

God is a Servant

(4 weeks)



Outcomes

At the completion of this module students will understand:

- The meaning of a 'servant', Jesus being the greatest servant that ever lived.
- That God the creator serves us through all that he provides
- That we can serve God by caring for others
- That God wants us to serve without complaining
- That God wants us to serve even when we are afraid, or when it is hard
- That we can learn to be good servants of God by learning from others

Related topics for Science, Social Studies and Health:

Community servants: The Medical Profession; medical missionaries

Link between "God is a Servant" and the topics:

The children can be reminded that doctors, nurses and the medical workers help us when we are sick or injured. They are examples of community servants.

Values:

Compassion; flexibility; humility; willingness; thoughtfulness; sacrifice

God is a Servant

Week 1

Jesus was the greatest servant that ever lived

Bible references

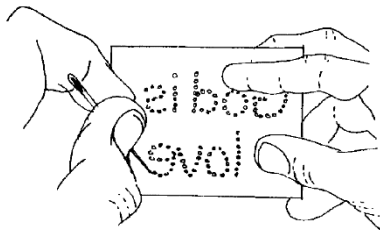
Luke 4:16-19, John 9: 1-34 Jesus heals a blind man (Revision from Term 1)

Galatians 5:13 Serve one another in love

Preparation

Take a piece of thick cardboard, such as a paper plate, and use a needle to prick a message.

During the lesson you can pass this around for children to feel.



Introduction

Ask the student if they know what a servant is.

A servant is a helper.

Ask them to think about ways in which we can help others. How do they help at home and school?

Jesus wants us all to be servants.

Jesus was the greatest servant that ever lived.

The Bible tells us about the kind of servant Jesus was.

Jesus came to...

- heal the sick
- heal blind eyes and deaf ears
- heal sad hearts
- heal people from sin

Bible lesson: Jesus heals a blind man

What would it be like to be blind? You would have to rely on feeling as you did in the games. What are some of the things you could not enjoy?

In the time when Jesus lived, blind people were not cared for very well. There was no special help available for blind people. Today people who are blind may have the opportunity of reading special 'feeling' books. Braille is an alphabet made from raised dots which blind people can feel with their fingers. (Pass around the Braille message you have prepared beforehand.)

In Jesus' day there were no places where blind people could go to receive help. They just had to sit on the street and hold out a bowl, begging people who passed by for money. Because they were blind, they could not work to earn money. They had to beg for money to buy food.

Jesus was walking along the road with His disciples. They saw a man sitting by the road. "Look Jesus," said one of His men, "that man is blind. He can't see. Will you help him?"

"Yes," said Jesus, "God sent me to heal people. He sent me to be the light of the world." Jesus bent down next to the man. He spat on the ground to make it wet. He rubbed the ground to make it into clay.

"Now, sit very still," Jesus said. "I will put the clay on your eyes."

Jesus rubbed the clay on the man's eyes. "Now," he said, "Go to the pool of Siloam and wash the mud off your eyes."

The man went to the pool. He washed his eyes. As he opened his eyes he looked around. "I can see!" he cried. "I'm not blind anymore!"

He was so happy. He told crowds of people that a man had healed him. He did not know His name. Jesus came to find the man who was healed. He bowed down before Jesus. "Now I know you are the special Man sent from God," he said.

The man told many people about Jesus.

Jesus asked the blind man to do something very unusual. Because the blind man did just as Jesus said, we know that he believed and trusted in Jesus.

Questions:

What must people do if they want to be healed by Jesus?

What are some of the different kinds of healing that people may need?

How does Jesus heal?

Jesus healed people because he loved and cared for people. How can we show that we love and care for people?

Activity

Make a prayer chart to remind us to pray for people who are sick or sad. Pray for these people every day. (The student can decorate the chart.)

God is a Servant

Week 2

Others first

Following the example of Jesus

Bible references

Matthew 8:14-17 Jesus heals many people including Peter's mother-in-law.

Luke 6:17-19 They had come to hear Him and to be healed of their diseases. ...power was going out from Him and healing them all. (GNB)

Philippians 2:14 Do everything without complaining

Introduction

Revise the meaning of a servant.

Today we are going to think about times when it is hard to be a servant. What would you do in these situations?

Just imagine that...

