

Volunteering

Dear Facilitator: For several weeks we have been discussing how successful families communicate, support one another, and organize their lives.

How can you make a difference in our world? We know that Christ—through His death and resurrection—redeemed the world, but until Christ comes again, the world still feels the pain and consequences of sin.

Jesus says, in Matthew 25:44-45, “They also will answer, ‘LORD, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?’ He will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.’”

Jesus says that “whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.” Do you find this challenge troubling, or do you find it encouraging?

This week we are going to focus on volunteering (service learning).

It might be helpful for you to know what we hope to accomplish through this lesson. Participants will:


1. Explain why one should volunteer.
2. Identify ways in which a family can volunteer together.
3. State blessings gained through volunteering.

During the past few lessons, we have made commitment statements. This week’s commitment statement is: As a family, we will give not only our money but also our time to the benefit of others.


We pray that God will give you direction and clarity as you prepare the lesson and activities. We hope that the families in your group will grow together in God’s love and become a source of friendship and support for one another.


Blessings


Prior to Meeting

 **Do:** Leaders will need to make copies of Handout 1 (page 10) and Handout 2 (pages 11 & 12).


Welcome *5 minutes*


 **Say:** Welcome back! I hope it's been a good week for all of you as you have been working diligently on many things that are positively influencing your family.


 **Ask:** When you are kind to others, what happens?
One way to be kind to others is to volunteer. Now “volunteer” is a big word. What does it mean?

 **Say:** To volunteer means to freely offer up your time and service to help others.
(<https://www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/volunteer>)

Introduction *5 minutes*

 **Say:** Let's take a few minutes together to read out loud our Family Commitment Statements (read together out loud the previous statements).

 **Ask:** Does volunteering make a difference in the world?

 **Say:** To see how change can make a difference, we are going to do an object lesson. (Adapted from PenniesOfTime.blogspot.)

 **Say:** Do small things really create movement?

If our world was, in fact, water in the sink (tub or bowl), and if each act of kindness was something we dropped in the water, then we have two questions:

1. If small acts of kindness create ripples, can there be an act of kindness that is too small to create ripples?
2. Can many small acts of kindness together create as many ripples as a large one?



Do: Grab all the small things you could think of and test the theory to answer our questions:

- Sprinkles (the kind you put on cookies)
- Little rubber bands
- Marshmallows
- Toothpicks
- Leaves (big and little)
- Fossil

Fill the sink with water and start testing the theory.

First, the fossil, representing a larger service project like pulling weeds from a neighbor's yard or visiting a nursing home.

THE RESULT: SPLASH!

Second, a leaf, representing a "regular-sized" service project like making someone a meal, handing a hygiene kit to someone in need, or inviting a new friend over to play.

THE RESULT: There were ripples.

Next, a toothpick, a "regular" act of kindness like writing a nice note to someone, taking a treat to a neighbor, or giving out a homeless care kit.

THE RESULT: There were ripples.

Then, a little rubber band, representing small acts of kindness like telling someone a joke or picking up a toy they dropped without being asked.

THE RESULT: There were ripples, even with a single rubber band.

Last, a sprinkle, representing the smallest act of kindness like holding the door for someone or saying "hi."

THE RESULT: There were ripples when we dropped a single a sprinkle!

DISCUSS

- Whether all the little things, together, could make as many ripples as the single fossil did. So,



Do: Put in a pinch of each of the items.

- Sprinkles
- Rubber bands
- Toothpicks



Ask: So, do you think that we can help others by doing little things as well as big things? Even a grain of salt causes ripples in the water.



Say: In today's session we are going to figure out what happens when we volunteer. Today's teaching objectives are to:

1. Explain why one should volunteer.
2. Identify ways in which a family can volunteer together.
3. State blessings gained through volunteering.

During the past few lessons, we have made commitment statements. This week's commitment statement is: As a family, we will give not only our money but also our time to the benefit of others.

Family & Table Talk 20 minutes



Say: During our meal time today, we are going to discuss how we have volunteered in the past. We will also talk about how what we did made a difference in others and our own lives.

