



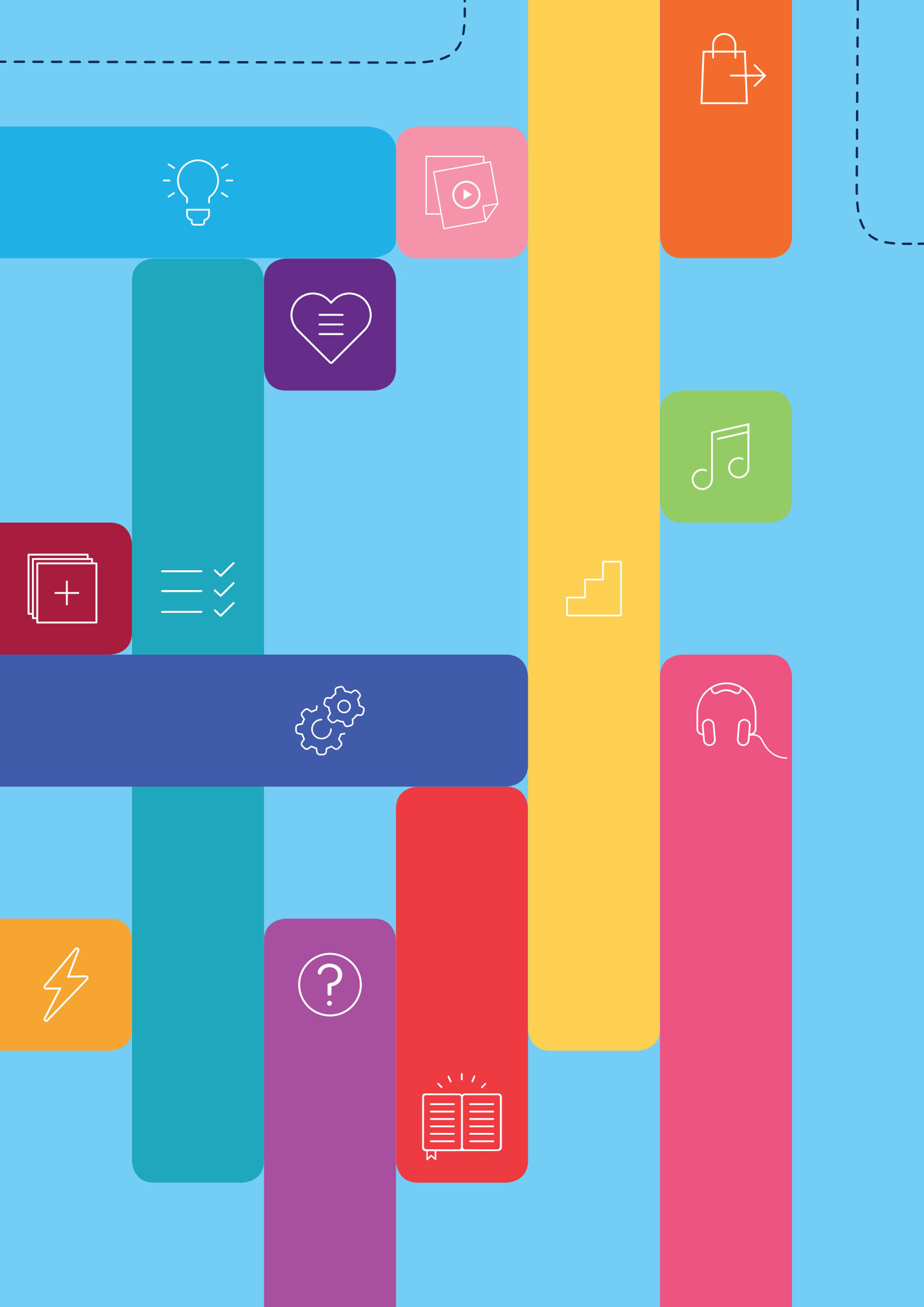
Youth and
Children's
Ministries

COOGS

CHILDREN
OF GOD  SERVE



A SPIRITUAL PROGRAMME
FOR CHILDREN'S EVENTS



Introduction

In 2020, we will be exploring the theme SERVE.

'During supper Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him...

After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, 'Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord - and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.'

