First Kids—Elementary (Kdg-4th)

No Train, No Gain

**Bible Story:** No Train, No Gain (*Daniel Trained in Babylon*) • *Daniel 1*  
**Bottom Line:** When you know what God says, it can help you stand for what's right.  
**Memory Verse:** “Don’t ever get tired of doing the right thing.” *2 Thessalonians 3:13, NltV*  
**Life App:** Conviction—standing for what is right even when others don't.  
**Basic Truth:** I can trust God no matter what.

**Plug In: Focus the Energy**

**Early Arriver**
- An offering container
- *(Optional)* A pillowcase or opaque bag filled with an assortment of small objects

**Test Your Super Power: X-Ray Veggie Vision**
- Print the “X-Ray Veggie-Vision” Activity Page on cardstock
- A quarter

**Power Up: Engage the Heart (Large Group, 20-25 minutes)**

**Catch On: Make the Connection**

What’s Missing from the King’s Table? *(review the Bible story)*
- Print the “Story Illustration Slides” Activity Pages and cut apart  
- Super hero cape (large bath towels, small tablecloth, or small blanket)  
- *(Optional)* If desired, include 5 items found on a dinner table such as plate, silverware, cup, bowl, napkin, and so forth.

*Alternate activity for younger kids:*

**Mr. Potato Head Hero** *(review the Bible story)*
- Print the “Mr. Potato Head Hero” Activity Page on cardstock; 1 for each kid  
- Clean baking potatoes; 1 for each kid  
- Markers and/or crayons  
- Scissors  
- Double-sided tape or tape dots  
- *(Optional)* Simple stickers such as star, dot, and alphabet stickers

**Prayer**
- A potato
This summer we’ll be spending June and July discovering more about what the Bible has to say about conviction — standing for what’s right, even when others don’t.

Lots of people have conviction, but often when they act with conviction they come across as arrogant or smug. But that’s not what conviction is about at all. It’s not about what a person thinks is right because it’s too easy to become convicted about the wrong thing. Conviction has to be rooted in something deeper and more dependable than a personal opinion. It needs to be rooted in Scripture and what God says is right. And often it’s not even just standing for something that’s right; it’s also about standing for something that’s right in the right way. And that takes some practice, especially because standing for what’s right and showing conviction, may not win any popularity contests.

That’s why we’re taking the summer to help kids understand a little bit more about Conviction. Conviction is standing for what’s right, even when others don’t. Let’s take Jesus for example.

Even for Jesus, the Son of God, doing the right thing wasn’t always popular. Sometimes doing the right thing meant hanging out with tax collectors, blessing the little children, or even forgiving someone who had done something wrong. No matter what it was that Jesus needed to do, He did it because it was the right thing to do.

But doing the right thing often made Jesus stand apart from some of the rich and powerful people of His time. They didn’t like what He was doing or saying, but Jesus never let those crowds persuade Him to go against what God, His Father, wanted Him to do. Even when it meant going to the cross to die, Jesus knew that it was the right thing, and He did it.

Jesus was able to live with conviction because He knew the will of His Father, and that gave Him strength and courage. In the same way, God has given us the ability to know what is right and the ability to do it. You see, when we are fueled by God’s character, we will stand up for the things that matter to God.

This week we’re discovering...

We begin looking at a person who showed conviction throughout his whole life, even when he was in captivity. In Daniel 1, we meet Daniel and his friends who chose to follow what God says even when it meant they could get in trouble.

Bottom Line: When you know what God says, it can help you stand for what’s right. The best place to find out how you should show conviction is God’s Word. When you know what God says, it makes it easier to figure out when and how you should stand for what’s right.

Our memory verse for the month is 2 Thessalonians 3:13: “Don’t ever get tired of doing the right thing.” Showing conviction might be difficult at times, but this verse encourages us to keep going even if we’re starting to get tired of standing up for what’s right.
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**Bottom Line:** When you know what God says, it can help you stand for what’s right.

**Memory Verse:** “Don’t ever get tired of doing the right thing.” 2 Thessalonians 3:13, NIV

**Life App:** Conviction—standing for what is right even when others don’t.

**Basic Truth:** I can trust God no matter what.

Plug In: Focus the Energy (Small Groups, 10-15 minutes)

1. Early Arriver Idea

**What You Need:** An offering container, a pillowcase or opaque bag filled with a variety of small objects (optional)

**What You Do:**
Greet kids as they arrive and encourage them to place their offerings in the container. Challenge them to another round of super ability tests. To test their super-sight, either let them place their hand in the bag and guess an object inside to “prove” they have X-ray vision, or play a few rounds of “I Spy” in your Small Group area.
Power Up: Engage the Heart (Large Group, 20-25 minutes)

ON DVD

Catch On: Make the Connection (Small Groups, 25-30 minutes)

Make the connection of how today’s Bible story applies to real life experiences through interactive activities and discussion questions.

1. What’s Missing From the King’s Table? (application activity / review the Bible story)

What You Need: “Story Illustration Slides” Activity Pages; cape or other large piece of fabric; 5 items found on a dinner table such as plate, silverware, cup, bowl, napkin, and so forth (optional)

What You Do:
Tell the kids that the X-Ray Veggie Vision powers they tested out before Large Group will come in handy with this next activity. They will need a keen eye and a sharp mind to spot a missing part of today’s lesson.

