



SERVANT LEADERS

KEY VERSE

"I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you."
John 13:15

BIBLICAL BASIS

Mark 10:43-45; John 13:1-20;
2 Peter 3:18

THE BIG IDEA

Jesus is our example of a servant, and we are to imitate His actions as servant leaders.

AIMS OF THIS SESSION

During this session you will guide students to:

- Examine the concept of servant leadership from the example of Jesus;
- Discover principles of servant leadership found in John 13:1-20;
- Implement a decision to be servant leaders by following the example of Jesus.

WARM UP

FEET GAMES—

A variety of games played with feet.

TEAM EFFORT— JUNIOR HIGH/ MIDDLE SCHOOL

FROG KISSIN'—

A story about changing into being servant leaders.

TEAM EFFORT— HIGH SCHOOL

A SOLDIER AND A PADRE—

A story on the effects of serving others.

IN THE WORD

A FOOT MEETING—

A Bible study on Jesus' example of serving His followers.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT (OPTIONAL)

Questions to get students thinking and talking about servant leadership.

PARENT PAGE

A tool to get the session into the home and allow parents and young people to discuss how they can be servant leaders to each other.



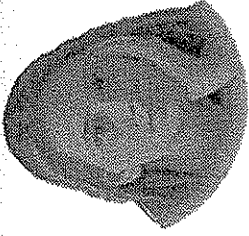
LEADER'S DEVOTIONAL

“Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Mark 10:43-45).

There are a lot of things in this life you most likely won't get rewarded for here on earth. As a Christian and servant leader of Jesus Christ, a lot of your work with young people will probably go unnoticed. You won't hear much applause or see your name in print or find out that you're up for the Nobel Peace Prize. There will be days when you wonder why you spend so much time with teenagers. No one will see when you give Tom a ride home after your youth group meeting for the eighth time in a row. The hours you spend on the phone talking to a kid in crisis won't earn you any frequent listening mileage points. You won't see any trophies for being the youth sponsor of the year. A simple fact of Christian service is that most of your work will, hopefully, go unnoticed. Why? Because that's what being a servant leader is all about.

Jesus talked about not letting your left hand know what your right hand is doing. True greatness in God's kingdom is serving without the need for the praise, approval and recognition of others. It's serving with your eyes on Christ and not yourself. That's not always easy to do. It's natural to want to know that you're making a positive difference in the lives of teenagers. Recognition is the feedback that tells you that you're on target. A simple thank-you is an honest, earthly expression of appreciation. None of those things are wrong; what's important is that we keep recognition in perspective. One thank-you from God will go a lot further than a stadium full of cheering fans. Jesus is your model for giving your life to teenagers. He came to serve and give His life as a ransom for many. As a servant leader, true greatness is waiting for the most important thank-you stored for you in heaven. (Written by Joey O'Connor.)

“If you wish to be a leader you will be frustrated, for very few people wish to be led. If you aim to be a servant you will never be frustrated.”—Frank F. Warren



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KEY VERSE

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BIBLICAL BASIS

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THE BIG IDEA

Jesus is our example of a servant, and we are to imitate His actions as servant leaders.

WARM UP (5-10 MINUTES)

FEET GAMES

• Choose one or more of the following games to play.

1. Shoe relay race: Have all the students take off their shoes. Pile the shoes in the center of the room. Mix up the shoes. Then form relay teams of four people to a team. Let them choose team members with whom they are comfortable. The object of the game is, in a relay race, to find their shoes, put them on and run back to the next person. The team in which everyone has their shoes back on first wins.
2. Foot wrestling: Divide students into pairs. Have pairs sit together without shoes or socks, foot to foot, and lock toes. When the signal is given, students try to "pin" the other persons foot just like in arm wrestling.
3. Foot drawing: Divide students into groups of four. Each team draws a picture using only their feet to draw. Give fun prizes for the most creative, the worst drawing and the most unique.
4. Foot autographs: Divide students into groups of four. Everyone receives a felt-tip marker (the kind that washes off). The group then has two minutes to see how many signatures they can get on their feet.

SO WHAT?

What are specific ways we can humble ourselves and serve others in order to make a difference in their lives?

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THINGS TO THINK ABOUT (OPTIONAL)

- Use the questions on page 69 after or as a part of "In the Word."
- 1. Why does the phrase "servant leadership" seem like words that shouldn't go together?

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2. What are illustrations of how Jesus was a servant leader?

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3. What are ways this group can be a servant to:

a. our families?

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b. our friends?

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c. our schools?

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d. our church?

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e. our neighborhoods?

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f. the world?

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PARENT PAGE

- Distribute page to parents.

