

A GUIDE TO
NARNIA

100 QUESTIONS ABOUT
THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA:
THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE



DISCUSSION GUIDE
GRADES 3-6

FOR TEACHERS, RELIGIOUS EDUCATORS, AND YOUTH MINISTERS

Note: *This guide is meant to help you and your students explore The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe from a religious perspective, articulating biblical parallels and highlighting moral themes in the story. It includes cross-references from the question-and-answer book A Guide to Narnia, published by Ascension Press. Although The Chronicles of Narnia may be read as nothing more than great tales of adventure, forgiveness, heroic leadership, and self-sacrifice, it is clear that C.S. Lewis allowed his own faith experience to color his writing, as all great writers do.*

These activities will work best if the class is familiar with the story of The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe. If you are not able to have them read it, or read it in installments in the classroom, it would be good to tell them an abridged form of the story, which can be found on the Internet.

All activities in this section are appropriate for students in grades 3-6

Activities

ACTIVITY 1

Mr. Tumnus: A Selfless Decision

Objectives:

- To convey that sometimes doing the right thing is not easy and may have unpleasant consequences.
- To help students develop moral decision-making skills based on Christian teaching.
- To explore the idea of sacrifice as a Christian moral value.

Materials: Copies (or at least one copy) of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, the Bible, copies of *A Guide to Narnia*, activity sheets.

Related Bible Verses: Deuteronomy 30:15-20; Daniel 6; John 15:12-15; Matthew 6:19-21.

A Guide to Narnia: see questions 15, 16, 17, 24, 39, 40.

Procedure: If possible, have the students read Chapter 2: “What Lucy Found There” or read it to them.

After praying together the opening prayer, read over the activity sheet with the students, or have them read it and fill it out themselves.

After they have finished, go over the answers with

them, pointing out that doing good and telling the truth are their own rewards and may not lead to personal advancement. In the words of Jesus, we are to store up treasure in heaven, not on earth. Encourage students to be honest and, if some of them say that they would tell Tumnus to turn Lucy in to save his own life, try not to be judgemental but simply point out to them that the weight of his sin would be unbearable compared to the freedom he gained. It is also noteworthy that, before he had met any children, he was capable of turning them in; having met Lucy, though, he could not. You might also respond by asking, “What if it was your brother or sister and not Lucy? Would you feel differently?” Then remind them that Jesus asks us to call everyone our brother and sister and to love all equally.

When processing the last question, you’ll find that the students will be much more willing to share their experiences if you are willing to tell them a story of a moral choice that you have made. Once again, don’t criticize anyone who made the wrong choice, but say that in the future, you know they will try harder to make the most Christ-centered choice.

IF TIME ALLOWS: Another aspect of this chapter is Lucy’s forgiveness. She does not get angry at Tumnus for trying to trick her, but shows Christian love by forgiving him. You might ask the students to consider how hard it would be to forgive if they were in Lucy’s place and how they might overcome hardness of heart to allow forgiveness in. Close by praying together.

ACTIVITY 2

Edmund is Tempted by the White Witch

Objectives:

- To introduce the idea of God speaking to us through our conscience.
- To explore the concept that one small wrong step often can lead to many more serious errors.

Materials: Copies (or at least one copy) of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, the Bible, copies of *A Guide to Narnia*, activity sheets.

Bible Verses: Genesis 3:1-7; Proverbs 1:10, Matthew 16:26, 1 Corinthians 10:13; Ephesians 2:1-6, 6:1-5.

A Guide to Narnia: questions 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 27-32, 34, 37, 38, 49, 50-52, 55.

Procedure: After the opening prayer, introduce the activity by reading, or having students read the introduction.

1. Have students answer the question themselves in writing, then conduct a discussion with the whole group, allowing several to read their answers. Guide them toward the idea that our God speaks to us through our conscience to lead us away from danger.
2. Allow the students to take five to ten minutes to write a letter to Edmund. Then ask for several students to share their letters. Ask them what Jesus might say to Edmund and allow them to discuss. If time allows, discuss with them how important it is to advise our friends to always try to do the right thing. Read Ephesians 6:1-5.
3. After allowing the class two to three minutes to answer the question and write a proverb, tell them that the correct answer is C. Spend a few moments explaining how Edmund's situation was like a slippery slope and one step led to the next. Allow several students to share their own sayings with the class.

