FOLLOWING JESUS VBS · TEACHER GUIDE · GRADES 1-3

Day 3: Jesus Shows Me How to Love

Serve Like Jesus! | Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet

Bible story	Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet (John 13:1-17, 34-35; Luke 22:24-27)
Memory verse (NKJV)	"For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you." (John 13:15)
Takeaway	Following Jesus means loving and serving others the way He loved and served us.
Daily call	Leader: "Serve" Kids: "Like Jesus!"

Objectives

- Retell the main events of Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet (John 13:1-17, 34-35; Luke 22:24-27).
- Say John 13:15 from memory.
- Name one way to serve others this week.

Materials

- Bible (NKJV) for the teacher and for each student
- Prop for the attention getter: a towel, a basin (bowl), and a pitcher of water
- Copies of today's student lesson and activity sheets (one per child)
- Crayons, pencils, and name tags
- Craft supplies: Coupon template sheet (8 coupons); Crayons or markers; Scissors; Envelope or stapler

Teacher preparation

- Read John 13:1-17, 34-35; Luke 22:24-27 in your own Bible at least twice this week.
- Read the matching "31 Days with Jesus" devotionals at The Preacher's Pen: Day 25: The Lord's Supper (Remembering Jesus); Day 30: "Do You Love Me?" (Renewed Love and Calling); Day 19: Miracles of Jesus (Trusting God's Provision).
- Make copies, prepare craft pieces, and set out the prop before children arrive.

Background for the teacher

- Foot washing was a sign of hospitality (Genesis 18:4; 1 Timothy 5:10) and one of the lowliest servant tasks (1 Samuel 25:41).
- Order of events that night (from the class lesson): Passover begins (Luke 22:15-18), the disciples dispute about greatness (Luke 22:24-30), Jesus washes their feet (John 13:1-17), the betrayer is revealed (John 13:21-30), the Lord's Supper is instituted (Matthew 26:26-29), and the new commandment is given (John 13:34-35).
- Jesus' act was an example of humble service, not a new act of worship. The apostles taught the attitude behind it (Romans 12:10; Philippians 2:3-8).
- Jesus loved His disciples "to the end" (John 13:1), even the one who would betray Him.
- The Lord and Teacher took the lowest servant's job and washed dirty feet (John 13:4-5).
- Jesus gave us an example of humble, loving service to follow (John 13:14-15).
- People will know we are His disciples by our love for one another (John 13:34-35).

Lesson plan (40 minutes)

Time	Segment	What to do
0:00-0:05	Welcome and review	Take attendance. Review yesterday's verse and call.
0:05-0:08	Attention getter	Show a towel, a basin (bowl), and a pitcher of water. Ask the opening question.
0:08-0:18	Bible story	Tell the story from your Bible (script below). Show the coloring page as a picture.
0:18-0:23	Discussion	Ask the discussion questions.
0:23-0:28	Memory verse game	Write the verse on the board. Read it together, then erase one word at a time until the class can say it from memory.
0:28-0:37	Activity sheets	Word search, maze, fill-in-the-blank, matching, coloring.
0:37-0:40	Wrap-up and prayer	Ask, "How will you serve others this week?" Close with prayer.

Attention getter

Show a towel, a basin (bowl), and a pitcher of water. Ask: What is the yuckiest job you have ever had to do? Who usually does the jobs nobody wants?

Bible story

Teach from an open Bible so students see that the story comes from God's word. Use this script as a guide; tell it in your own words.

In Bible times people walked everywhere on dusty roads wearing sandals. When you came into a house, a servant usually washed your dirty feet. It was the lowest job in the house.

Jesus and His twelve disciples gathered in an upstairs room to eat the Passover supper. Jesus knew He would soon go back to the Father. John says Jesus "loved them to the end" (John 13:1). But the disciples had been arguing about which one of them was the greatest (Luke 22:24).

No servant was there, and none of the disciples offered to wash feet. So Jesus got up from supper. He laid aside His outer robe, tied a towel around His waist, and poured water into a basin. Then He began to wash the disciples' feet and dry them with the towel (John 13:4-5).

When Jesus came to Peter, Peter said, "Lord, are You washing my feet?" Then he said, "You shall never wash my feet!" Jesus answered, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me." Peter said, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!" (John 13:6-9).

When Jesus finished, He sat down and asked, "Do you know what I have done to you?" (John 13:12). He said, "You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am" (John 13:13). If the Lord would wash their feet, they should serve one another too.

Jesus said, "For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you" (John 13:15). He also said, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another" (John 13:34). Followers of Jesus love and serve others.