1. Where have you volunteered in the past?
2. What were the results?

After the meal, children are dismissed to their group.

40 minutes

Parent Training

Engaging the World

VOLUNTEERING

How can you make a difference in our world? We know that Christ—through His death and resurrection—redeemed the world, but until Christ comes again, the world still feels the pain and consequences of sin.

Jesus says, in Matthew 25:44-45, “They also will answer, ‘LORD, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?’ He will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.’”

Jesus says that “whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.” Do you find this challenge troubling, or do you find it encouraging? This week we are going to focus on volunteering (service learning).

I hope that you find it encouraging to ask: “What can I do?”

As a family, where can we begin to serve?

Lewis (2009) provides some steps (Handout 1):

1. Research your project
 - a. What would you like to do?
 - b. What might benefit the most people?
 - c. What might make the biggest difference?
 - d. What can I afford (in terms of time, money, etc.)?
 - e. What is really possible for me to do?
 - f. What _____? (add your own question)

Today we are going to work through these questions in small groups. Hopefully, what we learn through this process will help us

implement a similar process with our children.

Get together in small groups and work through these questions.

Once you identified some possible ways to serve as a family, answer the following questions (Handout 1):

- How often will you do the project?
- Where will you serve?
- What do you hope to achieve?
- What is the cost (time, money, etc.)?
- Is it realistic?
- Consider the recipients—what are their needs?

Apply each of the questions to the project that your small group previously developed.

Where can you get ideas for service projects?

A few books that are helpful:

Lewis, Barbara A. (2009). *The Kid's Guide to Service Projects: Over 500 Service Ideas for Young People Who Want to Make a Difference*. Minneapolis: Free Spirit.

Rochester, C., Paine, A, & Howlett, S. (2012). *Volunteering and Society in the 21st Century*. New York: Macmillan.

Sundem, Garth. (2010). *Real Kids, Real Stories, Real Change: Courageous Actions Around the World*. Minneapolis: Free Spirit.

Thompson, Laurie Ann. (2014). *Be a Changemaker: How to Start Something That Matters*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Here are some broad topics (Lewis, 2009):

- Animals
- Politics and government
- Community development
- Crime fighting
- The environment
- Friendship
- Health and wellness
- Homelessness

- Hunger
- Literacy
- People with special needs
- Seniors
- Safety
- Transportation

Remember at the beginning of the lesson, we did the object lesson on how even small things produce change (toothpicks made ripples in the water)? What will happen when you impact the world for Christ?

ACTIVITY

Handout 2

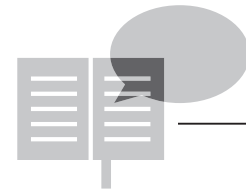
How did Jesus model service or volunteering?

Jesus says, in Matthew 25:44-45, “They also will answer, ‘LORD, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?’ He will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.’”

To end our lesson, please answer the following:

1. Who has an insight tonight about something you’ve learned or want to try?
2. What will you change or improve in your role as a parent this week?

Notes



Scripture SUPPORT

John 13:34-35

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

Luke 10:30

³⁰ In reply Jesus said: “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. ³¹ A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. ³² So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. ³³ But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. ³⁴ He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. ³⁵ The next day he took out two denarii[a] and gave them to the innkeeper. ‘Look after him,’ he said, ‘and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.’

³⁶ “Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?”

³⁷ The expert in the law replied, “The one who had mercy on him.”

Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.”

Matthew 5:7

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Malachi 3:18

And you will again see the distinction between the righteous and the wicked, between those who serve God and those who do not.

Matthew 25:44-45

“They also will answer, ‘LORD, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?’ He will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.’”