Close by praying together.

ACTIVITY 3

Wise Kings and Queens in Narnia

Objectives:

- To introduce the idea that we are all called by God to be heroes, to be "a light unto the nations" for each other.
- To help students gain an awareness of laws and their place in life: to establish fairness, protect the less fortunate and create a just society.

Materials: Copies (or at least one copy) of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, the Bible, copies of *A Guide to Narnia*, activity sheets.

Bible Verses: Exodus 1-17 Deuteronomy 4:5-8, 5:1-21; Nehemiah 9:13-15.

A Guide to Narnia: questions 29, 62, 82, 97, 98, 99.

Procedures: Introduce the activity and begin in prayer. Read, or have students read, the explanation of what happened in Narnia, then give them a few moments to answer the questions in activity 1. Have them break into groups of three to four to share their answers. Allow for laughter as they explore the idea of absolute power. Bring the group together and ask a few students to share their responses.

Explain that being king or queen is not about having your way or gratifying every whim, and that rulers who acted like that were hated by their subjects and sometimes overthrown. Read Deuteronomy 4:5-8 and Nehemiah 9:13-15.

Lead a discussion on what a good and wise king or queen might be like, then read (or have students read), the quote from *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*.

Introduce activity 2. Break into groups again, distribute a Bible to each group, and allow 10 minutes for them to come up with 10 good, fair and just laws for governing your school.

Bring the group together. Have each group report by reading out their laws and ask the class to critique them. As a class, choose the best laws and put together a new list of ten. Close by praying together.

Mr. Tumnus: A Selfless Decision

Opening Prayer: *Lord God, we thank you for the gift of friendship. Help us to learn to be good friends to those we meet and remember that each person we meet is a brother or sister in Christ.. Open our hearts to greater courage, greater faith, and greater love. Amen*

In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Lucy is an 8-year-old girl who enters a magical land and meets Mr. Tumnus, a faun. He invites her back to his house. After sharing tea and sandwiches with her, he plays a tune for her that makes her sleepy. He is secretly in the service of the White Witch and has been told to hand over to her any human children that he meets.

If Mr. Tumnus came to you while Lucy was dozing in his parlor and asked you what to do, what would you tell him? Why?

Let's look at his dilemma again:

If he hands Lucy over to the White Witch, nothing bad will happen to him. He might even be rewarded. But he will have to live with his conscience knowing that something really awful would happen to Lucy and he would be responsible.

If he lets Lucy go free, he might get away with it, but he knows that the Witch has spies everywhere who might see Lucy and him together and that the Witch will probably find out. He also knows that the Witch will do terrible things to him if she discovers that he let a human girl escape. She might even kill him or turn him into stone.

What reasons can you give Tumnus to convince him that he should do the right thing, even though it will put him in danger? What would Jesus do in this situation?

As you know by now if you've read the story, Mr. Tumnus doesn't turn Lucy over to the Witch. He realizes that he can't go through with it. He opens his heart to her, tells her everything, and she forgives him. And they become very good friends.

Mr. Tumnus had to make a decision. He had to decide if he could do something he knew was wrong because he was afraid that if he didn't do it, he would get hurt. The witch had bullied him (and many other Narnians) into agreeing to do things that they didn't really want to do.

Have you ever had to make a choice to do the right thing even though you were afraid that you might get in trouble? What was your decision?

Closing Prayer: *Dear Lord, we ask you to be with us on the paths of life, to watch over us when we are in danger. We ask that you show us how to live in love and courage and to laugh in the face of fear and adversity. Amen.*

Edmund is Tempted by the White Witch

Opening Prayer: *Lord, help us to walk in your ways. When we are not sure what to do, please give us the wisdom to turn to you and the humility to follow your way. May we always let your Spirit guide us into greater understanding. Amen.*

In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Edmund, an English school boy, finds himself transported to a land called Narnia, where animals talk and it's always winter. He meets a tall woman dressed like a queen, who seems to him proud, cold, and stern. He does not like the way she looks at him and he is afraid of her. But later she begins to speak more kindly and she offers him something to drink and his favorite candy, which she produces by magic.