John 13 (NASB)

It's often noted that Jesus wasn't necessarily the type of Messiah that people hoping for. For those who wanted war, his talk of 'peacemakers' was disappointing. For those who valued purity, his choice of dinner buddies left a lot to be desired. For those who hoped for victory, his execution was a crushing blow. They wanted a saviour - he came as a servant.

Today, we can sometimes still find ourselves with the same dilemma. We want a Jesus who can show us how to kick down walls and take over the world. But the Jesus we find has a towel around his waist, washing the feet of people who were meant to be following him, including those who will betray and deny him. Time and time again we encounter a Jesus who 'did not come to be served, but to serve' (Mark 10:45).

Through this resource, we will explore what this looks like for young people in their homes and communities. What can we learn from Jesus and those who have gone before? What does it look like to live right, treat others right and make the world right, as it changes around us and as we seek to serve in it?

Children Of God Serve (COGS) explores two themes...

1

HOW WE GROW AS CHILDREN OF GOD

2

HOW WE SERVE THOSE AROUND US

There are five sessions which take children on a journey through these themes, looking at themselves, their communities and the wider world.

Children will see the difference they can make through God's power and love by reflecting on the lives of different children in the Bible. There is also the option of making links with modern children who have made a difference in the world.

By looking at biblical examples of how God called people, their response and the effect of this on their lives and situations, children will learn more about God, their own calling and how God will move in their own lives and situations.

The resource includes ideas for a pick-and-mix approach to activities, allowing each session length to be adaptable as well as ensuring they work with children from a variety of backgrounds. Each session can stand alone.

*Session 1***JESUS IN THE TEMPLE**

Luke 2:41-52

- To understand we are all children of God
- To explore what it means to be a child of God
- To reflect on how we grow as a child of God

*Session 2***THE ANOINTING OF DAVID**

1 Samuel 16

- To understand that God calls us into his family
- To understand that God calls even the smallest person to great things
- To reflect on how we serve those we love and how we prepare for our calling

*Session 3***THE LITTLE SERVANT GIRL**

2 Kings 5:1-19

- To reflect on the boldness and strong faith of the servant girl
- To consider some of the unfair issues and injustices that are going on locally, nationally and globally
- To understand that we can play a part in God's Big Story by speaking out against injustices and taking appropriate action

*Session 4***TIMOTHY**

2 Timothy 1:5-14

- To understand that Jesus equips us as his followers
- To explore practical ways in which we can serve one another
- To explore how we serve those in our communities and church

*Session 5***JESUS INVITES THE CHILDREN**

Matthew 18:1-6; 19:13-15

- To know that we are loved by the God we serve
- To know that we have got all it takes to serve and be an example to others

Outline of Resource



SESSION AIMS

These are points to guide the learning outcomes for the children from the chosen Scripture passage, to help when preparing the session.



LEADER'S REFLECTION

This section is a space for self-reflection for the leader on the subject they will be exploring with the children. It helps leaders to personally connect with the theme and explore how the Scripture passage speaks to them. What is it saying? What is encouraging, challenging and affirming?



MEMORY VERSE

This is a Bible verse that captures the theme for the session, though not always directly linked to the Bible story. Being able to recall verses from memory is a great tool of power and encouragement throughout a disciple's life.



SCRIPTURE

These are the verses of the Bible story chosen to help explore the subject of the session. The translation can be different for different sessions. Using Bibles within your session will help the children practise searching and exploring their Bible, and this will help when they are at home with their own private study time.



GET READY

This section provides a series of warm-up games, activities and suggestions for introducing the story and themes to the children in practical and engaging ways.



TELL THE STORY

This section suggests ways to 'Tell the story'. Films/clips can be used along with books that may help to narrate the passage in a different way, drama, and even the option of asking the children to rewrite the story in their own words.



I WONDER

This is a list of 'I wonder' questions designed from the Scripture reading and teaching. There are no right or wrong answers to a 'wondering' question, for it depends on how the child feels and sees the world around them. The questions help the child connect to the truths of the story in their own lives. The questions can be asked during the story or used at the end as a 'wondering time'. Give time to wonder, so don't be afraid of silence if they are still thinking; a child does not need to voice their thoughts. All the questions can be used or just select a few.



IDEAS AND ACTIVITIES

This section has a selection of suggestions with descriptions which may include activities, physical or intellectual, experiments and craft or videos. These are designed to help children explore the story and themes in further ways.



