



Wattle You Do? By Deborah Wassenberg

It's important for children to learn that being a Christian doesn't mean nothing bad will ever happen to them. (In fact, in some places being a Christian attracts trouble in the form of persecution.) Kids will face tough times. It's imperative they learn that, no matter what, Jesus will be with them. A trip to an indigenous plant centre planted the seed for this story about the Australian Wattle that needs a bushfire to germinate.

You Tube Song Suggestions:

- Grow, Grow, Grow (Jana Alayra)
- 'Boom' Go Kids (chapelhill kids)
- Not Gonna Stop With Me (Hillsong Kids)

Bible Lesson: The Image of Gold Bible References: Daniel 3:1-30

Visuals for the Bible Story are available from Free Bible Images. I've added royalty free photographs of the Golden Wattle and its seeds at the end of this lesson.

Visuals:

- Picture 1: Acacias (Wattles)
- Picture 2: Australian Athlete
- Picture 3: Wattle seeds
- Picture 4: Bushfire
- Picture 5: Pictures of kids in difficult situations
- Picture 6: Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego as captives
- Picture 7: The gold idol
- Picture 8: All the musical instruments
- Picture 9: All but the 3 young men bowing down to the idol
- Picture 10: The king is told
- Picture 11: 3 young men in front of the king
- Picture 12: The fire
- Picture 13: There are 4 men!
- Picture 14: Happy kids and Wattle

Words:

1. Today I want to talk to you about Wattles or Acacia's.
(Pronounced uh-**kei**-shuh)
You've probably got one in your backyard
or in a park near your house.
Most Aussie's call them Wattles.
(The name from colonial days.)
The Golden Wattle is Australia's national flower and is on the Commonwealth
Coat of Arms.
There's a National Wattle Day (1st September, first day of Spring) and a Miss Wattle is
crowned at Cootamundra NSW.
2. Wattles grow in many parts of Australia.
From coastal zones to the mountains to the dry inland.
They can be small shrubs or trees.
The most beautiful part of the Golden Wattle is the yellow flowers.
The yellow flowers against the green leaves are the colours of Australia...
the green and gold.
They're the colours the Aussie athletes wear when they compete internationally.
3. Wattles have hard seed pods that look like flattened beans.
They are hard to open until they dry out.
Then the pods snap open by splitting along the seams
and the seeds are released.
But even in the ground the seeds won't germinate (begin to grow)
until the temperature is right.
They need fire.
4. A burst of heat from a bushfire will crack the coating on the seed.
After the fire, the seed germinates.
The bush, charred by the fire, turns green again as the Wattle seed grows.
5. Sometimes we can experience things in life that makes it feel
like we're going through fire.
In other words a really, really tough time.
Some kids actually know what it's like to lose their home to a house fire.
Some kids know what it's like to spend month after month in hospital.
Some kids know what it's like for their family to break up.
Some kids know what it's like to be bullied.
Some kids know what it's like to live in a warzone.
Some kids know what it is like to suffer for being a Christian!

6. I want to tell you about 3 young men who faced a fiery trial.
The Hebrew youths were captured and taken prisoner when their home, Jerusalem, was invaded by Nebuchadnezzar, the King of Babylon. King Nebuchadnezzar was looking for young men to be trained and educated so he would be surrounded by advisors that had understanding, and who were wise and knowledgeable.
So the young men were taught to speak a new language. Their names were changed to Babylonian names. Hananiah was called Shadrach. Mishael was called Meshach and Azariah became Abednego. *(Daniel 1:6-7)* Although the young men now lived in Babylon, spoke a different language and had their names changed...they never forgot their God, the one true God of Israel.
7. King Nebuchadnezzar had a gold idol made that was over 27 metres high and over 2 metres wide. Then he set the idol up on the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon. Then he called the satraps, prefects, governors, advisors, treasurers, judges, rulers, and all the other officials in his kingdom to come together. He wanted all of them to come to the dedication ceremony for the idol.
8. So all the men came and stood in front of the idol that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. Then the man who makes announcements for the king spoke in a loud voice, "All you people from many nations and language groups, listen to me. This is what you are commanded to do: You must bow down as soon as you hear the sound of all the musical instruments. When you hear the horns, flutes, harps and all the other musical instruments, you must worship the gold idol. King Nebuchadnezzar has set this idol up. Whoever does not bow down and worship this gold idol will immediately be thrown into a very hot furnace."
9. So as soon as the people heard the sound of all the musical instruments, they bowed down and worshiped the gold idol. All the people, nations, and different language groups there worshiped the gold idol that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. Except Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego who remembered the Commandments taught to them when they were little. 'You must not worship any other gods except me,' and 'You must not make any idols. Don't make any statues or pictures of anything up in the sky or of anything on the earth or of anything down in the water. Don't worship or serve idols of any kind, because I the Lord, am your God. I hate my people worshipping other gods.' So the young men did not worship the idol.
10. Some of the Chaldeans came up to the king and began speaking against the young boys. They said, "King, may you live forever! You gave a command. You said that everyone who hears the sound of the musical instruments must bow down and worship

the gold idol. And you also said that whoever does not bow down and worship the gold idol will be thrown into a very hot furnace. There are some Judeans who you made important officials in the province of Babylon that ignored your order, King. Their names are Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. They don't worship your gods, and they didn't bow down to worship the gold idol you set up."

