

LESSON 32

Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet

JOHN 13:3-17



BIBLE TRUTH

ONLY THOSE WHO ARE WASHED BY JESUS ARE SAVED

LESSON SNAPSHOT

1. OPENING ACTIVITY AND INTRODUCTION 5 MIN

SUPPLIES: two crowns; apron; wooden spoon

2. BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

SUPPLIES: *The Gospel Story Bible* (story 110)

3. BIBLE STORY DISCUSSION 5 MIN

Where Is the Gospel?

SUPPLIES: Bible (ESV preferred); Review “Where Is the Gospel?” to prepare

4. SNACK QUESTIONS 10 MIN

SUPPLIES: snack food and beverage

5. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5–10 MIN

6. ACTIVITIES AND OBJECT LESSONS (CHOOSE ONE OR MORE) 20–30 MIN

Coloring Activity

SUPPLIES: coloring page for NT Lesson 32—one for each child; markers or crayons

Washing the Disciples’ Feet

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ three basins
- ✓ potting soil
- ✓ water
- ✓ disposable drop cloth
- ✓ towels
- ✓

Puppet Skit

SUPPLIES: a puppet and a helper

7. CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

TOTAL 60–75 MIN

THE LESSON

OPENING ACTIVITY AND INTRODUCTION 5 MIN

In today's lesson the children will learn the importance of servanthood.

Collect crowns for the king and queen and an apron and wooden spoon for the cook.

Line up three volunteers. Have one pretend to be a king, one a queen, and one a servant who cooks for the king and queen. Give them their appropriate props and tell the children their roles. The king and queen should wave at the people in their kingdom (the other children in the class). The cook should stir the soup he or she is making for dinner. Then tell the actors to stop. Ask the class who they think is greater, the king, the queen, or the servant. (They will likely say the king or queen.) Then explain to them that the greatest is the servant, and that is what we are going to learn about in today's Bible story.

Take time to pray and ask God to help each person in the class learn how to be a servant in God's kingdom. Pray for the remainder of the class time before moving forward with the lesson.

BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read story 110, "The Widow's Offering," from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

BIBLE STORY DISCUSSION 5 MIN

After reading the story, use the following questions to involve the children in a discussion:

- **What happened in this story?**
(Jesus washed the disciples' feet.)

- **Why did Peter not want Jesus to wash his feet?**
(In Jesus' day, everyone wore sandals so their feet became dirty. Washing feet was a job for the lowliest servant, not a job for the teacher.)

- **What was Jesus trying to teach the disciples?**
(Jesus was trying to teach the disciples that true greatness is about serving one another, not being better than one another.)

SNACK QUESTIONS 10 MIN

Read Luke 22:24–30. Just before Jesus washed their feet the disciples argued about who was the greatest. While the children are eating the snack, engage them by asking the following questions:

- **How is this story connected to Jesus washing the disciples’ feet?**
(They both happened the same evening. Perhaps the disciples were arguing about who was the greatest and Jesus used the washing of feet to teach them a lesson.)

- **Why would Jesus washing their feet teach the disciples a lesson?**
(He was their teacher and leader. They should have been washing his feet.)

- **What did Jesus tell the disciples they should do?**
(Jesus said they should follow him and wash each other’s feet. What he meant was that they should serve each other rather than argue who is the greatest.)

Where Is the Gospel? _____

How does today’s Bible story fit into God’s greater plan of redemption?

Jesus’ greatest act of service was not washing feet. Paul tells us in Philippians 2:7–8 that our attitude should be the same as that of Jesus who “made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

Jesus—God himself—performed his greatest act of service for us by giving up his life for us. The events in the upper room were pointing ahead to what would soon happen in the crucifixion. It was demeaning for Jesus to wash the disciples’ feet. He was washing away the outward dirt with water and a towel. How much more demeaning was it for him to wash filthy hearts, taking upon himself all our vile sin and shedding his own blood as an atoning sacrifice to wash our sin away?

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5-10 MIN

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult.

ACTIVITIES AND OBJECT LESSONS. 20-30 MIN

Coloring Activity

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ coloring page for NT Lesson 32—one for each child
- ✓ markers or crayons

While the children are coloring, engage them by asking the following questions:

- **What is happening in the picture?**
(Jesus is trying to wash Peter's feet but he is refusing.)
- **Who should be washing feet?**
(The disciples should be the ones to wash the feet, not Jesus.)
- **What is Jesus trying to teach the disciples?**
(The disciples had just been arguing about which one of them was the greatest. Jesus was trying to teach them that the greatest is the one who serves.)

Washing the Disciples' Feet

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ three basins
- ✓ potting soil
- ✓ water
- ✓ disposable drop cloth
- ✓ towels

Fill the first basin with water, the second basin with potting soil, and the third basin with water. Lay the basins in a row on a disposable drop cloth. Have the children form a line to go through the stations. (If you have a large class that would make doing this activity with all the children difficult, or if you would like to limit the mess, pick a volunteer or two from the class and direct the rest of the class to sit down and watch.)

They will wet their feet in the first basin then walk into the second filled with potting soil. The potting soil should stick to the children's wet feet, representing the disciples' dirty feet.

Station yourself at a chair near the third basin. Have them wash their feet and then towel dry them. (You may need to change the water after a few children.) This exercise is simply an attention grabber that will help them remember the story. After you are finished, talk about Jesus' example and review John 13:15–16.

Puppet Skit

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ a puppet and a helper

This puppet skit is designed to show how two people might argue about who is the greatest.

PUPPET: I'll bet my dad is taller than your dad!

HELPER: Your dad might be taller than my dad, but my dad is smarter than your dad!

PUPPET: Your dad is not smarter. Besides, we have a boat and you don't.

HELPER: So who wants a boat anyway. We have a swimming pool.

PUPPET: We go swimming from our boat in the lake, so we don't need a pool.

HELPER: We can go swimming any time of the day and even at night!

PUPPET: We can go boating and swim from the boat whenever we want. Plus we can go fishing too!

HELPER: I'm a better fisherman than you.

PUPPET: You never catch anything.

HELPER: Yeah, well I caught a huge (*spreads arms wide*) bass last summer.

PUPPET: Yeah, well I caught a huger bass and I went to Canada and caught a musky!

HELPER: I can cast my line and get my sinker in a bucket far away!

PUPPET: Well, I could get my line in a bucket from farther away.

HELPER: No, you can't.

PUPPET: Yes, I can.

At this point you (the teacher) comes up and corrects them for arguing. Then turn to the class and ask them how the puppet and helper might serve one another. Perhaps they could take turns going to each other's house and sharing what they

have. Or they could have one outing to the lake to fish and the other outing at night to swim.

CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

Take time at the end of class to thank God for what you learned today. Include parts of your Bible lesson in your prayer as a way for the children to remember today's lesson.

LESSON 32 - JESUS WASHES THE DISCIPLES' FEET