CREATIVE SPACE

This is different from a response time or prayer time. It is exactly what it says it is - some space and time for the children to be guided through some creative mind space, using different senses while they lie down and relax. It helps them to consider their own thoughts on what they have been exploring and sharing.



COULD YOU...

These are suggestions of additional activities that can be done to deepen the learning. They require additional preparation in order to enhance the children's understanding of a particular area.



PRAYER TIME

This is an activity for the prayer and response time to help the children explore the Scripture through prayer.



SUGGESTED SONGS

This section provides some suggested songs linked to the themes, to use throughout the session.

Session 1

JESUS IN THE TEMPLE

Luke 2:41-52 (*International Children's Bible*)



SESSION AIMS

- To understand we are all children of God
- To explore what it means to be a child of God
- To reflect on how we grow as a child of God



LEADER'S REFLECTION

Jesus modelled living as a child of God

As Jesus grew, he continued to develop mentally (wisdom), physically (stature), spiritually (favour with God) and socially (favour with men). Jesus grew in these ways because he knew he was called by God to do a special task.

In Luke 2, Jesus and his family are going to celebrate Passover. God's law required every male to go to Jerusalem three times a year for three great festivals (Deuteronomy 16:16); Passover was a festival to remember the night the Israelites escaped from Egypt and the angel of the Lord passed over their homes (Exodus 12:21-36).

At age 12, Jesus was considered mature, so he wouldn't have spent a lot of time with his parents during the festival. Traditionally, women and children would travel at the front of the group, with the men bringing up the rear. A 12-year-old boy could have been in either group, and so on the journey back both Mary and Joseph presumed Jesus was with the other. But they later discovered that when the group left Jerusalem, Jesus had stayed behind, absorbed in his discussions with the religious leaders.

At Passover, the greatest rabbis (teachers) of the land would gather to teach and discuss great truths. The coming Messiah may have been a popular discussion topic and Jesus would be eager to listen and ask probing questions. It was not his youth but the depth of his thought and questions that amazed the teachers.

Do you give space for your children to ask questions? Do you listen and respond to what they are asking? Do you acknowledge that you can learn from the children?

Mary and Joseph found Jesus but they didn't understand what he meant about being in his Father's house (v49). Although they knew he was God's Son, they didn't understand what his calling would involve. The Bible doesn't record any events of the next 18 years of Jesus' life, but he must have been learning, maturing and raised as a normal child alongside his brothers and sisters (Matthew 13:55-56). As the oldest of a large family, he would have helped Joseph in his carpentry work, and when Joseph died Jesus would have had to provide for the family.

Do you give your children opportunities to serve?

Jesus was like us. He grew physically and mentally, he related to other people and was loved by God. It is important for us to develop in each of these key areas – mental, physical, social and spiritual.

As you plan for this session, consider:

How can you develop mentally, physically, socially and spiritually?

What is the best way for you to connect with God?

How do you support children in developing those areas of their lives?



SCRIPTURE: LUKE 2:41-52 (CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH VERSION)

⁴¹ Every year Jesus' parents went to Jerusalem for Passover.
⁴² And when Jesus was twelve years old, they all went there as usual for the celebration. ⁴³ After Passover his parents left, but they did not know that Jesus had stayed on in the city. ⁴⁴ They thought he was traveling with some other people, and they went a whole day before they started looking for him. ⁴⁵ When they could not find him with their relatives and friends, they went back to Jerusalem and started looking for him there.

⁴⁶ Three days later they found Jesus sitting in the temple, listening to the teachers and asking them questions. ⁴⁷ Everyone who heard him was surprised at how much he knew and at the answers he gave. ⁴⁸ When his parents found him, they were amazed. His mother said, "Son, why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been very worried, and we have been searching for you!"

⁴⁹ Jesus answered, "Why did you have to look for me? Didn't you know that I would be in my Father's house?" ⁵⁰ But they did not understand what he meant.

⁵¹ Jesus went back to Nazareth with his parents and obeyed them. His mother kept on thinking about all that had happened.

⁵² Jesus became wise, and he grew strong. God was pleased with him and so were the people.



MEMORY VERSE

'Jesus became wise, and he grew strong. God was pleased with him and so were the people.'

Luke 2:52 (CEV)



COULD YOU...

Passover is a time of celebration where family and friends from different areas come together to observe this festival. Jesus, his family and many others were celebrating when this story takes place.