Fold

TEAM EFFORT—JUNIOR HIGH/ MIDDLE SCHOOL (15-20 MINUTES)

FROG KISSIN'

- Divide students into groups of three or four.
- Give each student a copy of "Frog Kissin'" on page 63 and a pen or pencil, or display a copy using an overhead projector.
- Students complete their pages.

Ever feel like a frog? Frogs feel slow, low, ugly, puffy, drooped, pooped. I know. One told me.

The frog feeling comes when you want to be bright but feel dumb, when you want to share but you are selfish, when you want to be thankful but feel resentment, when you want to be great but are small, when you want to care but are indifferent.

Yes, at one time or another each of us has found him- or herself on a lily pad, floating down the great river of life. Frightened and disgusted, we are too froggish to budge.

Once upon a time there was a frog. But he really wasn't a frog. He was a prince who looked and felt like a frog. A wicked witch had cast a spell on him. Only the kiss of a beautiful maiden could save him. But since when do cute chicks kiss frogs? So there he sat, an un-kissed prince in frog form. But miracles happen.

One day a beautiful maiden grabbed him up and gave him a big smack. Crash! Boom! Zap! There he was, a handsome prince. And you know the rest. They lived happily ever after. So what is the task of the Church? To kiss frogs, of course.

1. What do you see as the point of the Frog Kissin' story?

2. How does being a servant leader relate to this story?

3. What are specific ways this group can be more effective at servant leadership?

TEAM EFFORT—HIGH SCHOOL (15-20 MINUTES)

A SOLDIER AND A PADRE

- Divide students into groups of three or four.
- Give each student a copy of "A Soldier and a Padre" on page 65 and a pen or pencil, or display a copy using an overhead projector.
- Students complete their pages.

There was a soldier who was wounded in battle. A padre crept over and did what he could for him. He stayed with him when the remainder of the troops retreated. In the heat of the day he gave him water from his own water bottle, while he himself remained parched with thirst. In the night, when the chill frost came down, he covered the wounded man with his own coat, and finally wrapped him up in even more of his own clothes to

save him from the cold. In the end, the wounded man looked up at the padre. Then said the wounded man, "If Christianity makes a man do for another man what you have done for me, tell me about it, because I want it." Christianity in action moved him to envy a faith which could produce a life like that.

1. What do you see as the significance of this story?

2. How does the phrase "If Christianity makes a man do for another man what you have done for me, tell me about it, because I want it" relate to being a servant leader?

3. How can this group be more effective at servant leadership?

IN THE WORD (25-30 MINUTES)

A FOOT MEETING

- Divide students into groups of three or four.
- Give each student a copy of "A Foot Meeting" on page 67 and a pen or pencil, or display a copy using an overhead projector.
- Students complete the Bible study.
- End the Bible study with a feet washing ceremony. Bring out buckets of soapy water and ask each group to wash each others feet. When finished (and don't worry about it not being a solemn ceremony), ask these questions:
What makes it uncomfortable to wash others' feet and have your own feet washed?
Why do you think Jesus washed the disciples' feet?
- Read John 13:1-20.

1. Why do you think Jesus washed His disciples' feet?

2. What lessons did Peter learn from his encounter with Jesus?

3. What is the path of blessing according to John 13:17?

Fold

Team Effort

FROG KISSIN'

Ever feel like a frog? Frogs feel slow, low, ugly, puffy, drooped, pooped. I know. One told me.

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TEAM EFFORT

A SOLDIER AND A PADRE

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Note

1. William Barclay, *The Letter to Romans: The Daily Bible Study Series*, Rev. Ed. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1975), p. 148.

IN THE WORD

A FOOT MEETING

It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love.

The evening meal was being served, and the devil had already prompted Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, to betray Jesus. Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"

Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand."

"No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet."

Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me."

"Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!"

Jesus answered, "A person who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet; his whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you." For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean.

When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things you will be blessed if you do them.

"I am not referring to all of you; I know those I have chosen. But this is to fulfill the scripture: 'He who shares my bread has lifted up his heel against me.'

"I am telling you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe that am He. I tell you the truth, whoever accepts anyone I send accepts me; and whoever accepts me accepts the one who sent me" (John 13:1-20).

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SERVANT LEADERS

ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS

"But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen" (2 Peter 3:18).

How does growing in grace and knowledge of Jesus relate to serving others?

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What are specific ways we can be servant leaders in the home?

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Albert Schweitzer was a person who knew a lot about serving. He was a missionary doctor in Africa. Here's what he had to say about being servant leader: "I don't know what your destiny will be, but one thing I know—the only ones among you who will be truly happy are those who have sought and found how to serve."

Share your impressions of this powerful quote.

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How is this quote similar to the statement of Jesus in John 13:12-17?

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Session 4 "Servant Leaders"
Date