

Day 4

## **Saved to Serve**

### **Focus Question**

How does Jesus set an example of service?

### **Theme Statement**

Through the death on the cross, Jesus sets a humble example of servanthood. Jesus saves us and sends us out to serve.

### **Objectives**

This Bible study will help campers and their leaders:

- realize that their call to service points to Jesus
- experience the cross as a sign of servanthood
- consider Jesus' example of humble service

### **Bible Text**

John 13:1-17, 34-35 (Jesus' Washing of the Disciples' Feet)

### **Key Verse**

“So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. . . . I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.” John 13:14, 34

### **Materials**

Deck of cards, paper, tape, pencils, magazines, glue, markers, sticky notes.

### **Gather**

Choose one or two campers to serve as directors for the daily gathering activity. Prior to the Bible study, the counselor will need to teach the opening activity to the directors for the gathering activity in order to allow them to facilitate the activity with the Bible study group. Choose one or two of the following activities to encourage campers to consider the theme for the day, *Saved to Serve*.

### **King or Servant**

Play this version of the popular card game “President.” Rules for the card game can easily be obtained online. This game is played by attempting to trump the previous players and gain the title of highest social ranking. Traditionally, the top two players are given desired titles (for example, President and Vice President) and the bottom two losing players are given less desirable roles (for example, Dirtbag). Those in the middle are considered common people. Rather than utilizing the traditional titles for the various roles, use the following: *King* and *Prince* for the top tier, *Commoners* for the middle people, and *Butler* and *Lowest Servant* for the bottom tier. Play two or three rounds of the card game.

After the game, introduce the day's theme. In today's Bible passage, Jesus washes the disciples feet. What would it be like if your teacher were to come and wash your feet? Jesus was the master, the king, the teacher, yet here in today's lesson, we find him taking

on the role of the lowest servant by washing the dirty, nasty, smelly feet of the disciples. In this simple act of service, we are given both an example of and a call to a life of service.

### **Guess Who**

Prior to this activity, write down the following identities on five different sheets of paper: Slave, President or Prime Minister, Jesus, Movie Star, American Idol. Without showing campers the identities, tape the papers on five of the campers' backs. The campers' goal is to ask yes or no questions of the remaining campers to guess the identity taped on their back. After the activity, discuss:

- What questions helped you guess you were the president or prime minister?
- What questions helped you guess you were a slave? How about Jesus?

Many times, various stereotypes or preconceived notions will provide clues which aid in the correct identification. In today's Bible lesson, we see that our preconceived notions or stereotypes are blown away. Just as we pinpoint particular characteristics for a movie star or American idol, we may have different attributes for a slave or for God's own son, Jesus. Although Jesus came to the earth in the form of God, Jesus took the form of a slave, giving us a humble example of servanthood.

### **Word**

#### **Model of Servanthood**

Engage campers in a conversation on role models. Invite campers to share about someone whom they look up to, someone who has been a role model in their own life. As a counselor, have an example ready to share to get the discussion going. After campers have had adequate time to share, have campers stand in the middle of your meeting space. Explain that you will be reading off names of people who are role models for some people. Ask them to choose whether or not they view the person as a personal role model in their life. Thus, if the person you name is a role model, they should move to the right side of the area. If not, move to the left side of the area. If the camper is unsure who the person is, they can sit out that round. Use the following list of names, or create your own list of celebrities and other well-known people:

- Brittany Spears
- Brett Favre
- Wayne Gretzky
- The President of the United States
- Miley Cyrus
- Mother Teresa
- Peyton Manning
- Martin Luther King Jr.
- Kobe Bryant
- Jesus
- Steve Nash

In the day's scripture lesson, we learn that Jesus sets an example of service. He provides a role model for us of humble servanthood.

Have campers open their Bibles to John 13:1-17, 34-35. Take some time to consider the setting of the scripture lesson. Jesus and the disciples are in a private room. Earlier, Jesus

had instructed Peter and John to prepare the last meal for Jesus and the disciples. Explain that during this time period, it was customary for the servant of the house to wash the feet of the guests. However, Jesus and his disciples were not guests in any home, so there was no one to take on the menial task of the washing of the feet. As a result, we see that Jesus took on the role of servant in this lesson.

Read the scripture lesson while encouraging campers to identify with someone in the lesson. Campers may choose to put themselves in the place of Jesus, Simon Peter, or the other disciples. After reading the scripture, ask these questions:

- For those of you who identified with Simon Peter, what did you notice?
- For those of you who identified with Jesus, what did you notice?
- For those of you who identified with the disciples, what did you notice?