1. If you were Edmund, would you take the candy? Why or why not? When you meet someone and a voice inside tells you not to trust them, what might that mean?

2. Edmund takes her candy, and thinks it was the best he has ever tasted. He soon finds himself wanting more candy very badly, but she refuses to give him more. Later, she lets him go and tells him she will reward him with more candy if he brings his brother and sisters to meet her. In the space below, write a note to Edmund and tell him what you think he should do about this queen. What advice do you think Jesus might give him?

Dear Edmund,

Signed, _____

Later on, he returns to Narnia with his brother, Peter, and his sisters, Susan and Lucy. He soon finds himself separated from them and in very deep trouble, being held as a hostage by the witch, his life in danger. And it all started because he met a strange woman and took some candy from her.

On Edmund's first trip to Narnia, he found himself in an awkward situation. A stranger he didn't trust started talking to him. He was being very cautious toward her until she offered him something he liked a lot. Then he made a bad choice – he took what she offered. It didn't seem like a really bad thing to do, although everyone knows that no one should ever take food from a stranger. But it led him to make more bad choices until he found himself making really bad choices.

3. Which saying below sums up what happened to Edmund?

- A. All's well that ends well. _____
- B. Never judge a book by its cover. _____
- C. One wrong step on a slippery slope can cause you to slide all the way down. _____
- D. All that glitters is not gold. _____

Can you make up another saying that sums up what happened to Edmund?

Closing Prayer: *Loving God and Father, help us to see clearly your guidance. When we feel you speaking through our conscience, give us the wisdom to listen, to cling to you in all our choices. Amen.*

Wise Kings and Queens in Narnia

Imagine that you have stumbled accidentally into a whole different world, a world full of wondrous sights and amazing inhabitants. And soon you learn that YOU are chosen to be a king or queen of that land and the inhabitants have been waiting for you to come and take your place on their throne. Today we'll talk about a story where that happened.

Opening Prayer: *Dear Father, we spend all our young lives wondering what our destiny might be. Are we called to be leaders? Are we called to stand up for your truth in the world? Help us to find our way, to answer your call to be heroes and to lead others to your way. Amen.*

In *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, four young people found themselves magically transported to the Land of Narnia, a magical place full of excitement and danger. They soon discovered that a powerful witch was trying to kill them, that a great and righteous leader was eager to help them, and that they were the long-awaited Kings and Queens of Narnia—in fact, four thrones were waiting for them in a tall castle on the edge of the shining sea.

1. How would you feel if you suddenly found that you were absolute ruler of a magical, far-off land? What would you do first?

The story of their adventure, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, tells us that:

These two Kings and two Queens governed Narnia well, and long and happy was their reign.... They made good laws and kept the peace and saved good trees from being unnecessarily cut down.... And Peter became a tall and deep-chested man and a great warrior, and he was called King Peter the magnificent.... and Susan grew into a tall and gracious woman... and was called Susan the Gentle.... Edmund was ... great in council and judgement.

He was called Edmund the Just.... as for Lucy... her own people called her Lucy the Valiant.

2. Let's return to our original idea that you find yourself a king or queen, not of a magical land, but of your school. What are some of the laws that you would make? Who would you protect? Before beginning, read over the book of Exodus 20:1-17 and Deuteronomy 5:1-21 to see what laws God gave to the Israelites. It's important to remember that, for the Israelites as well as for the Kings and Queens of Narnia, there was an understanding that the idea of just law was a gift from God, that laws existed to further the providence of God, to protect the weak and powerless, and to extend God's blessing to all.

The Laws I Would Make If I Were King or Queen of This School

By _____ date _____

Closing Prayer: *Our Father, we ask you to lead us, to guide us, and to give us the wisdom and courage to be the heroes you have called us to be. Help us to put you in the center of our lives and fill our hearts with bravery, kindness, and forgiveness. Amen.*

This guide was created by Michael Fabian and Mustard Seed Educational Ministries.