

Back to School

→ with God ←



Children's Talk

The following provides a short talk suitable for a children's slot within a wider service.

You will need: a crown, large chair (old if possible), hat, decrees to hide in the hat. Here are some suggestions for the decrees – choose which would work best in your situation and either write or type them and place inside the hat.

- Hop like a frog
- Walk backwards
- Make an animal noise
- Stand on one leg
- Waddle like a penguin.

Script

We are going to play a little game this morning where some of the children will get the opportunity to pretend that they are King or Queen for the day. Our King or Queen will come forward, wear a crown and sit on our 'throne'. Then they will pick a decree out of the hat (*lift up the hat*) and announce it to us all. When they hear the decree, the children must do what it says.

At this point invite all the children to come to the front. If you have small numbers of children, you might like to invite some willing adults to come forward as well!

So, who would like to be our first King or Queen of the day? *Choose a child and make a fuss of placing the crown on their head and letting them sit on the throne. Once your King/Queen is comfortable, ask them to make the following statement, then pick a decree out of the hat.*

“If I were King or Queen for the day, I would make everyone ...”

When the King/Queen has made the decree, encourage the children to act it out.

Well done, your majesty! That was an excellent decree. Would anyone else like a turn of being King/Queen? *Appoint a new King/Queen and repeat as before.*

Thank you to all our Kings and Queens who made such funny decrees for us today.

Once there was a king in the Bible called King Darius. He made a decree one day that he demanded everyone in his kingdom should follow. Just as I helped you make your decree as king or queen, King Darius had help to write his decree. Some of the leaders in his kingdom encouraged him to make it. Not because they were wanting to be helpful, but because they were jealous of one of the other leaders and wanted to set a trap for him.

The man they were jealous of was Daniel. Daniel had a very important job. He worked for the King, and he helped him rule the kingdom. But unlike the other leaders, Daniel was an

Israelite, which means he was one of God's people. He worshipped the living God and trusted him. He regularly spent time praying to God. The other leaders were jealous of Daniel's success. They knew the only way to trap him was through his relationship with God.

And so, they convinced the King to make this decree: *You could put the crown on at this moment and sit on the throne and say:*

"As the King, I will make everyone pray only to me for the next 30 days. Anyone who prays to any other god or statue will be thrown into a den of lions."

When Daniel heard this, he did not do what the King said! Instead, he went about his day as normal. Three times he went to his window and prayed to God, just as he always did, because Daniel loved God and knew that spending time with Him was the most important thing in his life. Daniel knew it was through spending time in prayer with God that He could get to know God better. He trusted that God heard him when he prayed - and that He would answer. Prayer made Daniel who he was. Prayer shaped Daniel.

True to his decree, when the King was told that Daniel had been found praying, Daniel was thrown into the den of lions. All night long the king fretted and worried because he actually liked Daniel and didn't want him to be harmed. When morning came, the King ran to the den and shouted out to see if God had saved Daniel. Amazingly, God had! He sent an angel to shut the lion's mouths and keep Daniel safe. Prayer not only shaped Daniel and made him who he was, prayer also saved him from the lions! When Daniel prayed, he was spending time with God, the One who is all-powerful and in control of all things. Darius couldn't save Daniel: only God could save Daniel from the lions, because only God was powerful enough to close their mouths and stop them from attacking.

When we go back to school this week, I wonder if we will be like Daniel. Will we pray regularly like Daniel did? Will we allow prayer to shape who we are? Will other people see and know that we are part of God's family by the way we act?

Spending time in prayer with God is so important! Prayer shaped Daniel, and prayer saved Daniel. It made a huge difference. And so, as a church, we'd love to pray for you this morning as you go back to school.

PRAYER **A prayer of response.** *The prayer can be downloaded as [BSG20 Responsive Prayer](#). Before the service invite the following to take part:*

- *A parent who will pray for nursery schools*
- *A child who will pray for primary schools*
- *A teenager who will pray for secondary schools*
- *A church member who will pray for the community*

Leader: On this Back to School with God Sunday we want to pray for our children, teachers, and local schools. Would those who have been invited to take part and lead in prayer please come up front? *Allow time for this.*

It is a privilege to be able to support schools in prayer, particularly as we all know they have been through a difficult time.

I would invite you to stand if you are someone who is connected with a nursery, primary or secondary school in any way – as a pupil, staff member,

SU Group leader, parent, grandparent, governor or parent council member.
Or even if you attended a school!

(*Mention names*) will lead us in prayer. However, so we can all take part – at different points when we hear the words “Lord, hear our prayer,” we will respond by saying together the words on the screen: **PPT Slide 32 Thank you, God, that you are close to us when we pray.**

Parent: **Let us pray.** (*Pause*)

Father God, we pray for our nurseries and those who work in them. Thank you, Lord, for watching over our little children. Thank you that you love them. We pray you will help nursery staff in the amazing job they do, creating happy places where our children can be safe and cared for well. Please help the children to settle, make friends, and learn to love and help one another. Lord, hear our prayer.

All: **Thank you, God that you are close to us when we pray.**

Child: **Let us pray** (*Pause*)

Father God, thank you for our primary schools and all those who work in them. Thank you that we are able to get back to school again, and we remember in prayer all the children in the world who have no school to go to. Please encourage our school staff, who do such a brilliant job of running our schools. Help them to adjust to a new routine. Please help all the boys and girls who are starting school for the first time, or who are nervous about returning to school. Help them to settle quickly and know that you are with them. When we are worried like Daniel, remind us that we can turn to you and ask for help. Lord, hear our prayer.

All: **Thank you, God that you are close to us when we pray.**

Teenager: **Let us pray** (*Pause*)

Father God, thank you for the Bible story of Daniel and for his good character, shaped by prayer. Lord, we pray the same might be said of those who work or study in our secondary schools. We pray that we may be people who can be trusted; who work hard; are respectful and kind. Lord, we are grateful for our education. Help us to appreciate those who teach us. As we go back to school please help those who are anxious or afraid. Strengthen our school community, so that we might help and support one another. Lord, hear our prayer.

All: **Thank you, God that you are close to us when we pray.**

Adult: **Let us pray** (*Pause*)

Our heavenly Father, thank you for this service today and for the reminder that prayer shapes, prayer saves. Remind us to pray for our schools, those who work in them, and the children and young people who attend them. We pray for the SU Groups that meet in them, asking that pupils will grasp what a great God you are. We lift our children to you. We love them, and we want to see them flourish at school. Lord, thank you for sustaining them through the months spent at home. Help them now to readjust and to gladly benefit from being part of a church and school family once more.

We ask you to bless our community and our role as a church within it. May our prayers make a difference! Lord, hear our prayer.

All: **Thank you, God that you are close to us when we pray. AMEN.**

Leader: *Thank those who took part and invite everyone to sit.*

SONG We suggest watching [King of Me: Rend Co. Kids](#) as a reflective response before the children exit to their normal children's programme.