- Your Mum has asked you to help her look after your little brother or sister, but your friend has also asked you to come and play
- A big storm has just damaged your house. There is water all through the house.
- You feel really tired and want to go to sleep, but the dishes haven't been done and Mum is busy looking after the baby
- Mum asks you to clean the toilet and you have never been asked to do that before

Bible Story: Jesus helps His friends

Jesus always helped people, even when He was tired. Jesus often got tired because so many people needed his help. The Bible tells us that one day Jesus was feeling tired from His busy day. Crowds had followed Him as usual, wanting to hear more about God's kingdom, and bringing the sick to be healed.

Jesus went to the home of His friend, Peter, hoping that He could rest a bit and perhaps get a bite to eat. As Jesus entered the house, He could see that something was wrong. Where was Peter?

Peter and his wife were at the bed of Peter's mother-in-law.

"We're so glad you're here," said Peter's wife. "Won't you pray for my mother? She's very sick with a fever."

When you have a fever you feel very hot. Have you ever had your temperature taken? A person with a fever has a very high temperature.

Although Jesus was feeling very tired, He immediately went to the bedside of Peter's mother-in-law. He touched her hand, and at once she was healed. Peter felt her forehead. Her temperature was normal! The fever had left her. Not only that, she felt well enough to get out of bed and prepare a meal for Jesus. I'm sure He was glad of that!

After the evening meal there was more work for Jesus to do. People started coming to the house. Some were sick. Some people were sad because they were troubled by evil spirits. But Jesus healed them all.

Some of the people who watched Jesus heal remembered something that was written in the book of Isaiah. It said that a Saviour would come to take away people's sicknesses and diseases. Jesus was the Saviour that the world had been waiting for.

Discussion

This story shows us that Jesus was always willing to help others even when he was tired, or had things to do for himself.

Sometimes we might not feel like helping, but Jesus would want us to help others when we are asked to without complaining. There is a verse in the Bible that says, "Do everything without complaining."

Think of people who we could help?
(People who are sick, sad, have too much work)

Art/Craft and Puppet Play

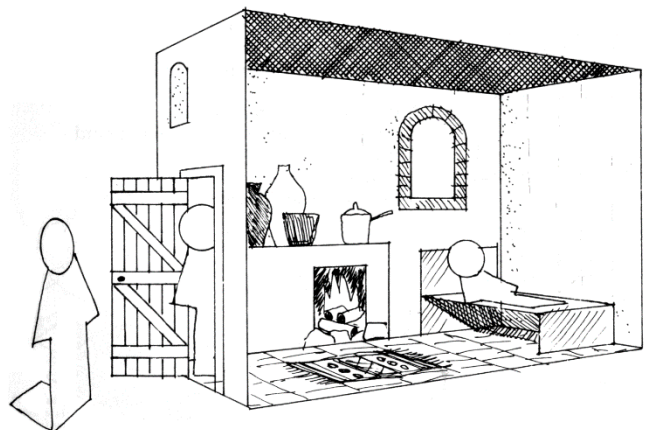
Make a play box to re-tell the story.

a) Take a cardboard box such as a shoe box or tissue box. Make one side open and turn this to the front. Create the background scenery on the back panel.

b) Cut out figures from card and make them stand up as shown. (Fold the bottom section of the card and use it as a base. Figures may also be attached to wooden building blocks for more support.)

c) Use the figures to re-tell the story:

1. Jesus comes to the house.
2. Peter meets Jesus at the door.
3. Peter takes Jesus to his mother-in-law who is sick in bed.
4. Jesus touches her and she is healed.
5. Peter's mother-in-law goes to the kitchen and prepares food for Jesus.



God is a Servant

Week 3

Serving God even when we are afraid

Bible references

Judges 6 Gideon, a servant of God

Psalm 91 God gives us angels to protect us when we are doing God's work

Psalm 56:3 When I am afraid, I put my trust in you.

Bible lesson: Gideon was afraid, but did what God wanted him to do

The people of Israel forgot about God and the way He had helped them in times of trouble. They forgot about when God opened up the Red Sea and saved them from their enemies when Moses was leader.

If we move forward in history some time later, the Israelites are again worried by their enemies. The enemies were the Midianites and they were surrounding the Israelites. The Midianites robbed the land. They would wait until the harvest was ready then move in to the Israelites land and carry off the grain and the ripe grapes and the olives. They stole the donkeys and the sheep and the cattle too.

