

SERIES: JESUS, OUR EXAMPLE
LESSON 3—OUR EXAMPLE OF SERVANTHOOD

Bible Reference: John 13:1-15

Key Verses:

Luke 9:48—“For whoever is least among you all, this one will be great”

1 John 2:6—“He who says he remains in Him [Jesus] ought himself also to walk just like He walked.”

ITEMS NEEDED:

- 3 Psalm 23 Posters
- Treats or prizes for the winners of “Squirt-Out Simon Says”
- A water “squirt” bottle
- Two pans of Jell-O with the same number of large marshmallows in each
- A floor covering such as a large trash bag
- Some paper towels and other items to clean your participant’s feet
- Craft items for making aprons (if you choose this small group option)
- Marker Board

PRAYER PART—“He makes me lie down in green pastures”

Choose three volunteers to hold the Psalm 23 signs.

Ask your students to read Psalm 23 with you.

SAY: Today we’re going to begin with a Bible drill. When I say “Go,” I want you to find the book of Psalms as fast as you can. Get your Bibles ready...get set...Go!

ASK: **Who knows an easy way to find Psalms in the Bible?** (Answer: Hold your Bible sideways and open it to the middle. Usually, this is the book of Psalms. If not, you’ll be close to it. If you have a Bible Book chart, show your students the books around the Psalms.)

Then have them close their Bibles. This time tell them to find Psalm 23.

SAY: King David, who wrote this Psalm, had been a shepherd as a young man, and as a shepherd, he understood the importance of rest and water for the sheep. If sheep didn’t get rest, they would become weak and die. It was important, especially during the heat of the day, that they had shade and water.

ASK: **What can you learn from this about what God desires for you?** (God provides for you what you need.)

ASK: **What makes you feel stressed? Or worried?**

ASK: **What can help a person who feels “stressed out”?**

SAY: We’ve talked about this before, but I want to remind you that the Bible says that you can “Cast your cares on God because He cares for you” (1 Peter 5:7). In other words, you can put your burdens on Him. Through prayer, you can give your cares to God.

OPTION: If you want, during this series, take a few minutes to ask for prayer requests. You might even want to keep a list in your room to refer back to each week to help your students see how God answers prayer.

PRAY

SAY: Everybody bow your heads and close your eyes. Now with your heads bowed and your eyes closed, I'm going to call out some of today's prayer requests and as I do, I want you to pray silently for them. (*Pause...Call out some of the prayer requests and then pray or ask one of your students to pray.*)

OPENING ACTIVITY (Optional):

Last week you played a game of "Simon Says" with your class. This week you're going to play the same game, but with a different twist.

INSTRUCTIONS: "Simon Says Squirt-It-Out"

Play "Simon Says" with your class. Either you can lead the game or you can have the students take turns leading. Either way, this version is a little different. When a student does something when they are not supposed to, they are not out. Instead, using a spray bottle, squirt them with a shot or two of water. (*NOTE: If a student doesn't want to get wet, shoot at their shoes or peripheral clothing. Many will want you to squirt their face though. This is meant to be fun, so if it is obvious that someone doesn't want to be squirted at all, that's okay too. If you have a student that is intentionally getting "out" to get squirted, institute a "three strikes and you're out" policy, which means, if they get squirted three times, they're out of the game. Also, DON'T let your students have the squirt bottle, even if they are "Simon," and be careful to keep as much water off the floor as possible since many floor get slick when wet.*)

Play for a few minutes. Whoever didn't get squirted at all during the game is the winner, and as a prize they get squirted five times! Or you can give them a treat such as a piece of candy or a sticker.

DISCUSSION

SAY: In this game you had to listen and follow the leader to win. In life you have to listen and follow God to win.

SAY: The only way you can win this game is by perfectly following Simon's instructions. Simon is your example and you are "imitating" him. What he does, you do. What he says, you say.

ASK: Who remembers what it means to imitate someone? (To be just like them.)

SAY: God wants you to be just like Jesus. That means that God wants you live in the same way that Jesus lived and Jesus is our perfect example for what to do in any situation.

Leader: *How should you be?* / Students: *Just Like Jesus!*

SAY: Last week we learned that Jesus is our perfect example of self-control. Today we'll learn that Jesus is our perfect example of serving others.

