

Family Lesson 66

Principle: Leadership is shown in serving.

Bible Character(s): Jesus and the disciples

Scripture Reference: John 13: 1-17

1. Worship - Choose your favorite songs from the [Spotify playlist](#) found on the curriculum resource page. Have fun, sing loudly, and follow along with the motions!

2. Bible Lesson - Read through the lesson with your family. The bold font is meant to be read aloud along with the Scripture references.

Bible Lesson

Parents, place a white towel or napkin over your arm as a waiter or server would do. Ask your child who you remind them of. As they throw out answers, make sure you guide them if needed to help them to see you as a waiter, butler, server, etc. Next, ask them what this type of person does, or what type of role this person has. Allow them to give their answers and ideas, but make sure to help them understand that a waiter/server's role is to serve by putting others above themselves.

Today, we will look at ways we can serve others, examine the cultural context of foot washing, and challenge your child to follow Jesus' example of serving others through humility.

Last week, who did we learn about? (The Good Samaritan.) **Why did Jesus use the parable of the Good Samaritan?** (Jesus used this parable to show us how we are to love everyone, including people who are different from us.) **We also read the verse John 15:13, "There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends."** **There are people like police officers and firemen who might be called to give their lives for others, but most people are not in that situation. We are still called to love others by serving them.**

Today, we are going to read in John 13 to see how Jesus loved and served his disciples. Before we begin reading, let's look at something that the Israelites would do before they ate.

Would your feet get dirtier walking on dusty roads if you wore flip-flops or regular shoes? (Allow responses.) **In Jesus' time, the Israelites walked a lot. They wore sandals when they walked, so their feet would get very dirty. When the Israelites came home, they would wash their feet, especially before a meal. Normally, a servant would wash the feet of guests. It was very unusual for a teacher to wash the feet of his disciples. Can you imagine what it would be like to wash someone else's dirty feet? Would you want to do that? Why or why not?** (Allow responses.)

Let's begin our reading of the Bible in John 13 [NLT].

John 13:2-5

² It was time for supper...³ Jesus knew that the Father had given him authority over everything and that he had come from God and would return to God. ⁴ So he got up from the table, took off his robe, wrapped a towel around his waist, ⁵ and poured water into a basin. Then he began to wash the disciples' feet, drying them with the towel he had around him.

It says in verse 3 that Jesus has "authority over everything." Jesus does not have to do anything. He is God! But Jesus chooses to wash his disciples' dirty feet. Why do you think he does this? Why would he choose to do something so disgusting? (Allow responses.) **Jesus is serving his disciples. He is showing us how to be a good leader, and how to love others. Jesus chooses to do a dirty job that others would not want to do to serve those around him. In order to follow**

Jesus, we must also be willing to serve people around us.

Let's continue reading the Bible to see how the disciples respond when Jesus washes their feet.

John 13:6-8a

⁶ When Jesus came to Simon Peter, Peter said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"

⁷ Jesus replied, "You don't understand now what I am doing, but someday you will."

⁸ "No," Peter protested, "you will never ever wash my feet!"

Why do you think Peter does not want Jesus to wash his feet? (Allow responses.) Peter does not want Jesus to wash his feet because he knows that Jesus is his teacher; Jesus is in authority over Peter, and Jesus is the Lord God over everything. Peter does not think it is right for Jesus to lower himself and do a dirty job that is usually done by servants. But Jesus chooses to do that because he is giving the disciples an example of how to serve others. He is showing them how they can serve even when they are in authority over others.

Let's continue reading the Bible to see what else Jesus says about washing their feet.

John 13:8b-10

Jesus replied, "Unless I wash you, you won't belong to me."

⁹ Simon Peter exclaimed, "Then wash my hands and head as well, Lord, not just my feet!"

¹⁰ Jesus replied, "A person who has bathed all over does not need to wash, except for the feet, to be entirely clean. And you disciples are clean, but not all of you."

Jesus continues to talk to the disciples. He tells them that they need him to wash them. He does not mean just to clean their feet, but also to clean their hearts. We need to admit that we are sinners, repent of our sin, and ask for healing so that Christ can cleanse our hearts.

As a family, gather: a bowl, jug/pitcher of water, and a hand towel. Explain to your child that they are going to have the opportunity to wash someone else's hands. Tell them you will begin, and each person will wash the hands of one other person in your family.

Just like Jesus washed the feet of his disciples, we just had the opportunity to serve one another by washing each other's hands. How did it feel to wash one of your family member's hands? (Allow responses.) How did it feel to have your hands washed? (Allow responses.) Our hands were dirty before they were washed. When one of your family members washed your hands, he or she cleaned the dirt off them and washed the grime away. Jesus washed the disciples' feet to get them clean, and also to show them that they need him to clean their hearts as well. Sin can be thought of as dirt on our hearts. We need Jesus to wash away our sin and make our hearts clean. Just as water washes away dirt from our hands, Jesus' blood cleans the sin from our hearts if we repent of our sin. We need to spend time with God daily and turn away from our sin so that he can clean our hearts.

Let's continue to read the Bible to see what Jesus said about serving others.

John 13:12-15

¹² After washing their feet, he put on his robe again and sat down and asked, "Do you understand what I was doing?" ¹³ You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and you are right, because that's what I am. ¹⁴ And since I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other's feet. ¹⁵ I have given you an example to follow. Do as I have done to you."

Jesus did not say to do "what" he did; he says to do "as" he did. We do not have to wash everyone's feet in order to serve them. Jesus wants us to serve others. We can choose to put others first, just as Jesus did for his disciples, in order to serve them. We are called to serve

others, even when this means that we do things we do not like to do, or when we do things that we think are beneath us.

God wants us to follow Christ's example and serve those around us. Jesus calls us to serve others. He gave us an example of how we can serve those around us by lowering himself and putting others' needs before his own. People around us can see Jesus' love in us when we serve them.

Prayer

Spend a few minutes in prayer to close your family time. Ask God to help you have a humble heart to serve others by putting them first instead of yourself.

Activity

Serving

The purpose of this activity is to give practical ways of serving in humility and to examine ways in which your child can serve others.

Supplies:

Scenarios and Examples of Serving Others Guide (found on [GCK Resource Page](#))

On the scenarios side, read through the scenarios and ask your child how they could serve others in each situation. Allow them to come up with ideas of how they can serve and give guidance only if needed.

There are many different ways to serve those around us. We should be looking for how we can serve others every day. When we see a chance to serve someone else, we should do it. Jesus saw the chance to serve his disciples when he washed their feet. So he did it. Sometimes serving can be hard; to serve someone, we have to do something that is not always fun, or seems beneath us. God wants us to serve those around us, especially when we think we should not have to do something because we are older or better than those around us. Jesus is the Son of God, but he chose to put himself below his disciples and do the job that a servant or slave would normally do by washing their feet. God wants us to serve our brothers, sisters, parents, teachers, friends, and even people we do not know.

On the "Examples of..." side of the guide, act out how you could potentially serve others in each situation.

Every day, we have many opportunities to serve others by putting them first. God wants you to recognize different chances throughout each day that you can put someone above yourself. It may be letting someone go before you in line, holding a door for someone, or sharing what you have with someone else. If you believe and trust in Jesus, you are a follower of Christ. You can be like Jesus by loving others through serving them. What are some other ways to serve others that you can think of? (Allow responses.)

