



**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Series:** Spring Cleaning  
Spring Year 1, Lesson 54

# Sweep Away Self- Centeredness

**Take Home Point:** \*Sweep away self-centeredness  
— serve others. \*Repeat this phrase throughout the lesson.

**Bible Event:** Galatians 5:13-14

**Key Verses:** Matthew 20:28, “It’s the same way with the Son of Man. He didn’t come so that others could serve him. He came to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many people.”

Galatians 5:13, “...Rather, serve each other through love.”

**We will help kids know:**

- The opposite of self-centeredness is serving others.
- The power to serve comes from the personal experience of how Jesus served them.
- Serving others can be a life-style habit when practiced daily.
- We sweep away self-centeredness by asking for forgiveness through Christ.




**We will help kids feel:**

- Overwhelmed with gratitude at having been served by Jesus in his life given for us.
- Joy in serving others.

**We will help kids do:**

- Examine self-centeredness in their lives as they divide candy among their group.
- Throw away self-centeredness in a game.

# THIS LESSON'S ROADMAP

DESTINATION	PAGE #	DISCOVERIES ON YOUR JOURNEY	SUPPLIES NEEDED
<b>Small Group Warm-Up</b> 	3	Candy is used to show our self-centered hearts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• small candies (<i>three per student</i>)</li> <li>• serving bowl</li> <li>• pieces of paper about three inches by four inches (<i>one per child</i>)</li> <li>• pencil for each child</li> </ul>
<b>Large Group</b> 	4  6  8	<b>Overview</b>  <b>Dramatic Presentation:</b> Shirley Mclean or Stanley Steamer, the Spring Cleaner, sweeps away the self-centered papers from small group as a picture of how Jesus sweeps away our self-centeredness through forgiveness.  <b>Game:</b> Kids then play a game of charades, giving examples of ways to serve others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cleaning costume: jeans, sweats, bandana or sweat band</li> <li>• spray bottle, dust rags</li> <li>• broom</li> <li>• dustpan with a cross on it made from masking tape</li> <li>• act out cards (<i>p. 10</i>) cut apart and placed in a container</li> </ul>
<b>Small Group Application</b> 	4	Kids write down specific examples of self-centeredness and specific examples of service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• pencils or pens</li> <li>• “Sweep Away Self-centeredness” and “Serve Others” photocopied front to back for each kid (<i>p. 11-12</i>)</li> </ul>

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# Small Group Warm Up: 15 minutes



**Purpose:** *Get pointed in the right direction!* Build relationships and help guests feel at ease. Do the learning readiness activity that will point your group in the right direction for the lesson.

**As kids gather:** Listen to memory verses from last week and give coupons for memory verses, remembering to bring your Bible, and bringing a guest

**Supplies:** a bowl of small candy assortment (three per student), pencils and pieces of paper about 3 inches by 4 inches for each kid

Place the entire assortment of candy in a big bowl set in the middle of the group. Say:

**Here is some candy. Take what ever you would like.**

While the students are selecting their candy ask the following question:

**What were you thinking when I said you could take whatever you would like?**

**How did you determine how much to take?**

**Did anyone feel like they did not get their fair share?**

**Think about a recent time when someone was self-centered and did something to you that you didn't like. For example, maybe they were selfish and didn't share, or did something that left you out because they were thinking only of themselves.**

Discuss and see how quickly the stories emerge. Hand out the pieces of paper and say:

**Now let's think about a recent time when you were self-centered or selfish. Please write this down on the paper. Keep these papers because we will use them again in large group.**

**Which do you think was easier to remember? A time when you were hurt by someone else's self-centeredness, or when you hurt someone else with your self-centeredness? (Most likely they will see that it is easier to recall the times when someone else was self-centered.)**

**Why do you think it is easier to remember others' self-centeredness rather than our own? (We are by nature selfish people, and it is easier to see others' faults rather than our own.)**

**Today we will learn to *\*sweep away self-centeredness and serve others.***

Have kids take their papers to large group.

# Large Group Overview: 20-30 minutes



**Purpose:** *Help kids observe what the Bible says. Present the Bible event in creative fashion. Help kids begin to interpret what it means.*

**Dramatic Presentation:** Shirley Mclean or Stanley Steamer, the Spring Cleaner, sweep away the self-centered papers from small group as a picture of how Jesus sweeps away our self-centeredness through forgiveness.

