

Serve Others

Quarter 7 • Lesson 10

Focus on Life Skills

- 1. Connecting:** Act out what it looks like to serve and be served.
- 2. Teaching:** Learn from Jesus' example how to serve (Matthew 20:28; John 13:1–15; Galatians 5:13).
- 3. Responding:** Think of ways to serve.

SUPPLIES

- Bible
- Plates or cups (1 for every 4–5 children)
- Pieces of cloth (1 for every 4–5 children)
- Optional Supplies:*
 - Memory Verse Poster
 - Bowl or basin
 - Towel
 - Student Pages
 - *The Action Bible*, image of Jesus washing disciples' feet
 - Scissors

Teacher Devotion

*Be like the Son of Man. He did not come to be served.
Instead, he came to serve others.
He came to give his life as the price for setting many people free.*
Matthew 20:28

What is the greatest thing anyone has ever done for you? How did it feel to be served? The act of serving is an important value in God's kingdom. In fact, it is so important that Jesus, the King of heaven, did not come to be served but to serve. He paid the ultimate price when He gave His life for sinners. Think about that: Jesus has served you.

Following Jesus' example by serving others requires humility and love. We must treat others as more important than ourselves and allow God's love to grow in our hearts. As we do, He will give us opportunities to serve others and point them to the love and freedom He offers. Think of someone you can serve. Maybe it is a family member, a friend, or a neighbor. Ask Jesus to overflow your heart with His love so you can spill it out onto others as you serve with humility.

Family Connection: Encourage families to talk to their children about opportunities to serve in their own homes and communities and make a plan to do it.

LESSON TIME

1. Connecting: Act out what it looks like to serve and be served.

Greet the children as they come to class. Ask each child to say 1 thing that made him smile last week.

Today, we will talk about serving. When you serve someone, you do something for that person. You may bring them food or a drink. You may help them do a job. There are many ways to serve.

Allow 1–2 children to respond to each question.

- **What have you done for someone else that needed to be done?**
- **What has someone else done to help you?**

Raise your hand if you think serving others is a good idea (pause). Raise your hand if you think serving others is not a good idea (pause). Some people may think serving others is what people do only if they must. Some people may think that servants do not have honor. In fact, serving others honors them, and it also honors God!

Teacher Tip: Some children in your class may have been forced to serve someone in inappropriate ways or some may have been threatened with violent consequences for not serving. If so, explain to them that this is not the type of serving that God wants us to do. God wants us to help each other, which means that the person serving should also be treated with respect.

Have the children form teams of 4–5 children.

Let's do something fun! I will give each team a plate or cup and a piece of cloth. You must look at these items and think about how you could use these to serve someone in your group. For example, I might pour a cup of tea into the cup and give it to someone in my group. Or, I might dust off the feet of another group member.

In a moment, you will use an object to serve 1 person in your group. The children in your group will take turns serving each other until everyone in your group has served and has been served. Ready? Serve!

Allow 2–3 minutes for the children to act out serving group members. If you notice a team struggling to come up with ideas, you may remind them of the service examples or think of new ones.

Many people would rather be served than serve others. And in many communities, servants are not respected. So, you may be surprised to find out that Jesus Himself came to be a servant! Let's read from the Bible to find out more about this.

2. Teaching: Learn from Jesus' example how to serve (Matthew 20:28; John 13:1–15; Galatians 5:13).

Optional: If possible, share the image from *The Action Bible*.

Read this verse directly from your Bible.

*Be like the Son of Man. He did not come to be served.
Instead, he came to serve others.
He came to give his life as the price for setting many people free.*
Matthew 20:28

Jesus, who is God the Son, came to serve! During His life on earth, He served people in many ways. Right now, I will tell you a true story from the Bible about a time when He served His friends, the disciples, in a special way. I need 4 volunteers to act out the story as I tell it.

Choose 2 children to come to the front of your teaching space and be disciples. Choose another child who you think will be comfortable speaking in front of the class to be Peter. Tell this child to repeat what you say when you say the words "Peter said." Choose another child to pretend to be Jesus. Have the children sit on chairs or mats if possible. The child pretending to be Jesus will pretend to wash the disciples' feet as you tell the story. You may provide a towel and basin or bowl if you have them. Encourage students to pretend by doing the actions they hear you talk about as you read the story.

During Jesus' time, most people walked everywhere they went. Israel, where they lived, was a very dusty land, so their feet were always dirty. When people were invited to have dinner at someone's home, a servant would wash the guests' feet before they ate.

One special night, Jesus was eating dinner with His disciples. Jesus knew that He would soon die and rise again so that people could be forgiven for their sins. Jesus loved His disciples and wanted to show them His love by serving them. Listen to what the Bible says:

*So he got up from the meal and took off his outer clothes.
He wrapped a towel around his waist.
After that, he poured water into a large bowl.
Then he began to wash his disciples' feet.*
John 13:4–5

Remind the child pretending to be Jesus to act as though he is washing the other children's feet. Encourage the other children to act surprised.

Jesus' friends were surprised! The Son of God was doing the job of a servant! His friend, Peter, said, "You will never wash my feet!"

Pause to allow "Peter" to repeat these words.

Peter did not want Jesus to wash his feet because he did not want to bring shame on

Jesus. But Jesus explained that Peter could only share life with Him if he allowed Jesus to wash his feet.