If you are using this material for a children's camp, could your week begin with a celebration of the children's arrival, acknowledging that everyone has travelled from different places?



GET READY

Warm-Up Games

1. The Name Game

Get the children to form a circle. Child 1 says their name and does an action. Child 2 repeats child 1's name and action, and then says their own name and does another action. Each person after that says the names and does the actions of the other children in order before adding their own. If the group is large, do this activity in teams and see how many names the children can remember. For younger groups, leave out the actions.

2. Obstacle Relay Race

You will need:

- Chairs
- Memory Verse (Resource 1.1)
- A range of random objects, eg hula hoops, beanbags, footballs, clothes

Split the group into teams and place cut-up sections of the memory verse on a chair, one per team. Each team lines up facing their chair and takes turns to complete the obstacle course to their chair (hoops to step into, three kick-ups to do, bean bags to juggle, clothes to put on, etc) and collect one piece of the puzzle. Once the pieces are collected, the team has to arrange them to reveal

the memory verse. The winning team is the first to arrange the verse in the correct order and learn it.

3. Yes/No Game

Ask a child a list of questions that they must answer without saying 'yes' or 'no'. They're also not allowed to nod or shake their head. The winner is the child who can answer the most questions without saying 'yes' or 'no'.

Introduce the Story

You will need:

- Wrapping paper
- Marker

What do we need to grow?

Create a height chart by sticking some wrapping paper (design side down) to the wall. Before the children arrive, measure the height of some leaders and other children and mark these on the chart. As children arrive, add their heights on to the chart and show them how some are taller than children younger than them. Show them how much they need to grow to be as big as the adults on the chart. Ask:

Do we just grow in our height? How else do we grow?

We can also grow in:

- how much we know
- how much we understand Jesus
- our skills
- our friendships

Did you know that Jesus was once a child? Did you know that he too grew in height as well as knowledge and wisdom?

This is the only story in the Bible about Jesus as a child, but it tells us a lot about him and the things that he found important. Sometimes we forget that Jesus was human as well as God. Jesus grew from a baby to a child, like us. He worried his parents just as sometimes we've worried our parents or carers. He asked lots of questions and wanted to learn more, like us. The teachers in the Temple were very impressed because of the things Jesus knew and understood about God. Jesus grew physically but he also grew spiritually, which means knowing more about God.



TELL THE STORY

- Watch the short animation of Jesus at the Temple
<https://youtu.be/7CZiA7Zea9U>
- Watch this video of Jesus at the Temple, with more background on the events surrounding Jesus' birth
https://youtu.be/ho_3gvlWzbw
- Invite two children to act out 'The Perfect Child', an imagined conversation between two of Jesus' brothers (Resource 1.2)



I WONDER

- I wonder which part of the story you liked best?
- I wonder which part of the story is the most important?
- I wonder which part you felt was especially for you?
- I wonder if there are any parts we could leave out and still have everything we need?
- I wonder how Jesus felt in God's house?
- I wonder how you would respond to Jesus' teaching?
- I wonder if Jesus, Mary and Joseph or the Temple teachers learnt more about God that day?



TAKE AWAY

Consider giving the children a prayer journal to take home after the event. They can use it to record three things they are grateful for each day or to write down prayer requests and answered prayers.



IDEAS & ACTIVITIES

News Report

Provide copies of the story. One child will act as a news reporter and interview eyewitnesses. Give the other children roles as people travelling back with the family, Mary, Joseph, rabbis in the Temple or Jesus.

Write this as a script and then present it, or record it and make a video with someone in the news station hearing from the news reporter in the 'field'.

Graffiti Wall

You will need:

- A large sheet of paper / wrapping paper

Say: Jesus asked the rabbis lots of questions to help him learn more about God. We too can grow in wisdom and knowledge by asking questions. What are the big questions you would like to ask God? Write your questions on the large sheet to make a graffiti wall.

Seder Plate Tasting

You will need:

- A plate
- parsley (Karpas)
- roasted lamb (Zeroah)
- bitter herbs eg romaine lettuce (Maror)
- apple sauce (Charoset)
- savoury biscuit (Matzah)
- a hard-boiled egg (Beitzah)

Eat a representation of the Passover meal together. Talk about how Jesus had travelled with his family for the Passover celebration and how this was the meal they would have shared together. Talk about each element on the plate/table and what they represent, giving the children the opportunity to taste them.

