



# Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet

John 13:1-17

Fifth- and sixth-graders tend to be idealistic. They'd like to follow Christ's example and help make the world a better place, but they're not always sure what they can do. They're often too young for many volunteer opportunities and other service ideas. This lesson can show your students why they're called to serve and how they can serve where they are.



### ► Bible Point


Jesus wants us to serve others.

### Key Verse

"If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all" (Mark 9:35).

### Weaving Faith Into Life


Children will follow Jesus' example as they practice serving others.

LESSON	WHAT KIDS DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
<b>1</b> Getting Started	<b>Opening Ceremony</b> <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Participate in an opening ceremony for the "Olympics of Service" as they identify various ways people serve.	CD player, 5 pieces of poster board, 5 thin dowels, packing tape, markers <b>Teacher Pack:</b> CD, "Olympics of Service" poster 	Hang the "Olympics of Service" poster where kids can see it.
<b>2</b> Bible Exploration	<b>Option 1: Gold Medal Serving</b> <i>(about 25 min.)</i> Read the story of Jesus washing his disciples' feet and act as Olympic judges who determine why Jesus should receive the gold medal of service.	Bibles, Bible Buzz, pens	Tear out the Lesson 3 pages from each Bible Buzz student book.
	<b>Option 2: You're Serving Me?</b> <i>(about 25 min.)</i> Be served by their teacher, hear the Bible story, and discuss what it means to serve and be served.	Bible, basin, washcloth, towel, warm water, Bible Buzz, pens	Tear out the Lesson 3 pages from each Bible Buzz student book.

*Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.*





LESSON	WHAT KIDS DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>3</b> Weaving Faith Into Life</p>	<p><b>A Commitment to Serve</b> <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Choose a service project and commit to completing it during the week, then participate in a closing ceremony.</p>	<p>Bibles, pens, 2 feet of flat ribbon per student, scissors, paper, tape, CD player <b>Teacher Pack:</b> “Gold Medals” sheet, CD, “Olympics of Service” poster</p> 	<p>Separate the “Gold Medals.”</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>4</b> Lasting Impressions</p>	<p><b>Daily Challenges</b> <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God’s Word.</p>	<p>Bible Buzz</p>	
	<p><b>Weaving Faith at Home</b> <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.</p>		

***Bold text** within the lesson is spoken text.*







### Opening Ceremony Supplies

CD player  
5 pieces of poster board  
5 thin dowels  
packing tape  
markers  
**Teacher Pack**  
CD: "Olympic Music"  
(track 6)  
"Olympics of Service"  
poster

### Opening Ceremony Easy Prep

Hang the "Olympics of Service" poster where kids can see it.

## 1 GETTING STARTED

# Opening Ceremony

### What You'll Do ■■■■■■

As students arrive, play the "Olympic Music" (track 6 on the CD). Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went.

Say: **Welcome to the "Olympics of Service"! During the games, you'll be learning more about the history of service, the reasons to serve others, and different ways to serve others.**

Have students form five teams, and assign each team one of the medals from the "Olympics of Service" poster.

Give each team a piece of poster board, a thin dowel, some packing tape, and markers.

Say: **Each of the medals represents a type of service to others or to God. In your team, I'd like you to create a name for an imaginary country and a flag to represent your country. Brainstorm with your team about all of the different ways you can serve within your "country" according to the medal you were assigned. For example, if you were assigned the "Home" medal, brainstorm all the ways people in your country could serve their families. Your ideas might be ways you can serve or ways other people can serve. Include them all on your flag. When you finish, you'll be marching in our very own opening ceremony.**

Give teams a few minutes to work, and then play the "Olympic Music" from the CD again. As the music is playing, encourage teams to walk around the room, carrying their flags. After one lap around the room, have teams sit down, and ask each team to share its flag with the rest of the group.

Say: **Wow! You thought of many different ways to serve others!**

### Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **Why should we serve others?**

Say: ► **JESUS WANTS US TO SERVE OTHERS.** Today we're going to learn more about the ultimate champion of service—Jesus!





## 2 BIBLE EXPLORATION

### Option 1: Gold Medal Serving

#### What You'll Do

Give each team pens, and have them turn to “The Gold Medal of Service” in Bible Buzz. Give each student a Bible. Explain that each team is to act as one of the judges in the Olympics of Service. They can choose to either write a letter explaining why Jesus should be given the gold medal of service or create a skit in which one person interviews a judge about whether Jesus should receive the gold medal and why.

Have teams work through the Bible Buzz section.

When everyone has finished, have each team share its letter or present its skit.

#### Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- If you had been present when Jesus washed the disciples’ feet, what do you think you would have thought about Jesus? Why?
- What would have made you feel this way?
- How do you think the disciples would answer the question “Why should we serve others?”
- How do you think Jesus would answer the question “Why should we serve others?”

Read aloud the Key Verse, Mark 9:35: “If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all.”

Say: **Jesus gave us the ultimate example of what it means to serve others. Washing the disciples’ feet was surely a dirty, maybe even disgusting, chore. And it definitely wasn’t something he had to do. Jesus chose to wash the disciples’ feet to prove a point to them. He wanted them to know that they were to serve each other and people they came into contact with, just as he had served them. And ► JESUS WANTS US TO SERVE OTHERS, too.**

Now that we know why we should serve, let’s identify some other ways we can serve.