BIBLE LESSON

(Based on John 13:1-15)

SAY: Today, during our Bible story, we'll be looking for two good listeners, so listen well and we'll be watching...

ASK: **Can anyone tell me where the Gospel of John is found in the Bible?** (*Refer children to a Bible Book Chart, if you have one in your room.*) (Answer: New Testament)

ASK: **Can anyone tell me what the word "Gospel" means?** (Good News)

ASK: **Who can tell me who wrote the Gospel of John?** (John, Jesus' disciple—NOT John the Baptist.)

ASK: **God used John to write five of the twenty-seven books of the New Testament—which ones did he write?** (The Gospel of John, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, and Revelation.)

ASK: **Does anyone know an easy way to find the Gospel of John?** (Turn in the middle of the Bible. You'll land near Psalms. Then turn halfway to your right and you'll usually land in the Gospels. John is the last of the four Gospels.)

SAY: For those of you who have a Bible with you today, when I say "Go," I want you to find the book of John as fast as you can. Get your Bible ready...get set...Go! Now turn to chapter 13. Now find verse 1.

SAY: As I read this story about Jesus from the Bible, I want you to follow along in your Bibles too.

Read John 13:3-5.

ASK: In Jesus' day when people entered a house, they would remove their sandals and the lowest person or servant in the house would wash their feet. **Why was this so important?**

SAY: Imagine a group of men, like the disciples who had been walking in the dust and dirt throughout the day, with sweaty feet. Their feet would be dirty and probably smelly. This job was given to the lowest person in the house because it was a dirty job.

ASK: **Why do you think Jesus did this?**

SAY: Several times in the Bible we find the disciples arguing about who is the greatest. None of them would have volunteered to take the spot of the lowest person and wash everyone's feet. It must have been amazing to them when Jesus put Himself in this role.

ASK: **What do you think Jesus wanted them to learn from this?**

Read John 13:12-15.

ASK: After hearing what Jesus said, what do you think He wanted his disciples to learn from this? What can we learn from this?

SAY: Jesus didn't boast or do things to make Himself look better than everyone else. Instead He humbled himself. He put others before Himself and in so doing, He gave us an example of how to treat and serve others.

ASK: What is one way that you can put others ahead of yourself this week?

Consider the follow ideas:

- Let your brother or sister have first choice at something, even when it's your turn.
- Give someone your place in line and go to the back.
- Help someone in a way that you wish someone would help you.

SAY: While we talk about our key verse, be thinking of other ways you can put others ahead of yourself.

Leader: *How should you be?* / Students: *Just Like Jesus!*

KEY VERSE

ASK: What makes a person great? (Take a few answers.)

Choose two good listeners—one boy and one girl—who are willing to take their shoes and socks off!

Reveal your pans of Jell-O with large marshmallows inside. Call up your two volunteers for each pan and have them sit in a chair and remove their shoes and socks. *(NOTE: You will want to lay down some sort of floor covering such as a large trash bag or a painter's sheet.)* When you say go, using only their toes, they will try to remove from the pan and set aside as many marshmallows as they can.

When the competition is done, have them remain sitting in their chairs with dirty feet...

SAY: Imagine what the disciples might have been thinking when they entered the house. Obviously no one washed their feet. So there they were—all sitting around with dirty feet. Who should wash them? Who was the least disciple? Maybe John, some might have thought—After all, he was the youngest. Maybe James—He was a fisherman. That's kind of a dirty job. But none of them wanted anyone to look at them as being less than everyone else. They were each giving up an opportunity to do good because they wanted everyone else to know how great they were. They each wanted to be the greatest, not the least. And they did this even after Jesus had told them how to truly be great.

Let your volunteers wipe their feet and go to the bathroom to get cleaned up if necessary.

SAY: This brings us to the search for today's key verses. On the marker board there is a blank for each word in each verse. We'll take turns letting you guess words and see how quickly you can solve each.

The two verses are below. Let your kids guess words. As they guess, fill in words for each verse. Give them hints if they get stuck.

Luke 9:48—"For whoever is least among you all, this one will be great"

1 John 2:6—“He who says he remains in him [Jesus] ought himself also to walk just like he walked”

SAY: I mentioned that Jesus had already told the disciples how to be great. Listen to this...

