



Faith Adventures for Children Together



*Committed to URC Children Together:
enabling everyone to grow more like Jesus
together in the home, church and beyond.*

For guidance on the purpose of the resource and how to use it as a launch pad for your engagement with children and families, please use this link:

<https://urc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/FACT-how-to-sheet.pdf>

Daniel 9: 3-5/ 9

Theme: sorry prayers

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Introduction: What would be helpful to know in my planning?

The book of Daniel was written around 530 BC by Daniel the prophet. The first chapters tell the stories of what was happening at that time. God's people are in exile in a land where many gods are worshipped and Daniel wants to only worship his one god, the God of the Israelites. It tells about the struggles to live how you believe you should even under persecution. The famous stories include Daniel in the lion's den and Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the fiery furnace. In this chapter he is feeling sorry that he and God's people have not been putting God first and they have been worshipping other gods. The final chapters of the book are prophecies about the end times.

In this chapter we see Daniel praying for himself and others; he is saying sorry to God for not putting God first, he is showing how sorry he is by wearing sackcloth and ashes and going without food. He is saying that they need to be truly sorry and repent, turn back to God.

This is in the Old Testament and took place before Jesus has come to the world. It might be an opportunity to talk to the group about what praying for forgiveness looks like after Jesus' death and resurrection. Showing we are sorry and turning around surely is made easier for us to understand and do when we know that Jesus has paid any price that might have needed paying. Jesus died for the forgiveness of our sins.

This session explores what we might feel sorry for and how we can pray about it. It could be linked to verses in Matthew (the Lord's Prayer).



Trigger warning – Daniel's behaviours were to show God and others how guilty he was feeling and how sorry he felt. This might be a trigger for any in the group who have experience around eating disorders or self-punitive behaviours. It might be worth explaining that God does not ask us to do anything to show guilt or shame, post-Jesus.

Together

How do I help my group to come together and get started with the theme?

Gathering prayer

Jesus, our friend

(use alternate index fingers to point and tap the middle of opposite palms)

Be with us today

(two hands, palms up in front of you, move up and down twice)

As we share together,

(two hands, palms up in front of you, move one forward and one back and alternate twice)

Pray together,

(hands together, palm against palm, as though praying)

Play together,

(hands to each side, palms up, make two small circles outwards)

And get to know you better,

(point up with one hand)

As children together in your family

(one hand out, palm down in front of you, move it sideways and up in three 'steps' as though to indicate children of three different heights)

AMEN

(Two thumbs up, and bring fists slowly together to meet in front of you)

OR

Thank you, God, for bringing us together today.

Help us to grow closer to you in all we do.

Help us to speak and to listen, to learn and to grow together,

Adventuring together with you wherever we may go.

Amen



In-person or online game

True confessions

The game can be played online or in person, with some adjustments to allow for it to be more active. It introduces the theme of saying sorry.

Each person is asked to think of a confession – something they will tell the group that they have had to say sorry for – not telling anyone until it is their turn to confess. It can be true or false. One at a time, members of the group share their confession. The rest of the group must decide whether they think it is true or false. You could give everyone the same sentence starter such as; “I once had to say sorry because.....”

In person adaption – allocate one side of the room for ‘True’ and one side for ‘False’. After each person has given their True Confession, the rest of the group decide which side of the room they will stand on. When everyone has made a decision, the Confessor can reveal the answer. The whole group must return to the middle of the room to hear the next confession.

Experience

For this story we recommend using the the Easy-to-Read version

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Daniel+9%3A+3-5%2C+9&version=ERV>

Where can I find the story online?

Under fives: God's people Daniel – crossroads kids club <https://youtu.be/o7UVIG4Cjul>

Over fives: Daniels prayer – coast kids in-house <https://youtu.be/jJby613Rk3c?t=450>

Songs to support the story

Under fives: An apology – I am sorry, forgive me – Hooray kids songs - <https://youtu.be/LhQ1cDH3bSY>

Over fives: You forgive me – Sarah Moon - <https://youtu.be/s3Kn9TOvFKQ>

Explore

Ideas and activities to explore this week's Bible passage together

Exploring the story together

This passage gives us the opportunity to explore together how we pray when we are sorry and the sorts of things we are sorry for. It might also be a chance to talk about when we apologise to others.

A lot of the conversation could take place whilst doing the craft together or while discussing and sharing stories together.

Ask the group what sort of things we say sorry for.

I wonder how many times we say the word sorry in one day?

Have a listen to this poem and see if you count the apologies.....

Read the poem aloud at a pace that makes the task fun whilst also giving children the chance to hear the text.

A day in the life of an apology.

Sorry, could I interrupt this session a minute

There's something I just wanted to say

See, I've been wondering and trying to count up

How many times we say sorry in a day.



It begins the moment we wake up
And what's the first thing that we do?
We run to the bathroom and bump into your mum
Sorry, you first, no I insist, you....

Someone's outside now, waiting for their turn
Sorry I won't be a minute
Then you notice there's no toilet roll left
Sorry could you just run and get it?

