



Date: _____

Series: Advent
Winter Year 3, Lesson 30

Jesus Leads Us by Serving Us

Primary Scripture: Matthew 20:28

Key Verse: Matthew 20:28, “He (Jesus) didn’t come so that others could serve him. He came to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many people.”

How does this address a need in our kids' lives?

With the excitement of Christmas, children are easily fascinated by all the gifts that they might receive. Their focus can easily be on what they get, not what they give. By looking at who Jesus is—the Son of God who gave himself completely for us—we can be transformed into his likeness. We, too, can serve others as Jesus serves us.

How does Jesus fill this need?

Jesus for us: Through Jesus’ death and resurrection, he gives us the forgiveness of our sins. He serves our greatest spiritual need.

Jesus in us: Jesus gives us his attitude of servanthood so that we, too, might serve others.

Jesus through us: Jesus uses our service to others as a way in which we witness for him.

Stamp of Excellence:

Remind the kids what excellent worship looks like. We are in God's presence to honor him. Put on your best manners. This might include wearing your name tag, participating eagerly at all times, listening when the leader is talking, raising your hand to speak, not distracting others, playing the learning game with cooperation, singing enthusiastically, and praying reverently. Offer rewards or positive reinforcement to those who worship with excellence.



Worship

Invocation:

Let kids bring forward the worship symbols such as the cross, candles, Bible, and offering plate. Invite God's presence and call by name Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Attention Grabber:

Capture the children's attention and help them focus on the worship theme for the day.

Supplies needed: a slice of bread, the story "Birds In the Barn" (Appendix pages 7-8.)

Read the story , breaking apart the bread as the father in the story does.

After reading the story, point out the following.

Today's worship helps us understand that God came into this world to guide us to him. He did this by serving us. Jesus served us all the way to the point of giving his life for us on the cross. When we trust in Jesus, our sins are forgiven and he lives in us forever.

Songs of Worship:

Choose two or three songs. Briefly introduce songs so kids can better understand what they are singing and be drawn into a more focused worship. Keep the attention on God!

Your choice of music.

The Power of the Cross:

Jesus has given his life for us that we might have forgiveness and power to live for him.

Ask the kids what presents they want for Christmas. Then ask them what presents they are planning to give for Christmas.

Which list has more presents? Which is easier to think about—the number you are giving or the number you are receiving? Sometimes it is easier to think more about what we get than about what we give.

Jesus says that he came into the world not so others could serve him. Rather, he came to serve and to give his life as a ransom for people.

What ways this last week did we served other people?

Have there been times that we have thought about only what we are going to get rather than what we are going to give?

Let's talk about some of those right now.

Take suggestions from the kids.

Then lead a prayer of confession.

Use Matthew 20:28b as the forgiveness verse.

"He came to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many people."

Explain how a ransom is a payment for letting someone go free. Jesus' death and resurrection were the payment necessary for us to go free and be with God forever.

Song of Response:

Choose a song to help the children turn to Jesus. Or, you may want to help them celebrate what God has done by singing a song of praise.

Offering:

Teach the importance of giving and talk about the mission activities they are supporting.

Place the offering in a manger. Talk about how the manger is a picture of Jesus coming into the world in a very lowly, or humble way. Tie this image to the current mission project.



The Word

Learning Game:

Some churches dismiss children from the adult service at this time to join Kids Church. The learning game provides a fun kinesthetic activity to help kids connect with each other. The learning point will help reinforce the theme of the day.

“Faith Walk”

Blindfold kids and put them in lines of ten. Each child should hang onto the hand of the person in front of him. Give the kids an obstacle course to walk around with the objective to keep from bumping into things. They can be led through various parts of the building or room.

Then say:

As one person follows, he becomes the leader for another. So it is with Jesus. As he is our leader through servanthood, we serve him and become a way that others might follow Jesus.

Bible Presentation:

Help children pay attention by giving them a word or concept to listen for as you read. Consider letting a child read who could do so with excellence.

Read the story, *The Most Important Christmas* by James H. Nelesen and illustrated by Carolyn Ewing Bowser. Although published by Concordia Publishing House in 1985, it is out of print. With permission of the author, pictures can be scanned into Power Point. An excellent prop for the storyteller would be a blue dress that could be pulled out at the very end of the story.

