be sure to send home the HomeFront Weekly for next week's lesson! This preteaching tool for parents encourages families to spend time in God's Word together before children arrive at church.

HomeFront Monthly: Every four weeks we highlight one of the 10 environments. For each new environment, parents should receive HomeFront Monthly. This resource gives families ideas for how to create fun, spiritually forming times in their home—setting aside a sacred space for family in the midst of their active, everyday lives!