Read Luke 9:46-48.

ASK: What did Jesus say makes a person truly great?

SAY: Jesus taught whoever is the least will be the greatest. Jesus also showed this by washing the disciple's feet. Jesus put others before Himself. Now it's our turn to be just like Jesus. 1 John 2:6 says if you say you are in Christ, then you should “walk” or live in the same way that Jesus did.

Control Tool: Leader: *How should you be?* / Students: *Just Like Jesus!*

Dismiss to Small Groups

SAY: Right now it is time for our small groups, so I'm going to dismiss you one row at a time. *Dismiss rows of chairs to the tables in the rooms. Give them specific directions where to go.*

SMALL GROUP

OPTION #1—Craft

Jesus served others in today's lesson. To give our students a reminder for them to serve others, they are going to make their own personal aprons. These aprons will need to stay at church to dry until next week. Each student will be supplied with a blank canvas apron. Their job is to create a picture using fabric paint and markers to remind them of how Jesus lived. (A variety of items will be available for this including many permanent items. If your students use these items, some younger children may need to wear smocks. Also, if you choose to use non-permanent items for your students' designs, be sure to tell them that these will wash off when they get dirty and are cleaned. Then after their apron is washed, they can create another design on it.) Tell your students to wear their aprons when they help in the kitchen or even with projects in the garage. Help them consider ways that they can serve others at home.

NOTE: This activity may take your students more than one week, depending on how much time you allow.

OPTION #2—Activity

OLDER STUDENTS—

(1) Help your students consider ways that they can serve others at home.

(2) Help your students consider ways your class can serve others.

In small groups have your students brainstorm ways that your class can serve others. Here are few suggestions:

- Collect canned food or peanut butter for people in need.
- Make cards for elderly church members.
- Make prayer card for people you are praying for.
- Make balloon animals to be delivered to children's hospital.
- Other ideas...

Have your class choose a simple project to do next Sunday, but also begin thinking about ways that your class can help others as spring approached. For example: Would your class...

- Like to plant flowers for some senior adults
- Do yard work for people who are elderly or in bad health
- Deliver breakfast or dessert to the local police and fire stations
- Other ideas to serve and help others in our church and community...

(You can also ask them how they can share Christ through these opportunities.)

~NOTE: Please let Kolby know your ideas for the future so he can help to organize matters. Please let Michelle know if you will need certain items for next week or feel free to pull them out of the resource room.

OPTION #3—Small Group Discussion

(NOTE: Each week in this series, we will be giving discussion questions from Psalm 23. Use these as a springboard for deeper discussions and pull in questions from each individual lesson also.)

PSALM 23—part 3

He guides me— after sheep rested in the heat of the day and had water and food, they would many times begin to move towards the sheepfold in which they would spend the night. The shepherd would make sure the sheep stayed on the right path. The most dangerous time for a sheep to get lost was before dark. How does God guide you to stay on His path, walking in His ways? If a sheep began to stray, the shepherd would tap them with

his staff or even hook them with it to pull them back. How does God move in ways to keep you living right for Him? If a sheep was particularly rebellious, the shepherd would break one of his legs—Why do you think a shepherd did this? How do you feel about this? Then the shepherd would carry the sheep on his shoulders. While it healed, it would learn to depend on him and it would develop a very special relationship with the shepherd. By the time it returned to the flock, it was usually loyal and stayed close to the shepherd. What lessons can we learn from this? How does God in some ways act like this? How do we?

in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. —Why does God desire to keep us living right for “His name's sake”? How do you represent His name? On a scale of 1 to 10, how well do you represent His righteousness? Are there actions in your life that are un-righteous? If so, what might these be? What is your greatest struggle in your walk with Christ? On a scale of 1 to 10 (10 being perfect), how righteous are your words? On a scale of 1 to 10, how righteous are your actions? On a scale of 1 to 10, how righteous are your thoughts? What do you think God would tell you about these actions? On a scale of 1 to 10, how righteous is your favorite TV show? What are influences in your life that lead you toward His righteousness? What are influences in your life that lead you away from His righteousness? What is one thing you could do to become more righteous (more like Jesus, who is perfect)?

Prayer—Take prayer requests and pray with your students.

EXTRA TIME

Play the “Simon Says Squirt-It-Out” game again.