Ask one or two campers to serve as expert witness(es) for the day to help summarize the scripture lesson. Encourage campers to reread the scripture lesson and ask questions about the passage.

Make sure the following questions are included:

- What did Jesus do in this reading? (*Jesus took on the job of a household servant, washing the feet of his disciples.*)
- What does it say Jesus knew prior to engaging in the act of service? (*Verse 1- He knew he would be leaving soon. Verse 3- Jesus knew that he had come from God and was going to God.*)
- Why do you think that it was important to include verse 3 in the Bible? (*Jesus' ministry and service were all rooted in his relationship with God.*)
- Think about the feet. What do you think they were like? (*They were dirty. People in those days didn't have the latest shoes or nice paved roads. People during Jesus' time wore sandals and walked along dirt paths, much like camp.*)
- What was Peter's reaction to Jesus?
- When Jesus finished washing, what did he do? (*He told the disciples to follow his example.*)

In this passage, Jesus took the role of a lowly servant and washed the disciple's feet. It says that Jesus knew that all things were from God and that he was going to God. He knew his time was short and chose to use his time to share love and point the disciples towards God. Likewise, we are commanded to love one another and serve just as Jesus served his disciples.

- What do you think Jesus meant by that? (*Jesus showed love through the washing of the feet. He loved the disciples so much that he cleaned their smelly feet.*)
- What does it say in verses 34-35?
- How can you and I answer the command in verses 34-35? Do you think we can "live up" to it?

### **Message Mania**

During this activity, campers will create a collage to represent Philippians 2:3-8. Provide campers with old magazines, glue, markers, and paper. Encourage campers to individually create a representation of what our Bible passage either calls us to do or not to do. For many campers, it may be easier to create a collage of what Philippians warns us against (conceit, greed, selfish ambition) than what it instructs us to express (humility). Give campers both options. Have campers read Philippians 2:3-8 and create their own collage.

- What does this passage say about our own actions in verse 3-4? (*Do nothing from selfish ambition but be humble and regard others as better. Look to the interests of others.*)
- How do your collages address these verses?
- How does this play out? Is this really possible when you think of your relationships with friends?
- What does this say about Jesus as a role model? (*He took the form of a slave and humbled himself to the point of death on the cross.*)
- How do your collages address Jesus' example?

When we look around at the world, hundreds of messages are sent our way about the ways we should act. When we look at a magazine or television advertisement, we are told we have to have the latest name brand of jeans, the cell phone with all the extra gadgets, and/or the latest version by Nintendo or Xbox. This passage says to look past the ways of the world, look past our own selves, and focus in on the needs of others. While Jesus was God, he took on a role of a human, a slave. Jesus served the ultimate act of service to free us from the wages of sin and death. By freeing us from our own sin, we are saved to serve.

### **Serve**

During this activity, campers will experience washing another person's feet just as Jesus knelt to wash the feet of the disciples. Read John 13:34-35 to remind campers of their call to step out and serve in love. As a group, walk to a water source on camp land: lake, river, stream, ocean, faucet). Divide campers into pairs, and allow campers to wash one another's feet.

### **Catechism Connection**

Stay close to the water source used in the Serve activity for the next discussion. Martin Luther wrote the Small Catechism to share some explanations for the various parts of our faith. In the Creed, we proclaim the basic tenets of our faith. In the second petition of the Creed, we say that we believe in Jesus Christ. Ask campers to repeat the second article.

- What are we saying when we say we believe in Jesus Christ in the Creed? (*We are affirming the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We are affirming our own salvation as a result of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection.*)
- What does Martin Luther say it means? (Read Luther's explanation of the Second Article.)

As a result of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, we are freed from our own sinful ways and freed to serve. Jesus saves us so that we can step out in service to our neighbor. Have campers pair up with their foot-washing partners. Making the sign of the cross on the forehead of their partner with the water, have campers bless their partners with these words, *Jesus freed you from your sinful ways, and you have been saved to serve.*

### **Closing prayer**

Return to the area of the cross (created earlier in the week with masking tape). Have the prayer leaders invite campers to write prayers on colored slips of paper (or sticky notes) and add them to the prayer cross as an offering to God. Invite campers to write their prayer to God and affix the prayer within the outline of the prayer cross, allowing the writing to show if they'd like the community to share in the prayer or placing the writing towards the wall if they prefer the prayer to remain between them and God. Close the

time of personal prayer with one or two campers chosen to serve as the prayer leaders, who will begin the group in saying a spoken prayer.

After the closing prayer, assign the roles of the directors for the gathering activity, the expert witnesses, and the leaders for closing prayer(s) for the next day's study.