



**A Celebration of Our
12 Powers**

**Family Study Material
"UNDERSTANDING"**

Writer/Editor: Reverend Diane Venzera

642 N. Harvey Ave.
Oak Park, IL 60302
708-785-7566

diane@dianevenzera.com
www.dianevenzera.com

Unit 7 Overview



Apostle: Thomas

Color: Gold

Location In The Body: The Front Brain

Nature Symbols: Sun

Ability: To know and comprehend

Spiritual Truth

Understanding is the "knowing with the heart." It is the ability to know and comprehend Divine Ideas; Truth Principles and Spiritual Law.

Power Points

- Spiritual understanding is knowing that the greatest choice we can make is to let Spirit direct our lives. It is what helps us to receive clarity and insight into all aspects of our lives.
- When we know that God is always there directing us we are inspired to take actions that benefit humankind.
- Awakening our Spiritual understanding helps us to know that we are Spiritual beings living Spiritual lives in a material world.
- There are two kinds of understanding:
 - ◆ Intellectual Understanding – gaining wisdom and understanding using our five senses.
 - ◆ Spiritual Understanding – comes from stilling ourselves enough to know that God is love. When we see the world around us with the eyes of love, our perception of everything changes for the good.
- We are all born with a uniqueness that makes us who we are
- We all have a special gift that is ours to give to the world.
- We understand that God is love and only good and therefore we are expressions of that love and are only good.
- Even though we may look different and believe different things, we are all made from the same Spirit.

Bible Quotes

John 6:7

"Give me understanding, that I may keep your law and observe it with my whole heart."

Job 32:8

"It is the Spirit in man, the breath of the Almighty, that makes him understand."

Proverbs 4:7

"Wisdom in the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding."

Proverbs 16:22

"Understanding is a wellspring of life unto him that hath it."

LESSON-AT-A-GLANCE

Bible Story	“Daniel in the Lion’s Den,” Daniel 6:1-23
Synopsis of Story	Because of Daniel’s willingness to serve God, he had grown in stature in the kingdom. This threatened the status quo and so the leaders wanted to get rid of him. They convinced the king to decree that all must worship him but Daniel continued to pray as he had always done. Daniel was throw into a pit of lions, but his belief in God kept him safe.
Deeper Meaning of Story	<p>Daniel was a man who was obedient to God. He understood that his power and inspiration came not from the outer world, but from a deep understanding that he and God were one and that all things could be done through the power of God within. No matter what experience Daniel faced, his confidence in the indwelling power of God never diminished. He stood his ground, knowing that Spiritual direction was always available to him.</p> <p>When the king demanded that everyone worship him instead of God, Daniel refused. It would have been a simple matter to follow the directions of the king, but Daniel knew he had to remain true to the Truth he knew - that his allegiance was to the one True God.</p> <p>This story invites us to stand on holy ground. To develop our Spiritual understanding that the God within is our true source of power and to never waiver from that knowing. We will experience many challenges in our lives, but if we are willing to go to God first, all will be well.</p>

CREATIVE ACTIVITY SUPPLIES

Title	<u>Who Am I Really?</u>	<u>My Five Senses</u>	<u>Who Am I Really?</u>
Age Group	Kids	Adults & Teens	Adults & Teens
Supplies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sidewalk Chalk • Colored card stock • Polaroid camera & film • Tacky glue • Markers • Sequins • Feathers • Beads 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Journal • Pens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modeling Clay



Understanding

Opening Activities

Greeting

- Greeting the participants as they arrive creates an atmosphere of community and inclusiveness.
- it is an opportunity to provide them with lesson materials and any other information they may need.

Opening Prayer

- Call the group together at the appointed time by playing music or sounding a chime. Welcome everyone.
- **Centering Breath:** Always begin with a centering breath. This helps to release stress, bring their attention to the present moment, focuses the brain and connects the heart.

Example:

Take a breath in and feel your belly expand and your shoulders relax. Hold. Release, allowing your belly to fully contract and your shoulders to remain relaxed. As you continue to breathe in this manner, move your attention to your heart center and breathe in and out, feeling your heart energy expanding and filling every part of you.

- **Prayer**

I know my oneness with God. As I sit in the quiet, inner world of my soul, I touch the Divine...*pause*...Each moment, each breath is a reminder that the infinite power of Spirit is with me always. I grasp the understanding that God and I are one and that I am never alone...*pause*...As I wander the paths of my life, I am constantly reminder of the indwelling presence of God that lights my way and lightens my load...*pause*...God is my constant and abiding companion and I am eternally grateful. Amen.

Community Building

- Go around the circle and invite each person to share their name and complete this phrase: My spiritual motto, life slogan, or a core belief is _____.



Story Exploration

Adults

Teens

Lesson Focus

Exploring how true Spiritual understanding leads us through any challenge.