**Game:** Kids then play a game of charades giving examples of ways to serve others.

# Small Group Application: 20-25 minutes



**Purpose:** *Help kids map out the meaning of the Bible event in their lives. Use the questions to stimulate discussion, but don't feel tied to them. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide you. Include personal examples from your own faith journey. The example of Christ at work in your life will leave lasting impressions of how Christ can work in the children's lives.*

*Use your Bibles! Children need to learn how to look up references and follow along when scripture is read aloud. Allow for quality time of prayer at the close of the lesson.*

## Observation Questions: What happened?

Have kids look up Galatians 5:13-14 in their Bibles.

**According to Galatians 5:13, what should we do rather than be self-centered?** *(Serve each other through love.)*

**How should we love our neighbors?** *(Galatians 5:14. As ourselves.)*

**Who is our chief example of selfless giving?** *(Jesus.)*

## Interpretation Questions: What does this mean?

**Our key verse from Matthew 20:28 says, “It’s the same way with the Son of Man. He 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 much was Jesus willing to give up to serve us?** *(His life.)*

Have kids read Galatians 5:13 again.

**Paul was speaking to believers in this verse. How are we free because of Jesus? From what were we freed?** *(We are free from the consequences of our sin. We are no longer slaves to sin nor are we condemned because we cannot perfectly keep the law.)*

**How can someone “turn this freedom into an excuse for our corrupt nature to express itself?”** *(We can fall into the trap of thinking, “It doesn’t matter if I do wrong, I will be forgiven.”)*

### **Application Questions: What does this mean to me?**

**Why should we not take our freedom in Christ so lightly?** *(Because it cost Jesus his life.)*

**Because Jesus is the ultimate example of servanthood by giving his life for us, we should willingly and graciously serve others to show our love back to him.**

#### Application Activity:

*Supplies: “Sweep Away Self-centeredness” and “Serve Others” papers copied back to back for each kid, pens or pencils*

Pass the papers to the students. On the broom/dustpan side, have them write individual examples of their self-centeredness that they want God to sweep away. After a few minutes, have them turn the papers over and write in the dust clouds, specific examples of ways they can serve.

Encourage kids to discuss what they wrote and share their plan of action to implement their service projects. Next week remember to ask kids how well they did. Say:

**Selfless living does not happen by accident, but by purposely and consciously practicing these things until they become habits.**

Conclude with the take home point:

**Today we learned to *\*sweep away self-centeredness—serve others.***

#### Closing Prayer:

Have the students ask forgiveness for the ways they have been self-centered (examples they wrote down). Then have them ask God to help them serve in the ways they wrote down.

# Large Group Presentation: 20-30 minutes

*The presenter for this series will dress for spring-cleaning. This person's name is either Shirley Mclean or Stanley Steamer, the Spring Cleaner. They could be dressed in jeans or sweats with t-shirts. Maybe wear a bandana or sweatband. Add any props that might enhance "Spring Cleaning," for example: spray bottles, rags, and dusters.*

*Each week of this series a different cleaning item will be used.*

*Week one: a broom and dustpan*

*Week two: a duster*

*Week three: a trashcan*

*Week four: a wash bucket*

*The emphasis of this series is to find the power in Jesus Christ through his death and resurrection and replace the traits of our sinful nature such as self-centeredness, disobedience, disrespect, and prejudice with service, obedience, respect, and acceptance.*

*Supplies: broom, dustpan with a cross on it made from masking tape, and act out cards cut apart and placed in a container*

## Let's Spring Clean Dramatic Presentation

### Introduction of Shirley Mclean or Stanley Steamer, the Spring Cleaner

**Hello everyone, my name is Stanley Steamer, the Spring Cleaner (or Shirley Mclean, if a woman). I am an expert cleaner. I don't just clean the stuff on the outside. No way! I am also interested in cleaning the dirt on the inside.**

**How about you? Are you ready for some spring-cleaning in your life? This is one of those necessary things that put our lives back into good order.**

**Did you know that we, by nature or ever since we were born, have a dirty house? Now the house I am talking about is not where you live, but your heart. This is called our sinful nature. The first thought we have is always about ourselves.**

**But, when Jesus lives in our heart, he wants to clean out that old sinful nature and replace it with himself in how we think and live. Let's look at this a little closer.**

## Collect Self-Centeredness Examples

**In your small groups today you wrote down your own examples of self-centeredness. Let's play a little game where I sweep away those areas of self-centeredness.**

**I have a broom as my only defense. Crumple up your little bits of self-centeredness papers into a ball. When I say to begin, you can throw those paper wads at me to see how many I can hit away.**

Divide the room into two groups.