Handout 1

1. Research your project

a. What would you like to do? _____

b. What might benefit the most people?

c. What might make the biggest difference?

d. What can I afford (in terms of time, money, etc.)? _____

e. What is really possible for me to do? _____

f. What _____? (add your own question) _____

Handout 2

Identifying the Impact of Volunteering

	PHYSICAL IMPACT	PERSONAL IMPACT	ECONOMIC IMPACT	SOCIAL IMPACT	CULTURAL IMPACT
Volunteers					
Organization					
Service Users					
Community					

Adapted from Rochester, Ellis, and Howlett, 2012

Handout 2 (Continued)

Potential Answers

	PHYSICAL IMPACT	PERSONAL IMPACT	ECONOMIC IMPACT	SOCIAL IMPACT	CULTURAL IMPACT
Volunteers	Training, certificates	Personal development such as confidence, self-esteem.	The financial cost of volunteering	Increased trust	Appreciation and understanding of other cultures
Organization	Measured number of meals served, trees planted, etc.	Diversity of workforce	Value of volunteering minus the cost of volunteering	Increased status and reputation	Services more reflective of cultural diversity within the community
Service Users	Improved quantity and quality of services provided	Personal development and skills enhancement	Access to services that would otherwise have to be paid for	Trust cooperation	Appreciation and understanding of others cultures
Community	Improved quantity and quality of services provided	Happier communities, better-skilled citizens	Enhanced value of money in public services. Lower crime; increased health.	Increased networks, trust and participation	Increased networks, trust and participation

Adapted from Rochester, Ellis, and Howlett, 2012

Ages 4-16

40 minutes

Student Training

Engaging the World

VOLUNTEERING

Objectives

- **Help children be aware of what the Bible says about volunteering and serving.**
- **Help children be aware of why a person should volunteer.**
- **Help children be aware of ways they can volunteer.**
- **Help children be aware of the blessings attained through volunteering.**

In our past lessons, we have learned that God created us in His own image. He wants us to be His children, and He wants to be a Father to us. Then later, He sent His Son, Jesus to walk on earth and demonstrate for us the kind of people He wanted us to be. The Bible is filled with stories about what Jesus was like and the things He did to help others. Matthew 20:28 says, “Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” Yes, Jesus came to serve others, and because we are created in the image of God, just like His Son Jesus came to serve, God also wants His earthly children to serve. So, our lives here on earth are not just about ourselves; instead, our lives are about the betterment of God’s entire creation.

Because Jesus Himself doesn’t walk the earth in person any longer, we are created

to show His love and His care for others by our actions. Ephesians 2:10 says, “For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” We serve realizing that we are doing the work that God specifically created us to do. When God created you, He placed inside you specific gifts and abilities to bring to the earth. As you grow and learn more and more about yourself, you become aware of what your special gifts and abilities are. God expects us to use our gifts and abilities to make the world around us a better place. In 1 Peter 4:10 God tells us, “Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.”

When God created man and woman, He made them and their children stewards over the earth. A steward is one who handles

affairs for someone else. We all are stewards handling God's affairs here in the earth. As God's stewards, we have the responsibility to manage, care for, and improve what He has entrusted to our care. Stewards are servants, and servants are ones who respond to the needs of others. God wants us to have a heart of sacrificial service that worships Him through our actions. When you give of yourself to help others, you make the world a better place, and that makes God very proud of you. That is true worship!

Those of us who grow up in a Christian home are truly blessed because we begin to learn about Jesus at a very early age. We are taught the stories about Him feeding the hungry and healing the sick and telling others about the kingdom of God. Most of us attend church with our parents, go to Sunday School, attend Vacation Bible School, and take part in family devotion time. This helps us know more about God and His Son, Jesus. When you ask Jesus to come into your life and be your personal Savior, the Holy Spirit comes to live inside of you. The Holy Spirit comes to help you, to guide you, to comfort you, and to teach you the way to live for God. As the Holy Spirit works inside you, your heart begins to feel more love and compassion for others, and your behaviors start to change. And the more we hear about Jesus, read our Bible, and spend time worshiping and praising Him, the more we desire to be like Him... and Jesus was a servant.

