**1. Motivate**

When have you felt clueless about how to fix something?

* when the car quit in the middle of the interstate
* when the washer/dryer stopped running
* my grade for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ was hovering above an F and I couldn’t do the homework problems
* the internet quit working
* the laptop wouldn’t even find my Bluetooth earphones – which had been working OK just a couple of weeks ago
* the garbage disposal stalled full of cooked spaghetti we were getting rid of
* our toddler had a meltdown right as we got to church
* the soccer team I coached had 5 of the best players out for sickness and we played the #1 team that day

**2. Transition**

There are plenty of things in our lives that we cannot fix.

* But God can fix them if we only trust Him
* When we talk to God about our problems, prayers really do make a difference.

A video introduction to the Bible study is available. View it at <https://watch.liberty.edu/media/t/1_9xo809be> If you have no wi-fi where you teach, best to download to your computer from <https://tinyurl.com/yck36n89>

**3. Bible Study**

3.1 Seek God

Listen for Daniel in danger. (Sounds like the name of a mystery novel or movie 😉)

Daniel 2:13-16 (NIV) So the decree was issued to put the wise men to death, and men were sent to look for Daniel and his friends to put them to death. 14 When Arioch, the commander of the king's guard, had gone out to put to death the wise men of Babylon, Daniel spoke to him with wisdom and tact. 15 He asked the king's officer, "Why did the king issue such a harsh decree?" Arioch then explained the matter to Daniel. 16 At this, Daniel went in to the king and asked for time, so that he might interpret the dream for him.

What situation created this threat of execution for Daniel and his friends?

* king had a dream
* wanted the interpretation … also wanted advisors to tell him what the dream was
* advisors couldn’t do it so he was going to execute the lot of them
* Daniel and friends were among those sentenced

What words and phrases describe how Daniel responded to the threat he faced?

* Daniel spoke to the commander with wisdom and tact
* asked why such a harsh and hurried decree
* went to the king and said if the king gave them time, an interpretation might be determined

Why do you think this was a good request?

* at least you can bargain for time
* gives the king some hope
* Daniel was blindsided by the execution sentence, allowed him to get the total picture
* we remember from previous study that Daniel had been given the gift/skill of interpreting dreams

What options do *we* have when facing a crisis? What do people sometimes end up doing?

* panic
* lapse into a blue funk
* “When you worry, when you doubt – run in circles, scream and shout!”
* give up
* seek advice, help
* pray, ask others to pray

Where do people in secular culture today turn with concerns about the future?

* financial planners
* medical professionals
* tax advisors, stockbrokers
* psychologists, psychiatrists
* ask friends on Facebook
* look for answers with Google, YouTube
* even palm readers and astrologers

What about Christians – where can/should believers go when they are concerned about the future?

* we can turn to God’s Word
* we can pray, talk to God about our problems
* we can receive godly counsel from wise believers
* God’s Holy Spirit can guide and direct or thinking, our decisions

3.2 Pray Expectantly

Listen for what Daniel asked of his friends.

Daniel 2:17-19 (NIV) Then Daniel returned to his house and explained the matter to his friends Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. 18 He urged them to plead for mercy from the God of heaven concerning this mystery, so that he and his friends might not be executed with the rest of the wise men of Babylon. 19 During the night the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision. Then Daniel praised the God of heaven

What did Daniel and his friends ask of God in the midst of a desperate situation?

* pleaded for mercy
* asked God to help them with this mystery
* prayed that God would spare them (and all the advisers) from execution

Once they had prayed, how did Daniel *then* respond to the crisis?

* notice that he did not stay up all night worrying or even praying
* he went to sleep
* that is when God revealed the mystery in a vision/dream given to Daniel

Daniel enlisted the prayers of his friends. What are the benefits of praying as a community?