The Israelites were afraid so they hid in caves in the hills until the raids were over. When they crept out the fields were stripped bare and there was no food to eat during the winter months ahead. This happened each year at harvest time.

After seven years the Israelites cried out to God for help. There was a young man called Gideon who God chose to help his people. One day he was crushing a little bit of wheat that he had managed to hide. He looked up and saw a stranger.

"God is with you, brave and mighty man," said the visitor. "I am sending you to rescue Israel from the Midianites."

Gideon was surprised. He was not a hero. He was not very brave. "How can I rescue Israel?" he asked the stranger.

"With my help," the stranger answered. "I will be with you and you will defeat the Midianites very easily."

Gideon wanted to make sure that this stranger was really from God. So he said to the stranger, "Please wait while I get you some food. The stranger promised to wait until Gideon got back.

Gideon went home and came back with some meat, some bread and some soup. The stranger said, "Put the meat and the bread on this rock, then pour the soup over them."

Gideon did as he was told. The stranger put out his stick and touched the food. At once a flame leaped up from the rock and burned up the food. Now Gideon knew that this was God's special messenger bringing him God's special words. Then the visitor disappeared.

Before Gideon was willing to become Israel's leader, he wanted to become even more certain that God had called him.

"If you have chosen me to rescue Israel, please give me a sign," he prayed to God. "Tonight I will put out a fleece of wool in the place where we crush the wheat. If the wool is wet with dew in the morning, but the ground is dry, then I will know that you have called me."

The next morning, Gideon's fleece was so wet that he wrung out a whole bowl full of dew from it. Yet the ground on which the fleece lay was dry. But Gideon started to doubt. Was this really God?

"Please don't be angry, God," he prayed. "Show me once more that you will use me to lead Israel. This time, please let the ground around my fleece be wet and the wool be dry."

God was not angry. He understood Gideon's worries and fears. Next morning, sure enough, the fleece was fluffy and dry but the ground around it was wet with dew. Now Gideon was certain that God was calling him to set Israel free from the Midianites.

Gideon did become the leader of the Israelites and with God's help they were able to defeat the enemies that were stealing their food. This is how they did it.

Gideon went out to find people to form an army. In a short time he had thirty-two thousand men. But God said, "You have too many soldiers Gideon. I want Israel to know that I am the One who is going to save them. Tell the soldiers that all those who are afraid must go back home."

Gideon did as God told him. Twenty-two thousand men went back home. There were just ten thousand men left. Now Gideon was afraid that his army was too small. But God said, "There are still too many soldiers, Gideon. Bring your soldiers down to the water. Watch them as they drink. All those who lap up the water with their tongues, like a dog does, put on one side. Those who get down on their knees to drink, put on the other side."

So Gideon took his soldiers to the water. He watched them drink. Three hundred of them lapped the water with their tongues. The rest he was to send home. So Gideon had only three hundred soldiers to fight all those Midianites!

Gideon led his soldiers to the camp of the Midianites. It was night when they reached a hill above the camp. There were so many enemy tents – too many to count. "Go down and fight them," God said to Gideon.

Gideon was afraid but God said, "Creep down to the enemy camp and I will show you something." So Gideon went with his servant. They heard two guards talking. "I had a dream," said one guard. "I saw a loaf of bread tumbling down the hill into our camp and it turned our tents upside down."

"That must be Gideon and the Israelites," said the other guard. "Their God is going to help them defeat us."

Now Gideon knew that God was going to help them.

Gideon told his men to form three groups. He gave each man an empty jug with a flaming torch inside, and a trumpet.

The men surrounded the camp with their torches and trumpets. Gideon broke his jug and held up his light and blew his trumpet. All his soldiers did the same. Gideon shouted, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon!"

The Midianites awoke in terror. The great noise fooled them. They thought that the army was huge. They stumbled out of their tents and ran away as fast as they could. The Israelites chased the Midianites out of their land. The Israelites made Gideon their ruler. He judged Israel for forty years.

Discussion

To be God's servants we sometimes have to have courage. It may be a bit scary to do what God wants us to do, but with His help we can do it.

When might we be afraid to do what God wants?

e.g. speaking to others about God; sharing in class what God has done

Many of our Fijian missionaries have worked for God even when they were afraid. Some came from countries like England and Scotland, where things were very different. They came to Fiji where people worshiped idols. The missionaries knew that they might even be killed, but that did not stop them from doing God's work. It doesn't mean that they weren't afraid. They probably were very afraid at times, but they always trusted God and looked to Him for help. If it was not for the early missionaries to Fiji we would not know about God and the Bible.