Discussion questions

1. Why were people's feet so dirty in Bible times?
2. Who usually washed feet? Why was it surprising that Jesus did it?
3. What did Peter say to Jesus?
4. What is one way you can serve your family this week?

Review

- Jesus tied a _____ around His waist. (Answer: Towel)
- He poured water into a _____. (Answer: Basin)
- Jesus washed the disciples' _____. (Answer: Feet)
- "I have given you an _____." (Answer: Example)
- Jesus said, "_____ one another." (Answer: Love)

Memory verse activity

Erase-a-word: write the verse on the board, read it together, then erase one word at a time until the class can say it from memory.

Craft (Craft Time): Helping Hands Coupons

Materials: Coupon template sheet (8 coupons); Crayons or markers; Scissors; Envelope or stapler

1. Children decorate coupons such as "I will set the table" or "I will pick up toys."
2. Write John 13:15 on the cover coupon.
3. Cut and staple into a booklet or place in an envelope.
4. Give the coupons to a parent or family member.

Recreation and snack

Game: Servant Relay: teams pass a towel and a dry bowl down the line, each child naming one way to help someone before passing it. Or "Serve the Team": kids carry cotton balls on a spoon to fill a teammate's cup.

Snack: "Towel rolls": rolled fruit snacks or tortilla roll-ups, with a cup of water. Older classes can serve snack to a younger class today. Always check allergy information on registration cards before serving food.

Songs (a cappella)

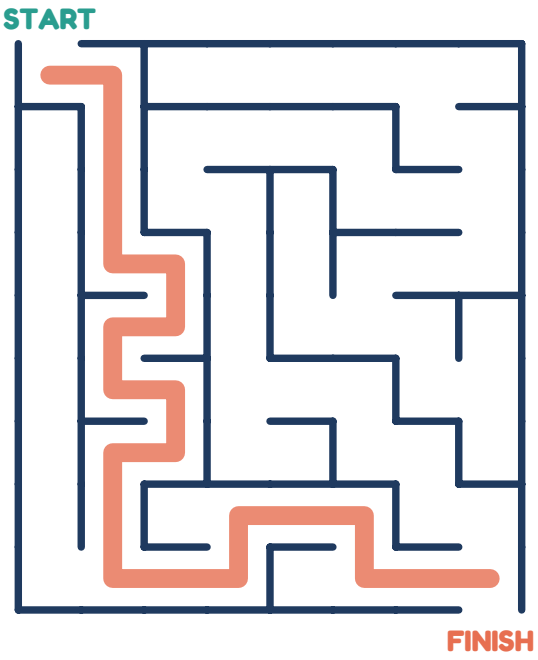
Sing without instruments. Suggested titles: Jesus Loves the Little Children; Oh, How I Love Jesus; Deep and Wide; Footprints of Jesus; Jesus Loves Me.

Answer keys

Word search

C	M	Y	U	P	O	N	V	Q	W
Z	W	A	S	H	D	S	I	M	O
J	L	M	Y	J	H	E	Y	B	Y
O	O	W	A	T	E	R	S	J	F
B	V	V	O	O	D	V	C	H	T
F	E	E	T	W	O	E	B	C	G
W	M	C	S	E	O	A	Y	L	I
Z	A	H	E	L	P	F	H	C	V
R	Y	X	K	I	N	D	S	E	Q
A	R	Z	Z	U	U	H	I	Y	R

Maze



Fill in the blank

1. Jesus tied a TOWEL around His waist.
2. He poured water into a BASIN.
3. Jesus washed the disciples' FEET.
4. "I have given you an EXAMPLE."
5. Jesus said, "LOVE one another."

Matching

- Towel: Jesus tied it around His waist
- Basin: held the water
- Peter: said, “You shall never wash my feet!”
- Example: what Jesus gave us to follow
- Love: the new commandment

Sources for this lesson

- “31 Days with Jesus” by Christopher Gallagher, The Preacher’s Pen: Day 25: The Lord’s Supper (Remembering Jesus); Day 30: “Do You Love Me?” (Renewed Love and Calling); Day 19: Miracles of Jesus (Trusting God’s Provision) (preacherspen.org/courses/31-days-with-jesus/)
- Preaching Library lessons and outlines: Jesus Washes the Disciples’ Feet (John 13:1-20, 2016 class lesson); Love As Displayed By God (1 John 4:7-9)
- Scripture: John 13:1-17, 34-35; Luke 22:24-27. All quotations from the New King James Version (NKJV).