* you don’t feel alone
* God promises results when we unite in prayer
* By hearing the prayers of others, we can become more deeply convinced that we are praying in the will of God
* the more you pray together, the more you sense each other’s heartbeat, burdens, joy in the Lord
* The more you hear others joining in prayer for the same needs, the stronger your faith tends to become
* Faith for God’s answer is strengthened
* when God answers there are more people praising God

How can we demonstrate in our lives the importance of prayer?

* keep a prayer journal so your mind doesn’t wander or forget some things
* note the date when God answered the prayers you had written down
* then you prayer journal becomes a prayer *and praise* journal
* give God the credit, praise Him publicly
* when you tell someone you will be praying for them, do it right then with them
* then be sure to carry out continuing to pray for them

So … you’re in a crisis, you pray with together others for God’s guidance, then God reveals to you what He is doing in a dream as you sleep. What might you be *tempted* to do when you wake up?

* post it on Facebook, Twitter
* call a friend
* write it down quick before you forget
* wonder if the dream was more the result of the pizza you ate before bedtime

In the next passage we will see what Daniel did.

3.3 Acknowledge God’s Work

Listen for the content of Daniels praise.

Daniel 2:20-23 (NIV) and said: "Praise be to the name of God for ever and ever; wisdom and power are his. 21 He changes times and seasons; he sets up kings and deposes them. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the discerning. 22 He reveals deep and hidden things; he knows what lies in darkness, and light dwells with him. 23 I thank and praise you, O God of my fathers: You have given me wisdom and power, you have made known to me what we asked of you, you have made known to us the dream of the king." ; 27-28a Daniel replied, "No wise man, enchanter, magician or diviner can explain to the king the mystery he has asked about, 28 but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries. He has shown King Nebuchadnezzar what will happen in days to come.

What does Daniel do immediately after the dream is revealed to him?

* praise God
* give credit to God
* give glory to God
* enumerate attributes of God which Daniel sees at work

What are some of the attributes for which Daniel praised God?

* the name of God – His power and authority
* eternality, wisdom, power
* intervention in the affairs of men
* God’s sovereignty even in who is king and how that king acts

Why were those attributes relevant to Daniel’s situation?

* they needed wisdom, insight, knowledge
* the realization that *God* is in control, not the king, not the guard who was going to carry out executions

What are some ways we can honor God when He answers our prayers?

* praise, worship
* obedience
* tell others what God has done

How does this passage show God’s involvement in the political process?

* God is at work even in the lives of unbelievers
* God raises some up, brings down others
* Remember, Proverbs 21:1 (NIV) *The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD; he directs it like a watercourse wherever he pleases.*
* believers can unite in prayer and have an influence on leaders

Give some specific ways in our life we can apply what we learn from Daniel here.

* don’t panic
* stuff happens we have no control over
* go to God, remember James 1:5 (NIV) *If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him*.
* seek counsel
* pray early and often
* keep praying
* be sure to give God the glory for answers to prayer

Use the last page as a handout so your learners can take home the application points of this week’s lesson.

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Start a prayer journal.

* Begin a personal prayer journal in which you record your prayer concerns.
* Include information about the concern, the date you added each entry, and space for how God answers your prayers.

Enlist a prayer partner.

* Invite someone to be your prayer partner for a specific concern in your life.
* Explain your concern and how you are praying for this issue.
* Make sure to give updates about how God is working in the situation, even if you are still waiting for Him to act.

Write a response of praise.

* Think back to a time when God has answered a prayer for you.
* Write out your response of praise for how He worked in this situation.
* Say your words out loud to Him, as an offering of worship.

Double Puzzle

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It is I, the Word Ninja. Our agents in Poresan Jipinesmon secreted this message to us in an empty Captain Crunch cereal box. The key on the left came in a Lucky Charms box. All the key words are found in Daniel 2:13 – 23 (NIV). The underground church considered the message significant enough to forward the challenge to us here in the West. Unscramble the words for the key, then use the numbers to decrypt the message. Technical help and other Fun Family Activities are found at <https://tinyurl.com/yck36n89>

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