Many people today have big battles. Not battles against armies, but battles against things like fear, sickness and sadness. Maybe there are problems which seem impossible to solve. If we do have a problem, and we belong to God's family, then God will fight the battle for us. God can win the battle for us even when things seem impossible. God can do anything if we have faith in Him. He is more powerful than anyone.

God is a Servant

Week 4

Learning to be God's servant

Bible references

Joshua 1 Joshua serves God by carrying on the work of Moses

Joshua 1:5 No one will be able to stand against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you.

Joshua 1:8 Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.

Joshua 1:9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go."

Isaiah 41:10 Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

Numbers 11:28 Joshua had been a helper of Moses since he was a young boy.

Numbers 27:18 Moses laid hands on Joshua and he received the spirit of wisdom.

Bible lesson: Joshua

Today we are going to go back in time to when Moses was leading the Israelites to the Promised Land. They had been slaves in Egypt, but God had chosen Moses to lead them out. God did many miracles for them. For forty years they travelled in the desert on their way to the Promised Land. There was very little food in the desert so God sent food from heaven called 'mana'. God said that in the new land there would be plenty to eat. It would be a land where there was milk and honey. It was going to be so much better than the desert country that they were travelling in.

Just before they reached the Promised Land, Moses died. God chose a new leader for the Israelites. His name was Joshua. Joshua had been a helper of Moses since he was a young boy. One day God came to Joshua and said, "Joshua, Moses has died. I want you to take the Israelites across the Jordan River into the Promised Land. Just as I was with Moses I will be with you. Be strong and full of courage. Do not be afraid, for I will go with you wherever you go."

God also said, "Study my law, day and night and teach my people to obey it too. Then all will go well with you."

Joshua told all the people that they would soon be in their new land. But first they must cross the river Jordan River. The people were afraid because the river was deep, fast-flowing and in full flood. First Joshua sent two men across to find out more about the city on the other side. These men were called 'spies'. The city had a wall around it to keep out enemies and strangers. The two men were strong swimmers. They crossed the river and climbed the wall. There was a house built into the wall where a lady called Rahab lived. She had heard how powerful the God of Israel was, and was afraid of the Israelites. She thought that she had better protect the two men or something bad might happen to her. Someone had seen the two men climb the wall and reported it to the soldiers of the city. The soldiers were looking

for the two men but didn't find them. Rahab let them hide in her house until they were safe, then let them down the wall in a basket. Then the two men hid in the hills for three days until they were sure they were safe then hurried back to the Israelites. The two men told Joshua about the city, and how the people in the city were afraid of the Israelites.

Now it was time for God's people to cross the river. God told Joshua what to do. Joshua chose twelve men to pick up stones and carry them to the place where they were to cross. The place was called Gilgal. Joshua told the men to pile up the stones to make a monument so that in times to come they would remember the place where they crossed the river, and the miracle that God was going to do for them.

Joshua followed the Lord's special instructions. He told the priests, (the Scripture teachers), to carry the Ark of the Covenant and begin walking into the Jordan. (The Ark of the Covenant was the special box that contained the Scriptures.) Even though the river was at flood stage, it immediately stopped flowing and dried up. While the priests stood in the middle of the dry riverbed, God told the priest to collect another twelve stones and pile them in the middle of the river bed. This would be a memorial to help the Israelites remember in future times how the Lord had dried up the river. Then Joshua instructed all the people to cross the river. They all crossed on dry ground. When everyone had finished crossing over, the priests followed to the other side.

As soon as the priests stepped onto the bank on the other side the water in the Jordan River began flowing again. The people looked back to see the top of their monument of stones showing above the water.

They were in their new land where there was plenty of food. God didn't need to send manna any more as he did when they were walking in the desert.

Discussion

How did Joshua learn to be a good servant of God? (He helped Moses and learned from him from when he was a young boy.)

What did God say to Joshua when he became leader of God's people? (Joshua 1:5; Joshua 1:8; Joshua 1:9)

What made Joshua a good servant of God?

- Brave
- Listened to God
- Obeyed God
- Studied the Scriptures and taught them to the people
- Cared for the people
- Showed wisdom