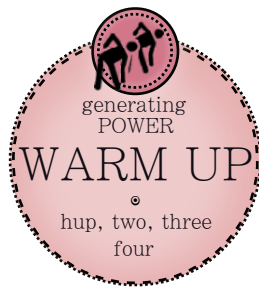




### God of New Life ...

**You raise the dead and bring hope to the hopeless, even in the most difficult of times.** Provide us with hope when we feel hopeless. Remind us that you are in charge, no matter what. – *AMEN!*



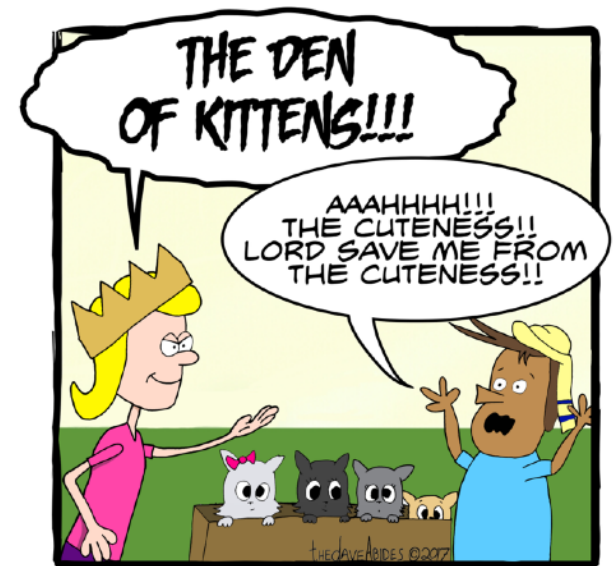
**Check in from last week.** What's been going on in your lives?

**Share highs and lows.** What's up? What's down?

### Scary Things

Share together a big fear that haunts you. Share only what you're comfortable with. Why are you afraid of that thing, situation, or experience? What can you do about the fear? What do you think God has to do or say about your fear?

# Chloe & Stan





Daniel and the Lions  
(Daniel 6:6-27)

# LIVE THE STORY



**Want to do something fun?** Have a chorus of “lions” that let out a vicious roars every time their hear the name “Daniel” spoken out loud.

## DANIEL & THE LIONS

*Read along while you watch the video online or perform the skit yourselves!*

**Characters:** King Darius, Conspirator, Daniel, Narrator

**Narrator:** King Darius was loved by the people. They wanted the king to live forever.

**All:** King Darius, may you live forever!

**Darius:** Aww, thanks you guys, I'll surely try!

**Narrator:** But not everyone was super benevolent in their love for the king...

**Conspirator:** Hey King Darius, live forever and stuff.

**Darius:** Thank you, kind follower.

**Conspirator:** You're welcome, king. Listen, king. I was thinking – you should really be praised. Not just praised like any old king, but **WORSHIPED**.

**Darius:** You think so?

**Conspirator:** I really do! I think you should make a law that says that **ANYONE** who prays to anything or anyone other than you for the next thirty days will be thrown into a lions' den.

**Darius:** You do? Even God?

**Conspirator:** Yup – even God. [chants, growing louder] Lions' den, lions' **DEN**, **LIONS' DEN!!**

**Darius:** Ok, write it up, I'll sign it.

**Narrator:** The decree was signed. But Daniel didn't care. He really liked King Darius, but he was only going to pray to God. He was so bold in his worship, he'd pray with the windows open – anyone could see,

**Daniel:** [in a cute prayer posture] Dear God, thank you for my food and for my house and for my friends and family. Please help me to get along with the conspirators because I don't think they like me, and please help me be patient when they say mean things to me. Please help me to be a good person and help me to follow laws...at least the ones that don't tell me to worship humans. Amen!

**Narrator:** Sadly for Daniel, the Conspirators were watching him through the open window. When they saw David praying to God, they giddily ran back to the king.

**Conspirator:** **KING DARIUS**, live forever – **DIDN'T** you **JUST** sign that law that said nobody could worship anyone but you for thirty days?

**King Darius:** I did....

**Conspirator:** And anyone who does worship someone else will get thrown in a lions' den, right?

**READING CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE!**



**King Darius:** Well, yes...

**Conspirator:** I JUST SAW DANIEL PRAYING TO GOD! He's going in the Lion's den!

**King Darius:** [gulps loudly]

**Narrator:** The king liked Daniel and didn't want to throw him in the den...but the law was written in such a way that there was no other choice but to put Daniel in the den and seal it up.

**King Darius:** Sorry, Daniel. Maybe your God will save you. [seals door, wipes eyes.]

**Daniel:** [smiling unworried] Maybe he will!

**Narrator:** The next morning, the king woke up and went to check on the lions' den. For whatever reason, he called out:

**King Darius:** OH DANIEL! DID YOUR GOD SAVE YOU? [to himself] I hope I hope I hope I hope.

**Daniel:** [From behind door] King Darius, live forever! Yes, my God sent angels and kept the lions from eating me! It was pretty awesome!

**King Darius:** [Throws open door to hug Daniel] *Whoopie!* Clearly, God is powerful and good!! I'm going to throw those conspirators into the den and see how they like it!!

**Conspirators:** Nooo!!

**Narrator:** The king threw the conspirators in the den – and the lions ate them immediately. Not pleasant, but at least we know that God was who protected Daniel, and it wasn't just that the lions were full or something....The king issued a new decree, that God is good and the people should worship God!