Peter said, "Then wash my hands and my head too!"

Pause to allow "Peter" to repeat these words.

Listen to what the Bible tells us happened after Jesus finished washing the disciples' feet.

When Jesus finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes.

Then he returned to his place.

"Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them.

"You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord.' You are right. That is what I am.

I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet.

So you also should wash one another's feet.

I have given you an example.

You should do as I have done for you."

John 13:12–15

Thank the 4 volunteers and allow them to join the rest of the children to answer the following questions.

- **What did Jesus tell His disciples He was doing for them?**

He set an example of how the disciples should treat each other.

- **What did He ask the disciples to do for each other?**

He asked them to wash each other's feet or serve each other.

- **We may not wash each other's feet, but we can serve each other. What are some ways you can serve the people in your life?**

Allow 3–4 children to respond.

By washing His disciples' feet, Jesus showed us how to live a life of serving others. Jesus was humble. That means He did not act as though He was more important than anyone else—even though He was and is! Listen to what the Bible says about serving.

My brothers and sisters, you were chosen to be free.

But don't use your freedom as an excuse to live under the power of sin.

Instead, serve one another in love.

Galatians 5:13

When we serve others, it does not mean they are more important than us, nor does it mean that we are less important than them. Because God created each of us, we are all important. Jesus showed us how to be humble and serve others out of love. Jesus served others while on earth. Jesus served you and me when gave His life to pay for our sin. He did this because of His love for us. We can follow Jesus' example and serve others in love.

Teacher Tip: If children struggle to understand how they can serve others without dishonoring themselves or their families, explain that serving can bring great honor to them and their families. By serving others, they bring glory to God and they show others they care.

3. Responding: Think of ways to serve.

Let's spend time thinking about how we can serve like Jesus. We will work together to come up with some ideas.

Divide the children into 2 groups. Have each group sit in a circle. Ask each group to choose 1 child who can remember the ideas discussed and report them back to the whole class. As the children talk in their groups, go around to each one and listen to what the children are saying. If a group is stuck, you may suggest one of the ideas provided below.

Tell the first group to talk about ways to serve people at home. This would include serving parents and siblings as well as doing jobs around the house. Some ideas are: Help a sibling with chores. Do a small job or project around the house. Ask a parent for a task to do. Do a task no one in the family enjoys doing.

Tell the second group to talk about ways to serve outside the home. This would include serving neighbors and friends. This could be done at church or at school. Some ideas are: Help a teacher clean up the teaching space. Help a neighbor clean the outside of her house. Help a friend with his school work.

Allow 5–7 minutes for the children to think of ideas. After this time, bring the whole group together and have each reporter tell the class what her group talked about.

Teacher Tip: As the children respond to this activity, remind them that serving others brings honor to those people and to God. Encourage them to want to serve others. They should not serve only to look like a good person or to try to get a reward from people or from God.

Optional: If you are using Student Pages, allow the children 5 minutes to cut or tear out the hearts and respond to the pictures. You may choose to have children work in pairs for this activity.

This week serve someone using at least 1 of the ways of serving we talked about in this lesson. Remember, this can be something as simple as helping a family member do a chore that is not usually yours to do. I will ask you to tell me about serving others when you come to class next week. Let's listen again to what the Bible says:

*Be like the Son of Man. He did not come to be served.
Instead, he came to serve others.
He came to give his life as the price for setting many people free.
Matthew 20:28*

The Bible tells us to follow Jesus' example and serve other people. Jesus was humble, meaning He did not act as though He was more important than anyone else—even though He was and is! We can be humble too by showing others that they are important and serving them.

Jesus served people because He loved them. When we know God and love Him, He fills us with love to serve others. Just like cars and airplanes need fuel in their tanks to make them go, we need love in our tanks to serve the way God wants us to. Serving will not always be easy. Sometimes we will want to take care of ourselves instead of serving someone else. Or we might think that someone else does not deserve to be served. Our memory verse today reminds us to focus on the truth.

If you are using the Memory Verse Poster, show it to the students.

*Finally, my brothers and sisters, always think about what is true.
Think about what is noble, right and pure.
Think about what is lovely and worthy of respect.
If anything is excellent or worthy of praise,
think about those kinds of things.*
Philippians 4:8

Sing or chant all but the last part of this verse using the following motions. If you changed any of the motions in Lesson 9, use the motions you created.

Finally, my brothers—Hold your arms out at your hips with your palms facing down. Turn the palm of 1 hand up.

And sisters—Turn the palm of your other hand up.

Always think about what is true—Point to 1 side of your head and smile.

Add these motions:

Think about—Point to 1 side of your head.

What is noble, right and pure—Clap to the rhythm of these words as you say them.

Think about—Point to 1 side of your head.

What is lovely and worthy of respect—Clap to the rhythm of these words as you say them.

Have the children sing or chant with you as you repeat the words to the memory verse 3 times.

When it is difficult to serve others, God will give you the strength to do what is right.

End class by saying this blessing, based on Matthew 20:28, over the children.

Blessing: May you be like Jesus, who came to serve others in many ways. May you be filled with God's great love as you serve others.

Lead the children in singing this quarter's song, if possible.

Raise a Hallelujah" by Bethel Music https://youtu.be/JvXBf_dEiHU