

Junior Soldiers

Unit 2 : Lesson 7



'Jesus the servant King: What an example!'

PURPOSE : For children to understand that to be like Jesus doesn't mean to live like a king, it means to live like a servant. This is a lesson about humility and serving.

Consider & Prepare

Read:

John 13:1–17

Philippians 2:5–11

JESUS: THE SERVANT KING

The last night of Jesus' earthly ministry was very eventful. He prayed His great High Priestly prayer (recorded in John 17), taught His disciples many valuable truths, observed the Passover meal with His disciples and was betrayed into the hands of His enemies. Through all of this, Jesus knew that in the morning, He would go to Calvary and die on a cross for the sin of humanity. However, before He began the events of the evening, before they came to the table to eat their last meal together, Jesus took some time to teach these men a lesson in servanthood that still speaks to us today. In these scenes, Jesus revealed His heart and His mission. He proved to the disciples that He did not come to be served, but to serve (Mark 10:45).

In showing Himself to be a servant of men, Jesus left us a vivid portrait of the kind of heart we are to have for others. In the Bible passages above, we find out that God's will for our lives is that we learn to give ourselves in service to others. As you look into these verses, let the Lord speak to your heart as you prepare to teach this lesson to the young people. Let's consider 'Jesus: The Servant King'.





What you will need:

For 'Connecting In'

- Two big bowls and two towels for feet-washing relay.
- Coloured cards (postcard size) printed with the template for the 'pay it forward' coupons.
- Ice, if you choose this option

For 'The Main Thing'

- A very large plasticbag filled with dirt and sand and a tarp.

For 'Tying In'

- Water
- A towel to wash someone's feet

For 'Home & Beyond'

- Print off the Home & Beyond cards for each child.



Connecting In

Foot-washing relay...

- Have two big bowls with water and towels and a seat to sit on.
- Have two teams and hold a relay race to see which team can wash and dry everyone's feet first.
- To make it more interesting, you could put ice in the bowls of water.

Link: We have just been playing a fun game of washing feet. Even though for us, today, it has been fun, this was something that people had to do quiet often in Jesus' time. We are going to look a little more closely at: the practice of washing feet; who would do it; and what Jesus taught us about this in his words and actions.

'Pay it forward' coupons...

Supplies needed: Colored card printed and cut using the template supplied

- Explain to the kids what a 'pay it forward' coupon is. You may want to mention the movie from 2000 that popularized the idea. 'Paying it forward' is a reference to initiating a good deed rather than repaying a good deed with another. It is pro-active rather than re-active. For the children, it may mean doing something good without being asked to, or doing someone a favour.
- Give the children at least six cards that they are to complete.
- Invite children to write on the blank side of the card a different idea on each. (*Examples: making the bed, taking out the rubbish, setting the table, feeding the pet, and helping _____.*)
- Talk to them about things that they aren't usually expected to do as chores that they could do as a gift, as a way of serving their parents, grandparents, neighbours etc.

Link:

What do you think it means to 'pay it forward'?

I wonder what serving others really looks like?

Is our attitude important when doing something for other people? Why/why not?

Do you know someone who sets a good example of someone who serves others well? Give examples.

Today we are going to look at the example that Jesus set for us about serving others and the attitude that we should have when behaving this way.



The Main Thing

Walking on the streets ...

(Set up the space for this experience - dirt or sand on a tarp - get all the children to stand on the tarp with their eyes closed.)

Say: I want you all to close your eyes and imagine you are in Israel in Jesus' day. Picture the hot, dusty, dirty streets. Picture camels and donkeys walking alongside men and women as they go about their day. Now, imagine that you are among these people, walking the streets with only sandals, or nothing at all, on your feet. Have you ever been to the beach and felt the sand between your toes? (*wiggle your toes in the sand on the tarp*) Imagine that feeling again if there was garbage or animal waste on the ground (*transport by donkey or horse was common in Jesus' day*) that you may have accidentally stepped in. Do you think this might feel (*and smell*) really, really bad? If you were invited to be a guest in someone's house, would you want to go into your friend's home with your feet that filthy? Would you be able to enjoy a meal with that terrible feeling and smell? I know I couldn't.

You can open your eyes now. How did you feel?

Say: Today, I need a volunteer who doesn't mind getting a little dirtier. **Choose a volunteer. If nobody wants to get dirty, reassure them that they will be clean again by the end of the activity.**

(*For this part you will need a strong garbage bag filled with dirt and sand, another bag that is pretty smelly and something to add to the mix that will make it squishy, maybe just some water to make it muddy.*)

Say: Thanks for being a brave volunteer! Now, you get to experience what a mild version of that yucky feeling we were talking about might be like. I've filled this bag with dirt and sand, similar to what you might find on a street in Jesus' day. What I need you to do is stand in this bag until your feet are really dirty. **Put the bag on the floor and have the Junior Soldier stand in the dirt. Encourage them by saying things like, 'Don't be shy! Really work that dirt in!' or 'Come on! You call that dirty?' Add the smelly substance to add to the experience and then add the item that will make the mix squishy. Once the volunteers feet are nice and dirty, have him sit down and show the class how dirty their feet are.**



Tying In

Group Discussion...

Read John 13:1-17

Say (while washing the volunteer's feet): This is a little like what the last supper would have been like, except the disciples' feet would've been much, much dirtier. Now, you can see that this is pretty gross, but Jesus washed all twelve of His disciples' feet! This task was usually left up to the lowest, most humble servant in the house. But Jesus, the Son of God who created the entire universe with just a few words, performed this disgusting, lowly task not once, but twelve times! This kind of humility is very hard to imagine.

- Think about someone famous that you look up to and would like to me.
- Can you imagine them coming to your house and washing your feet so that you could have dinner? Or coming to your house and cleaning your bathroom so that it was nice for you to have a shower?
- I am sure it would feel pretty weird having them come and serve you in this way, but even this sort of example takes nowhere near the amount of humility that Jesus had.



In verse 15, Jesus says that He has set an example for us.

- I wonder what he meant by that?
- How is what Jesus did an example for us to follow? Do we need to go around and wash everyone's feet? What might it look like for us today?
- Read 1 Corinthians 13:1–3. What does love have to do with our service to others?
- Is there something that stands out to you from either of the readings?

(We are to have the same kind of incredible humility that He had. This is because, as Jesus says, in verse 16, we, as servants, are not greater than our master, Jesus. So if our master, who is greater than us, had the humility and meekness to wash His disciples' feet, we should be more than willing to do the same for others around us. We are to show humility and serve others, just like Jesus did.)

Prayer: Ask Jesus for the kind of humility and the right attitude of love when serving others that He has, and that He will help each Junior Soldier serve and be humble each and every day.



Home & Beyond

Print off the Home & Beyond cards attached. The children might like to keep these in their journal or notebook where they could write or stick the challenges, reflect, answer questions or complete activities each week.

- Encourage the Junior Soldiers to use some of their 'pay if forward' coupons at home during the week.
- Encourage the Junior Soldiers to share with their family or Big Bud the example that Jesus set and how he served others.
- Send home some extra, blank coupon cards. 'Encourage members of your family to choose some ways that together you can serve others.'

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And if your Lord and teacher has washed your feet, you should do the same For each other:
I have set the example, and you should do For each other exactly what I have done For you.
John 13:14-15



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