God always provides—it just might look different than what we had in mind.  
— Anonymous



## Kid Story

We choose other gods all the time – we pay more attention to money, our social media, friends or our looks instead of doing what God asks of us. Share a time you chose another "god" over the true God. Sometimes we don't notice how it hurts God directly, but maybe it caused you to hurt another person; that hurts God. What does it feel like when your choices hurt those you love? Is it easy to make up for bad decisions? Why or why not?



GREAT  
**BIG**  
WORD

### Faithfulness

A quality of being trusting or loyal, no matter what happens.

## Questions

- Describe the law King Darius had decreed in your own words.
- Tell the reasons why you think such a law is fair or unfair.
- What response did Daniel have to this law? What were the consequences for breaking it?

## Yet More Questions!

- Share some ways when you are called to be faithful to God in your life. Are those ways hard or easy? Why?
- Some people throughout history have had to stay faithful and they did lose their lives. Is the story of Daniel unrealistic? Why or why not?
- Most of us (thankfully) won't have to put our lives at stake because of our beliefs. But, if you did, what would you do? What do you believe in strong enough to put your life on the line?



### Didja Know?

Many people throughout history have had to stand up for what they believe in; some risked their lives. Of course, not all of them were followers of Jesus. The [Jews during WWII](#) are one example of persecution.

### Quotable Quote

You can trust us to stick to you through thick and thin – to the bitter end. And you can trust us to keep any secret of yours – closer than you yourself keep it. But you cannot trust us to let you face trouble alone, and go off without a word. We are your friends, Frodo. Anyway: there it is. We know most of what Gandalf has told you. We know a good deal about the ring. We are horribly afraid—but we are coming with you; or following you like hounds.

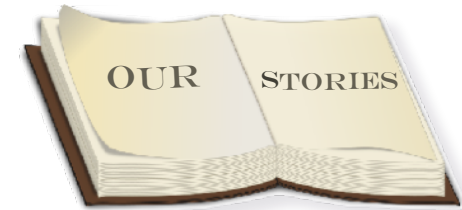
*J.R.R. Tolkien,*

*Author of The Fellowship of the Ring*

## Makes Ya Wonder

***I wonder...*** What would life be like in your state or country if you had to practice your faith in secret? What would you do if the authorities caught you?

*What do you think?*



**T**ell about a time when you needed to be faithful to a person.

What was hard for you?

What was easy?

Would you do it again?





## SAFE SPACE: JOURNAL

**Daniel's "safe space" was trusting in God, no matter what happened.** You can build yourself a safe space too. Some like to pray through journaling; it lets a person reflect about the day in a safe, private way. Try journaling for a week and see if you'd like to keep it up.



**See how many signs or symbols of "being faithful" you can find in your household.** Write them down as a list, snap a photo and post online to share with your leader or mentor. #narratologyonline

## GO ONLINE

**Go online and watch this video:** [www.youtube.com/watch?v=sOtNs5vT0u0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sOtNs5vT0u0). Historically, the population of African lions had been depleted in ancient times because they used them for sport (and punishment, as in the case of Daniel). Learn about lions in their natural habitat.



## Interview Time



**Interview your parents or another couple you know who are still together.** Ask them what effort faithfulness takes in a marriage. Is it easy to grow bored or frustrated with a person we care about? How does a faithful relationship change over time? What stays the same? Report your findings to your leader or mentor.

## Pet Justice! Shelters



**Lions are fascinating creatures.** They serve an important role on the African savanna too! Lions are apex predators, which means that they are at the top of the food chain.

Surprisingly, if you have a cat or a dog, these creatures are also part of the ecosystem in cities, towns, and suburbs. Although we provide them with food and love, some cats and dogs (other pets too) can face neglect.

Look online to see what animal shelters your community hosts. Consider giving your time or money to help them out.

## Shovel, Shovel, Shovel



**Part of being a faithful and good neighbor means we try to help each other out.** If you live in an area where it snows in the winter, that means it's shovel-time! Call up or visit a trusted neighbor and pledge to shovel out their driveway or sidewalk the next time it snows. If you're lucky enough to live where it's warm, maybe you can help till their garden or help with another project.



CHOOSE ONE ACTIVITY  
TO DO TOGETHER!



### Activity #1 Movie Time

Watch the movie "[Sophie Scholl: The Last Days](#)." (Free online link.) Sophie Scholl was involved with a resistance group called the *White Rose* in Nazi Germany. She eventually gave her life for the cause. Consider devoting an entire session for this movie or watch at home and report since it's 2 hours. What would you have done in this situation to remain faithful? What cause do you believe so strongly in that you'd die for it?

\* [www.youtube.com/watch?v=baRvF6ZBK18](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=baRvF6ZBK18)



### Activity #2 The Trust Tree

In a forested area, pairs take turns being blindfolded, verbally led to a tree (for touch and feel and general position) and then led away. After removing the blindfold, the tree hugger tries to locate his/her tree.

This activity works inside too! Simply replace the tree(s) with other safe spaces.

Record the session on a smartphone and let everyone watch after!



### Activity #3 Faith Collage

Stuff you'll need:

- old magazines with photos
- scissors
- tagboard
- glue or tape
- pens or markers
- *optional: color printer*

Find appropriate photos to paste onto the large tagboard. Find images that represent faithfulness or trust. Photos of things you believe in or care about work too.

Sign your names next to the photos with a statement of faith, something that you believe deeply in, at your core.

Optionally, you may also snap photos of each other on smartphones and paste them next to your faith statements.

Hang the collage in a place where everyone can see it.

### Bless

God will never let you down, even when it seems like it.

### Closing Stuff

*Confirm the date, time, mentor, and location of the next monthly meeting.*

*Don't forget to do  
your monthly  
check-ins too!*

*Stories can be  
found online.*

[bit.ly/narratology](http://bit.ly/narratology)