Application:

Ask the following questions about the story:

- **What did Emily expect was going to happen that didn't happen?**
- **Why did Emily think she should get the part of Mary?**
- **Who did get the part of Mary?**
- **How did Emily react when she heard the news that Jennifer Mosconi was assigned the part of Mary?**
- **What did Emily's mom say about Christmas that makes Christmas different from other times of the year?**
- **What did Emily learn through this experience?**
- **What lesson have you learned from this story?**



Witness

Witness and Tell:

Give children opportunities to share how God is working in their lives. It is best to use a microphone to ask children interview questions around the theme for the day.

Have kids describe ways in which they can serve others during the Christmas season. Encourage them to talk about things other than what they can buy for people.

Prayer:

Let the kids pray out loud. If you are using a microphone, invite children to form a prayer line and speak their thanksgivings or requests. If you have portable microphones, you can roam the audience. Kids can also go to prayer stations set up for specific types of prayer.

Blessing:

Speak a blessing prayer over the children. Personalize this to your setting. Use a special scripture verse or blessing around the theme of the day.

Song of Sending:

Choose one song. Briefly introduce song so kids can better understand what they are singing and be drawn into a more focused worship. Keep the attention on God.

Birds In the Barn

There once was a dad who did not believe in Jesus and didn't go to church. He believed that God was out there somewhere, but he did not really believe that Jesus was God's Son. It did not seem to make very much sense to him.

He was not a mean dad. As a matter of fact, he was very kind. He was kind to his wife and their three little girls.

Every Sunday when his wife and daughters asked if he would like to go to church, he politely refused. "No," he said, "I don't really think I can believe what they believe in the church."

On Christmas Eve, his wife and three little girls set off to church without him. He said to himself, "That's okay for them. I'll just spend some time thinking."

He thought all this while peering out the window. He noticed there were several small sparrows in the tree trying to stay out of the bitter cold. That evening the temperature would get well below zero degrees. If the birds could not find some type of shelter, they would probably freeze to death. The dad wished he could help the birds.

"I have an idea," he said. "I'll open the door of my barn. Maybe they will fly in there."

He bundled up in his winter coat and set out into the blistering cold. After he closed the door to the barn, he went back inside to watch and see if the birds would fly inside. Instead, the birds remained fluttering around the barren tree outside his window.

"Surely they will freeze to death," he thought. "Perhaps I can shoo them into the barn."

With that, he bundled up into his coat again and set out into the freezing outdoors. He went behind the birds and waved and shouted. Instead of moving towards the barn, the birds simply flittered up to the roof of the house. It would be even colder up there!

"How can I make them understand?" he thought. "Surely they must know if they go to the barn they can be safe. There they will not freeze."

He had one final idea. He went inside and got a piece of bread. He pulled off pieces of bread and set it outside the door of the barn. He

even put some pieces right inside the barn door. “Surely they will come and eat the bread and then fly inside,” he thought.

Eager to watch the birds’ rescue, he entered inside and peered out the window. The minutes ticked by and still the birds made no flight towards the barn. Maybe they did not see the bread. Maybe they did not trust him. Maybe they thought he was not trying to help them but that he was trying to capture them.

As the minutes rolled by, he thought about what else he could do. He was out of ideas. He thought, “I wish I could become a bird. Then I could lead the other birds into the barn and they would go with me.”

Just then he heard a car drive up to the house. His wife and daughters came running inside, eager to get out of the cold and happy to be home. His littlest girls jumped up to his arms and hugged him.

“I remembered my part!” she said. “I can even say it now.”

“Let me hear it!” her father said proudly.

The little girl recited, “‘The word became human and lived among us.’ Do you know what that means, Daddy?”

“No, what?”

“The word is Jesus, the Son of God, who came down from heaven to earth to be one of us, so he could save us from our sins.”

A tear trickled down her daddy’s face as he realized the truth—God really did send his Son to be a Savior for us.

Supplies

Attention Grabber:

- slice of bread
- “Birds In the Barn,” see appendix

Offering:

- manger

Bible Presentation:

- “*The Most Important Christmas*” by James H. Nelesen and illustrated by Carolyn Ewing Bowser—order from http://www.amazon.com/gp/offer-listing/0570041104/ref=dp_olp_1/104-7648977-6137510?ie=UTF8
- blue dress (optional)

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