The Bible teaches us that it doesn't do us any good to just learn about Jesus if we don't put what we learn to action. James 1:22 Says, "Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says." When we take the time to look around us, it is easy to discover that there are many people in the world who are not as fortunate as we are. We also become aware of areas of decay, disorder, neglect, and injustice in the world. There is a verse that tells us that because we have been given so many blessings, much more is expected of us (Luke 12:48). We are God's people, and He expects us to be good stewards of the earth and those in the earth. God expects His children to use the gifts and

abilities He gave them to help solve these problems. In Acts 20:35, the apostle Paul says it this way, “ In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the LORD Jesus himself said: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”

As Christians, we have a unique opportunity to give on behalf of God! God has assigned His children a very important role to play as stewards over His creation. Volunteering is a wonderful way to fulfill that role as we demonstrate God’s love while we serve in the earth. Not only that, but volunteering develops in our hearts compassion, empathy, tolerance, gratitude, and community responsibility.

No matter how small your contribution may seem to you, when you volunteer, you are doing your part to accomplish God’s purposes for the world. Through volunteering, you come to realize that little acts can make a big difference in the lives of others.

There are many ways you can volunteer. There are one-time projects like collecting children’s books and donating them to a homeless shelter or shoveling snow or raking the leaves in a neighbor’s yard. Then there are longer commitments like regularly visiting an elderly family member or friend at a nursing facility and reading with them or playing a board game. Other examples include walking an elderly neighbor’s dog or putting on protective gloves and picking up litter in your neighborhood. These are just a few of the ways good stewards can share God’s love and care for His creation.

Pray and ask God how and where He would like for you to serve. When you do, the Holy Spirit will show you just how you can help in a situation and be a blessing to someone. And when you find a way to lend a hand, do it with a heart of love, compassion, and joy! First Corinthians 10:31 says, “So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.” Remember, when you volunteer, you are giving, and God loves a cheerful giver!

DISCUSS

- Lead children in a discussion about what the Bible says about volunteering and serving.
- Lead children in a discussion about why God's children should volunteer.
- Lead children in a discussion about the ways children can serve and volunteer.
- Lead children in a discussion about how volunteering is giving.
- Lead children in a discussion about why the Bible says it is more blessed to give than receive.



Activities

Activities are age appropriate. One is focused on ages 4-11, and the second is for older children ages 12-16.

AGES 4-11

Materials

Technology to show video
Volunteer Pledge Form worksheet
Pencils, crayons, or markers
Easel or White Board for group discussion (optional)

Have children view YouTube:

<https://youtu.be/EkHdbhIV3Ro>

“Helping Our Community” (If possible. If not possible, do exercise without video).

- After viewing the video, discuss briefly reasons why we should volunteer and possible ways to volunteer.
- As a group, write ideas on the easel or whiteboard. Then have children fill out their “My Volunteer Pledge Form” worksheet.



Scripture SUPPORT

Matthew 20:28

Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

Ephesians 2:10

For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

1 Peter 4:10

Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.

James 1:22

Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.



Scripture SUPPORT

Luke 12:48

From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.

Acts 20:35

In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the LORD Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'

1 Corinthians 10:31

So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.

AGES 12-16

Materials

Technology to show video
Volunteer Pledge Form worksheet
Pencils, crayons, or markers
Easel or White Board for group discussion (optional)

Have children view YouTube:

<https://youtu.be/8gO6HcSeTs> "Kids Helping Kids"
and/or <https://youtu.be/YplwSTP2gdA>
"Kids Volunteering" (If possible) If not possible,
do exercise without video.

- After viewing the video, discuss briefly reasons we should volunteer.
- Put children in pairs or groups of three. In their group, have them come up with possible ways to volunteer. Have them fill out their "My Volunteer Pledge Form" worksheet. Have students share with large group some of their ways to volunteer ideas.

My Volunteer Pledge Form

“Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others,
as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.”

1 Peter 4:10

Name _____

I will pledge to volunteer _____ hours every month.

Here are some of the ways I plan to volunteer:

1. _____.

2. _____.

3. _____.

4. _____.

5. _____.

Signed _____ Date _____



CHALLENGE QUESTION

HOW DO I SERVE THE LORD BY VOLUNTEERING?

CHALLENGE COMMITMENT

WHAT ARE YOU WILLING TO DO TO WORK ON THE CHALLENGE QUESTION?



AFFIRMATION *Have children repeat:*

I serve the LORD by cheerfully serving others.