11. Nebuchadnezzar burned with anger. He called for Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. So they were brought to him. King Nebuchadnezzar said to them, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, is it true that you don't worship my gods? And is it true that you didn't bow down and worship the gold idol I have set up? This time when you hear the sound of the musical instruments, you must bow down and worship the gold idol. If you are ready to worship the idol I have made, that is good. But if you don't worship it, you will be thrown very quickly into the hot furnace. Then no god will be able to save you from my power!"

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered the king, "Nebuchadnezzar, we don't need to explain these things to you. If you throw us into the hot furnace, the God we serve can save us. And if he wants to, he can save us from your power. But even if God does not save us, we want you to know, King, that we refuse to serve your gods. We will not worship the gold idol you have set up."

12. Then Nebuchadnezzar became very angry with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. He gave an order for the oven to be heated seven times hotter than it usually was. Then he commanded some of the strongest soldiers in his army to tie up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. He told the soldiers to throw them into the hot furnace. So Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were tied up and thrown into the hot furnace. They were wearing their robes, pants, cloth caps, and other clothes. The king was very angry when he gave the command, so the soldiers quickly made the furnace very hot. The fire was so hot that the flames killed the strong soldiers. They were killed when they went close to the fire to throw in Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego fell into the fire. They were tied up very tightly.

13. Then King Nebuchadnezzar jumped to his feet. He was very surprised and he asked his advisors, "We tied only three men, and we threw only three men into the fire. Is that right?"

His advisors said, "Yes, King."

The king said, "Look! I see four men walking around in the fire.

They are not tied up and they are not burned. The fourth man looks like an angel."

(It was Jesus!)

14. Then Nebuchadnezzar went to the opening of the hot furnace. He shouted, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, come out! Servants of the Most High God, come here!" So Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out of the fire.

When they came out, the satraps, prefects, governors, and royal advisors crowded around them. They could see that the fire had not burned Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Their bodies were not burned at all. Their hair was not burned, and their robes were not burned. They didn't even smell as if they had been near fire. Then Nebuchadnezzar said, "Praise the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Their God has sent his angel and saved his servants from the fire! These three men trusted their God and refused to obey my command. They were willing to die instead of serving or worshiping any other god. So I now make this law: Anyone from any nation or language group who says anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego will be cut into pieces, and their house will be destroyed until it is a pile of dirt and ashes. No other god can save his people like this." Then the king gave Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego more important jobs in the province of Babylon.

15. Even though you won't be thrown into a hot furnace like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, you can go through times when the heat is on! We're all going to go through times of pressure or difficulty. But no matter how hot it gets, don't panic, you can trust that Jesus will be in the middle of the trial with you. You are not alone, just like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were not alone in the fiery furnace. They did not panic at all! Jesus will never leave you or forget you and the fire will not last forever. The Wattle seed has to go through a fire to germinate. Every Christian goes through a time of heat to grow, too. You will have learned that Jesus cares about you. You will have learned that Jesus is faithful. You will have learned that you can trust Jesus. You're not like a trapped seed anymore. Now you will grow. You will grow stronger and stronger. Just like the Aussie Golden Wattle, you will be beautiful to look at!

Ministry to the Children:

God says, 'When you pass through the waters I will be with you; and when you go through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze. For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel...Do not be afraid, for I am with you.' (Isaiah 43:2-3, 5)

No matter what you are going through with your family, your health or your school, God cares and will not let you go through it alone. (*Payer for children who are going through any trial*)

You are very precious to God. You are valuable, cherished and treasured. He knew you before you were born. He has a plan for your life. Part of that plan is for you to be in Heaven with Him

one day. But that can't happen when you have sin in your life. Sin is anything you have done wrong. Because God loved you so much He sent His Son Jesus to die in your place for your sin. All you need to do is tell Jesus you are sorry for your sin. Thank Him for dying on the Cross to take your sin away. Ask Jesus to come into your life today and become a follower of Jesus! All through your life He will never, ever leave you if you walk with Him. (*Salvation Call*)

Memory Verse: Romans 8:31 (ERV)

So what should we say about this? If God is for us, no one can stand against us. And God is with us.

A game of hot and cold. Write the words of the Memory Verse, and the reference, on pieces of bright coloured paper. You might like to have just one word on the paper, or two or more, depending on the number of children in your Kid's Church. Hide the papers around the room. (Make sure you make a note of where you've hidden them!) Choose a child to hunt around for the word/s. As the child searches say, 'You're getting warmer' or, 'You're cold,' to give the child clues to the location of the word. When the child has found the word they bring it to the front and wait until all the words have been found. When all the words have been collected, put the Memory Verse in the correct order and say aloud together. Then one by one take away the word/s until the children can say the Memory Verse without any help.

Game 1: Hot Potato

The ball is the 'hot potato'. Children must pass the ball around the circle as fast as they can because the ball is too hot to handle! Change the type and size of ball to add to the difficulty.

Game 2: Skipping

If you have a long skipping rope or a number of short skipping ropes, some children may like to skip faster and faster. 'Salt, mustard, vinegar, pepper!' Salt is the slowest and pepper the fastest. If you have the Memory Verse displayed the children could skip and say it.

Craft: Pompom Wattle

You will need:

- Photocopies of the Golden Wattle template (you may like to add the Memory Verse)
- Small yellow pompoms
(Yellow pompoms can be replaced with scrunched balls of yellow crepe paper)
- Felt pens/pencils/crayons
- Glue sticks

What to do:

- Colour the Golden Wattle leaves and branch
- Glue the yellow pom poms (or crepe paper balls) over the circular flowers