**On the count of three this side of the room will throw their balls at me. Ready? One, two, three, throw.**

After one half of the kids have thrown their paper wads, have the other half throw theirs.

The "balls" will be scattered all over the floor. Pick up a couple examples off the floor and read them.

**Let's open up a few examples of self-centeredness. How many of you would agree that it is very easy to be self-centered?**

## Sweep Away Self-Centeredness

Use the broom and dustpan with the cross on it to sweep away the self-centeredness balls. Then say:

**The only way we can take care of our self-centeredness is to have it swept away by the forgiveness that Jesus Christ offers us.**

***Matthew 20:28 says, "It's the same way with the Son of Man. He didn't come so that others could serve him. He came to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many people."***

**When Jesus came into the world, he did not think of himself. Instead, he thought of you, and he gave his life for you on the cross. He did that because your selfishness needed to be punished. If you were to take what you deserve, it would mean you could never enter God's presence. God, being a Holy God, must punish selfishness.**

**Jesus is the one who took that punishment for you. He took all of your self-centeredness and was punished for it when he died on the cross. When you know Jesus as your Savior and trust in him, that forgiveness is given to you. This is an incredible way Jesus has served you.**

**The way to get rid of self-centeredness is to ask Jesus to forgive you for your acts of self-centeredness.**

Sweep the “balls” into the dustpan and throw them away.

**God will then sweep this sin away to the cross, where it is removed forever.**

**Now you have the power to serve others, instead of yourself.**

### Replace Self-Centeredness with Acts of Service

**The Bible says in Galatians 5:13, “*You were indeed called to be free, brothers and sisters. Don’t turn this freedom into an excuse for your corrupt nature to express itself. Rather, serve each other through love.*” This means that because you are forgiven you are not a slave to your own selfishness anymore. There is freedom.**

**The last part of that verse tells us to “serve each other through love.” So, the opposite of self-centeredness is serving one another in love.**

**We are going to think of examples of loving one another. We will have a contest to show ways in which we can serve others. There will be two teams; girls against the boys. In this contest, one person from each team will take turns acting out a specific action of love that is written on one of these pieces of paper.**

### Contest:

Hold up a container such as a bowl or hat that is full of the act out cards.

Explain that each team will take turns drawing a piece of paper and acting it out. A contestant is given 30 seconds to think about what is printed on the card. If he needs help with the action, he can invite one person from his team to help. When you say, “go,” the contestant will have one minute to act out the action so his team can guess. If it is guessed within the time given, the team will get a point. While moving on to the next team, the contestant who just acted will pick another teammate to act out the next card. Scores are tallied at the end to determine the winner.

Pick a boy and girl to start the contest.

**Girls you will go first. Pick a card. You now have 30 seconds to think about it.**

When 30 seconds are up, say - **Ready, set, go.**

When one minute is up, it is the other team’s turn.



When finished with the contest, say:

**Great job, everyone!! These were some great examples of how each of us can show love to those around us.**

**Let's close in prayer.**

**Heavenly Father, thank you for sweeping away our self-centeredness. We admit that because of our sinful nature, it is easy to only think about ourselves. We thank you that you sent us your Son Jesus. He served us by giving his life for us. Help us now, because you have freed us through your forgiveness, to be like you and serve others as well. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

<b>Do the dishes happily (without complaining).</b>
<b>Send money to help feed a child in another country.</b>
<b>Mow the yard for an elderly neighbor.</b>
<b>Pray for someone.</b>
<b>Share clothes.</b>
<b>Help someone with his or her homework.</b>
<b>Wash the car.</b>
<b>Sit next to someone at lunch that doesn't have a lot of friends.</b>
<b>Tell a person how they can have a friendship with God.</b>
<b>Sing in the choir or with the worship team.</b>
<b>Tell a person how they can have a friendship with God.</b>

# **Sweep Away Self-centeredness**



**Admit our need for forgiveness for these acts of self-centeredness**

# Serve Others