Lay the cards on the floor face-up and in random order. Give the kids 10 seconds to look at them. Cover the cards with the cape or cloth. Reach under the cloth and remove one of the cards without revealing it to the kids, and then mix up the position of the remaining cards. Remove the cape and ask kids to identify the missing card as quickly as they can.

After the correct card has been guessed, ask the kids to share about the part of the story that’s pictured on the card. Return the card to the mix, and then continue selecting other cards and having the kids review what they remember about the story. If you’ve added table items into the mix, occasionally remove one of them instead of a card.

After the details of the lesson have been reviewed, remind the kids that Daniel was just an ordinary guy like all of us, but he knew what he believed and he wasn’t afraid to stand up for his convictions. Ask the kids to share what they believe about the following (or add other items that might strike up a stronger response from your particular group of kids):

- broccoli
- drugs
- Jesus
- Bullying
- Cats
- The Bible

[Make it Personal] Share some of your convictions along with the kids.

As the kids share where they stand in reference to the areas listed above, gently challenge them to back up their convictions with WHY they believe what they do. Take care to maintain a safe discussion environment where kids feel comfortable to share honestly, while also helping them experience what it feels like to stand up for what they believe even if it’s different from others.

What You Say:
“How did it feel to take a stand for what you believe about the things we just discussed? *(Let kids respond.)* Some of you have very strong convictions about broccoli! But the truth is, wherever you stand on the subject of broccoli, it’s probably not something you’d risk your life over. On the other hand, there are some extremely important things to stand up for the way Daniel and his friends did. So how do you know what’s worth the risk? Here’s how: *[Impress]* when you know what God says, it can help you stand for what’s right.

“Daniel knew that obeying God was the most important thing. That’s what makes him such a hero. He was an ordinary guy who chose to live by the commands of an extraordinary God. *[Apply]* So what’s stopping you from being that kind of hero too? All the courage, conviction, and power you need are available. God’s given you the Bible, the Holy Spirit, prayer, and other believers to help you. If you make it your mission to know what God says, He will guide you along and point you in the best direction. You’ll make the wise choice and know what it means to stand up for what matters the most.”

*If you lead mostly older kids, consider asking these discussion questions:*

- What are the best ways to get to know God? What are you doing on your own to get to know what God says?
- How do you take what you know from the Bible and apply it to a situation?
- When we choose not to do the right thing, is it usually because we don’t know any better? Explain.
- What would you say is the biggest advantage to standing up for what’s right?

**Mr. Potato Head Hero (review the Bible story)**

**What You Need:** Potatoes, “Mr. Potato Head Hero” Activity Page, markers and/or crayons, stickers, scissors, double-sided tape

**What You Do:**

Invite each child to choose a potato, and then give each child a “Mr. Potato Head Hero” page. Set out the markers, crayons, and stickers and encourage the kids to color and decorate the super hero accessories as they choose. Finally, guide kids to cut out the accessories (be sure to provide hand over hand assistance as needed) and tape them to their potatoes to transform them into Mr. Potato Heroes!

*Note: Be sure each child has the opportunity to choose his or her own potato. This can be a big deal for the kids!*

When everyone is finished, help kids use their Mr. Potato Heroes to reenact the Bible story.

**What You Say:**

“If Daniel had kept quiet and eaten the same food that everyone else ate, would the king have noticed that there was something different about Daniel and his friends? Maybe … or maybe not. But because Daniel and his friends chose to stand for what’s right and not eat the king’s food, God gave them special understanding and wisdom. He gave them SO MUCH special understanding and wisdom that the king took notice and gave Daniel and his friends very important jobs.
“How did Daniel know what was right and what was wrong? Yes, Daniel knew what God said. **[Impress]** When you know what God says, it can help you stand for what’s right. **[Apply]** How can you know what God says? (I can read my Bible, I can go to church and learn what God says, I can listen to Bible stories, I can memorize Bible verses, etc.) Great ideas! When you read the Bible, hear the Bible, and remember what the Bible says, you’ll know what God says is right and what God says is wrong. And **[Impress]** when you know what God says, it can help you stand for what’s right.”

**Pray and Dismiss**

**What You Need:** A potato

**What You Do:**
Guide the kids to sit in a circle. Lead the kids in a game of hot potato. When you cover your eyes, the kids will pass the potato; when you uncover and open your eyes, the child holding the potato tells something he/she learned today. It could be a bit of the Bible verse, the Bottom Line, a fact or truth from the Bible story, or one way they will stand for what is right. (*Hint:* Be very careful not to pressure any child to share. If a child is shy or hesitant, simply invite her to choose someone else to share in her place.)

*Note:* If a kid gets the potato after he’s already had two turns, guide him to pass the potato to the next child in the circle.

**What You Say:**
**[Impress]** “When you know what God says, it can help you stand for what’s right. **[Apply]** What are some ways you can know what God says? (I can read my Bible, I can go to church and learn what God says, I can listen to Bible stories, I can memorize Bible verses, etc.) **[Make It Personal]** (Tell the kids what you do to make knowing what God says a priority in your life, whether by reading your Bible every day, memorizing Bible verses, listening to people teach the Bible, or other ways.)

“When you read the Bible, hear the Bible, and remember what the Bible says, you’ll know what God says is right and what God says is wrong. And **[Impress]** when you know what God says, you can stand for what’s right. Let’s pray.

“Dear God, thank You for giving us the Bible so that we can know the right thing to do. Help us have the same courage that Daniel had. Help us stand up for what is right. We love You, Lord. Amen.”