The Story

“Daniel in the Lion’s Den,” Genesis 28:10-22

Because of Daniel’s willingness to serve God, he had grown in stature in the kingdom. This threatened the status quo and so the leaders wanted to get rid of Daniel. They convinced the king to decree that all must worship him but Daniel continued to pray as he had always done. Daniel was throw into a pit of lions, but his belief in God kept him safe.

Discussion

- Why did the leaders convince the king to issue the new decree?
- What was the new decree?
- How did Daniel feel about it?
- How did Daniel respond?
- What happened after Daniel was thrown into the lion’s den?
- What saved him?
- Tell me about a time that you stood your ground in Truth even though outer circumstances told you it would be a challenge.
- What effect did this have on your Spiritual understanding?
- How can we strengthen our knowledge that it is our inner, higher self that we need to follow, not outer circumstances, opinions and trends?



Lesson Focus

When we recognize our common connection to Spirit, we are able to live in harmony.

The Story

“Daniel in the Lion’s Den,” Daniel 6:1-23

Because of Daniel’s willingness to serve God, he had grown in stature in the kingdom. This threatened the status quo and so the leaders wanted to get rid of Daniel. They convinced the king to decree that all must worship him but Daniel continued to pray as he had always done. Daniel was throw into a pit of lions, but his belief in God kept him safe.

Discussion

- Who was Daniel and what did he believe?
- What caused the king’s advisors to fear Daniel?
- What did the advisors fail to understand?
- What did Daniel know about God and humanity?
- What happened after Daniel was thrown into the lion’s den?
- What saved him?
- What did Daniel believe about God?
- What do you believe about God?
- How do we know that we are always connected to God?

Who Am I Really?

Objective:

The object of this activity is to explore the inside and outside of me and how I am connected to Spirit.

Supplies

- Sidewalk Chalk
- Colored card stock
- Polaroid camera & film
- Tacky glue
- Markers
- Sequins
- Feathers
- Beads

Share With the Children

Say: In our story today we heard about a man who knew that God was a part of him. Even though he was in a dangerous situation, he did not lose his faith in God. Daniel had many positive characteristics.

Choice #1 - Action

- Bring out the artistic side of your children by setting out colored chalk and inviting them to trace one another on the sidewalk.
- They can then fill in their outline with all the characteristics WITHIN them that makes them who they truly are.

Choice #2 - Action

- Take a picture of each child as they enter and wait for it to develop. *(Another option is to have them draw a self portrait.)*
- Invite them to glue their photo to the card stock, representing who they are on the outside and then use the above supplies to create a picture of who they are inside.
- Encourage them to look for qualities that they possess like kindness or courage, etc.
- They might also want to include an affirmation that states how they think of themselves, for example, "I am a kind and loving person."

My Five Senses

Objective:

The object of this activity is to understand that when we acknowledge the presence of God in our lives, we see things differently.

Supplies

- Journal
- Pens

Action

Even though the past is the past and can't be changed, it is sometimes helpful to look at the choices we made and then apply our new spiritual understanding to them. This helps us to know that we are gaining in understanding and to make different choices next time.

Answer the following questions.

- A lesson I learned the hard way was _____.
- In this experience I made the following choices from my human perspective:
 - ◆ I **saw** it this way _____.
 - ◆ I **heard** this about myself _____.
 - ◆ I **felt** _____.
 - ◆ It left a _____ **taste** in my mouth.
 - ◆ I **smelled** _____ but did _____ anyway.
- As I reflect back on this experience I am able to see it from a wider perspective and if I could have responded from my 5 higher senses I would have:
 - ◆ Seen that God _____.
 - ◆ Heard _____ underneath the words being said.
 - ◆ Felt _____.
 - ◆ Tasted _____.
 - ◆ Smelled/sensed _____.
- I know _____ to be True about myself.
- Share with the group.

Who Am I Really?

Objective:

The object of this activity is to invite our inner self to define who we are.

Supplies

- Modeling clay

Action

(This is a meditative experience that invites the teens to allow their inner voice to define who they are in this moment.)

- Invite the teens to answer the question, "Who Am I?" *(Accept all answers.)*

(Now invite them to find a comfortable place to be. We will move into a time of meditation.)

- **Say:** Close your eyes and focus on your breath...*pause*...Know that this breath is the breath of Spirit in you...*pause*...It moves in and around you, through you and as you...*pause*...You are one with this breathe of God...*longer pause*...Focus your attention on your inner self and invite it to speak to you, telling you who you are in all of your magnificence...*long pause*...As you take in another deep God breath, feel it filling all parts of your being, knowing that it speaks the Truth about you...*pause*...When you are ready, open your eyes and use the clay to create a symbol of your True identity as defined by Spirit.

Discussion

- What was the difference between how you described, "who you are," at the beginning and the symbol you created at the end?
- What did you learn about yourself during this exercise?