#### Option 1: Gold Medal Serving Supplies

.....  
Bibles  
Bible Buzz  
pens

#### Option 1: Gold Medal Serving Easy Prep

.....  
Tear out the Lesson 3  
pages from each Bible  
Buzz student book.





### Option 2: You're Serving Me? Supplies

Bible  
basin  
washcloth  
towel  
warm water  
Bible Buzz  
pens

### Option 2: You're Serving Me? Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 3  
pages from each Bible  
Buzz student book.

## Option 2: You're Serving Me?

### What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Have kids sit in a circle. Without any explanation, take the basin and fill it with warm water. Place the washcloth in the water, and drape the towel over your shoulder. Then gently wash students' hands, one by one. Kids may ask what you're doing. Some may even giggle, but if they do, just smile quietly and continue washing. Answer their questions, but say as little as possible. Make an effort to look directly in kids' eyes as you wash their hands.

When you've finished, set the basin and towel in the center of the circle.

Have kids record their feelings about this experience in the "Hand Washing Reflections" section of Bible Buzz.

### Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What was it like for you to be served by me in this way?**
- **Is it common or uncommon for teachers or other authority figures to serve you? Explain.**
- **Did any of you feel uncomfortable? Why or why not?**
- **Why do you think an experience like this might make someone uncomfortable?**

Say: **What I did when I washed your hands was similar to something Jesus did one night with his disciples. They probably felt some of the same things you did in this experience. Let's take a look at the passage to discover what Jesus did, why he did it, and what his actions tell us about him.**

Read aloud John 13:1-17. As you read, ask kids to keep their eyes on the basin and towel in the center of the circle and think about how they would have felt if they were one of the disciples in the room with Jesus that evening.

Ask:

- **If you had been present when Jesus washed the disciples' feet, would you have let him wash your feet? Why or why not?**
- **Why do you think Jesus washed his disciples' feet?**
- **What does this story tell you about Jesus?**
- **What does this story tell you about what Jesus wants us to do?**

Read aloud the Key Verse, Mark 9:35: **"If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all."**

Say: **I washed your hands today to demonstrate for you the same lesson Jesus taught his disciples in this story. To be great in God's eyes, we must be willing to serve others. Serving others isn't always easy, but it brings God great joy whenever**





we follow Jesus' example. ► **JESUS WANTS US TO SERVE OTHERS.** And when you serve others, you'll discover that it can bring you great joy as well.

Now that we know why we should serve, let's identify some other ways we can serve.

### 3 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

## A Commitment to Serve

### What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Set out Bibles, "Gold Medals" from the Teacher Pack, and pens.

Say: **Jesus wants us to follow his example in the world by bringing his gift of service and love to those around us. There are many different ways and many different places we can serve.**

**I'd like you to choose one area of service from the "Olympics of Service" poster that really appeals to you and is an area of service you're interested in. Then I'd like you to gather with all of the other people who chose the same service area.**

Assign areas in the room for areas of service, and give each group paper.

Say: **In your group, I'd like you to think of as many ways to serve as you can in the area of service that you selected. Think of some ways that you can serve as a group and some ways that you can serve on your own. Have one person in your group write down all of the ideas.**

Give groups a few minutes to discuss their ideas.

Say: **Now I'd like each of you to find a place in the room where you can sit alone. Take your Bible Buzz, a "Gold Medal," and a pen with you. When you're situated, I'd like you to look up the Key Verse, Mark 9:35. Then I'd like you to think of one service idea you'll commit to complete this week. Write your commitment on the back of the "Gold Medal." Then I'd like you to write the Key Verse in your own words to remind you of why we should serve others.**

Give kids several minutes to complete this. Play "Servant of All" (Mark 9:35b) (track 7 on the CD) as they work.

Say: **You're all winners in the "Olympics of Service"! Let's celebrate Christ's achievements in our lives in a closing ceremony.**

Give each student a length of ribbon. Have students tape their partners' "Gold Medals"



### A Commitment to Serve Supplies

- Bibles
- pens
- 2 feet of flat ribbon per student
- scissors
- paper
- tape
- CD player
- Teacher Pack**
- "Gold Medals" sheet
- CD: "Servant of All" (Mark 9:35b) (track 7), "Olympic Music" (track 6)
- "Olympics of Service" poster

### A Commitment to Serve Easy Prep

- Separate the "Gold Medals."





## Daily Challenges Supplies

Bible Buzz

to the ribbons and tie the medals around their partners' necks. Play "Olympic Music" (track 6 on the CD) as they do this.

## 4 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

### Daily Challenges

#### What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **As this week's Daily Challenge, you'll follow through on your commitment from the "Gold Medal" you made.**

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell the kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

#### Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.**

Say: ► **JESUS WANTS US TO SERVE OTHERS. Let's serve by following through on our Daily Challenges this week.**

### Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about serving others. Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their Bible Buzz pages with their families.

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church's families. Available at [group.com/digital](http://group.com/digital).

Close in a prayer, asking Jesus to help your students remember to serve others as he has served them.