Down the stairs towards breakfast
Sorry, excuse me! as you push past your dad
Sorry as you use the last of the cereal
Sorry, I didn't mean to make you mad

And so it continues and so it goes on
Saying sorry for the rest of the day
Sorry for stepping on somebody's toes
Sorry for being in the way

Sorry for bumping into a lady passing by
Sorry for running a bit late
Sorry to the cars that stop to let you cross
Sorry for making them wait

I'm sorry, Miss, I've forgotten my pencil
Sorry but I've lost my reading book
Sorry I seem to have misplaced that letter
Sorry, give me a second to look

Sorry for saying you looked a bit weird
Sorry for not noticing your new hair
Sorry for not playing with you at break
Sorry that you think I don't care

Sorry for tripping and falling on you
Sorry for sitting in your seat
Sorry for saying sorry all the time
Sorry calling you a cheat

Sorry, I don't like the peas on my plate
Sorry, I can't come out to play
I'm sorry I wear my hair like this
I just prefer it that way

Sorry for this and sorry for that
And sorry for all that's gone wrong
Sorry for everything since the start of the day
Sorry the whole day long

Perhaps it's a word that's too easy to say
Perhaps it just trips off our tongue
Perhaps we don't think about why we are saying it
It's just something we're taught when we're young

But do we remember to say sorry
When saying sorry feels harder to do
When we really are truly sorry
For the things we say, think and do

Jesus said that we are already forgiven
For all the wrong things we have done
But it's still a good thing, to feel sorry
And to say it to everyone



Express

Praying together: how can you involve the children actively in prayer?

Sorry/forgiven chain prayers.

You will need:

- coloured A4 paper
- felt tip pens
- scissors
- glue, tape

Cut the paper into strips around 2.5cm wide.

Encourage participants to reflect and pray about the things that they are sorry for. As they pray, invite them to take a strip of paper and write the word "sorry". Use the glue or tape to fasten the ends of the strip together to form a loop. Invite participants to take another strip and add the word "forgiven". Thread this paper through the first loop before gluing the ends together. Fasten all the loops together to form a long chain, alternating between forgiveness and sorry, which reminds us that God forgives us.

Spoken prayer

God,

I'm sorry,

For the big things and the little things,

For the things I've ignored and the things I've done,

For the things I said, the things I shouted,

And the things I whispered.

I'm sorry.

I'm sorry,

Help me accept that you give me:

A fresh start,

A new beginning,

The chance to try again.

I'm forgiven.

I'm forgiven,

Ready to change,

A new chance for the right choices,

Learning from yesterday,

For a better today and tomorrow.

Thank you.

Amen



Alternative spoken prayer

You could also use the 'What's in the box?' objects as a prompt for prayer. As you take objects out of the box, say a short prayer. Members of the group could take it in turns to choose an item and pray quietly or out loud.

Responding together

Here are some suggested crafts and activities, and there is a colouring sheet at the end of this resource. You could also use small play toys and/or have a basket of resources available so children can choose their own way to respond. <https://urc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/FACT-how-to-sheet.pdf>

With an online group, plan whether to deliver any resources in advance or how you will encourage them to use what they've got to hand in their response.

However you do it, it is good for the adults to engage in the response too, and all chat together.

Sorry sandwich



You will need:

Bread

Sweet or savoury sandwich fillings

A knife

A plate or board to prepare the sandwich

Like a sandwich, sorry prayers have three main layers. Saying **sorry**, accepting **forgiveness** and a commitment to **change** our behaviour. As your group construct their sandwiches (choosing their filling and completing the three layers) you could ask whether it would be the same with just two pieces of bread or if the jam was on the bottom. Why is it important to have all three sections of the sandwich and all three sections of a sorry prayer?

Why not try.....

If you have time, your group could design Ultimate Sandwiches and vote to decide whose sandwich sounds the most delicious!

Water Filters

Challenge participants to design a filter which will produce the cleanest water.

Resources

- Paper cups
- Pencil
- Glass beakers/cups
- Range of filter materials – eg pebbles, sand, sponges, kitchen roll, coffee filters, tights, socks, cotton wool
- Dirty water – made from tap water mixed with soil



Use a sharp pencil to pierce several holes in the bottom of the paper cups to allow water to pass through.

Participants should build a filter by selecting items to place inside their paper cup. Add these items to the paper cups in layers.

Once completed, place the cup on top of the glass beaker which will be used to collect the filtered water. Pour a cup of the dirty water into the filter and wait to see how clean the water is after it has passed through the filter. Try repeating the experiment using different filter materials.

Everyday with Jesus – Walking the Way

What could we do this week to carry on what we've learned? Maybe members of the group could come up with a suggestion. If not, get them to choose from these two challenges:

- Saying sorry is a way of repairing a damaged relationship, but is pointless unless we mean it. Sometimes we need to do more to put things right if we can. This week, try to be more open to saying sorry to people when things need to be put right.
 - In how many different languages can you learn to say the word "sorry"?
-

We hope you enjoyed exploring **Sorry prayers** with us.

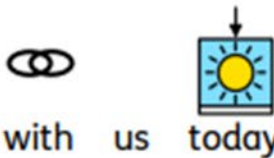
Please let us know what you liked or what you would find useful by emailing lorrainewebb@urc.org.uk

Next month's theme, for September, is **Changes**.

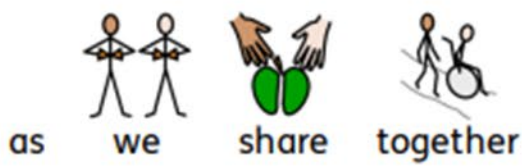




Jesus our friend,



be with us today



as we share together



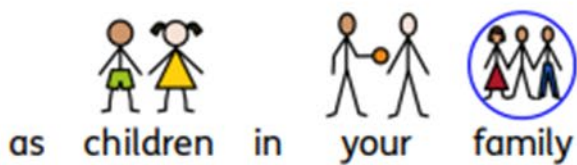
pray together



play together



and get to know you better



as children in your family



Amen



Right middle finger touches centre of other palm, repeat with left hand



Alternate hands back and forth

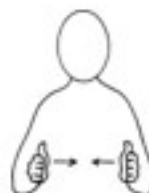




Illustration by Jill Kemp and Richard Gunther via lamsongs.co.nz