- Bitter herbs - symbolising the bitterness and harshness of the Hebrews being slaves in Egypt
- Apple sauce - representing the mortar and straw the slaves used for building
- Parsley - representing hope, the parsley is dipped into salt water and symbolises their tears
- Hard-boiled egg - symbolising the sacrifices made at the Temple
- Roasted lamb - the Paschal Lamb (Passover sacrifice)

Jesus in The Temple Images

Show the children the different images of Jesus in the Temple (Resource 1.3). Ask them: *What do you notice? Which image do you like best? Why?*

The Godly Play plaque image shows the head of Jesus and some of the teachers (rabbis) talking together. Show the plaque and share the Faces of Easter text (Resource 1.4), or read the following extract. *'Finally, they looked in the Temple - and there he was, talking to the priests of the Temple. When he spoke, they listened, because he knew so much. When they spoke, he listened, because he wanted to learn more.'*


What do we learn about Jesus from this text and image?

Construction

You will need:

- *Junk modelling material*

Invite the children to construct a building/model that represents their favourite place. It could be their home, school, church, grandparents' house or another place. Discuss why this place is their favourite. Say: *Jesus felt safe and at home at the Temple. He was surprised that Mary and Joseph didn't know that he would be in his Father's house. What did he mean by 'my Father's house'?*

 **Be aware that some children may not have a space or place where they feel safe and loved. Their response may be different from others who have this experience.**

Guess Who?

You will need:

- *Photographs of leaders as babies, children, teenagers and adults*

Reveal each picture one at a time and ask the children to guess who the person is. Discuss how the person has changed physically, and then interview the leader to discover who helped them grow and develop spiritually. Ask the children: *Who helped Jesus to grow and who helps us to grow?*

Family Coat of Arms

You will need:

- *Card*
- *Colouring pens/pencils*

Invite the children to create a heraldry-style shield with pictures and symbols that represent things important to them and their families (pets, hobbies, family members etc). Have them discuss how it feels to be part of their family and what they like to do together. Tell the children: *'Jesus was a member of his earthly family that shared things together. He was also the Son of God and we belong to God's family too.'*

 **Be aware that not all the children may come from stable family backgrounds.**

Discussion – So What?

Growth takes time. Jesus had the love and care of his earthly family, but he also had the love and care of his Heavenly Father. Think about all the ways you have changed in the past year. How do we grow:

- *mentally? (learning new things)*
- *physically? (balanced diets / healthy living)*
- *in our wellbeing? (physical and mental health)*
- *socially? (clubs, societies etc)*
- *spiritually? (praying, reading the Bible, serving, questioning and being role models)*

How can we grow more like Jesus? What does this mean for us in the days, weeks and years ahead?



CREATIVE SPACE

Ask the children to find a space on the floor and to lie down, relax and close their eyes. Everything you are going to ask them to do, they just need to think about – no need to talk. Say to them:

I am going to read the last part of the Bible story. I want you to think of who you are in the story. Are you one of the rabbis, someone in the Temple, Mary, Joseph or Jesus? How do you feel about what's happening? What do you think? What do you say?

Read Luke 2:46-51.

Now with your eyes shut, think about how you feel. Think about what you have seen and heard. Would you say anything?

Within a sensible time frame, sense the atmosphere in the room, then say, When I say 'go' you can get up quietly. Count down from 3...2...1...Go.



PRAYER TIME

People Web

You will need:

- *Enough paper plates for each child*
- *A ball of wool for each child*

Say: *Jesus was connected to his family and friends who went to celebrate the Passover. We are also connected to many people.*

Give each child a paper plate with the centre cut out and holes punched around the edge. Tie a long piece of wool through a hole and have the children begin threading the wool back and forth to create a web pattern. Say to them: *Think about all the people who help you grow physically (family), mentally (family and teachers), in your wellbeing (family, friends, teachers, church family) and spiritually (family, friends and church family). Say their names in your head and thank God for them as you thread the wool through the holes.*



SUGGESTED SONGS

- **'Nothing's too big' (Doug Horley)**
- **'Need to know you' (Rend Co Kids)**
- **'Made in your image' (Hillsong Kids)**
- **'King of me' (Rend Co Kids)**

RESOURCE 1.1 - MEMORY VERSE

Jesus	and he	strong.	pleased
became	and so	God	with
wise,	grew	was	him
people.	were	the	



RESOURCE 1.3 - JESUS IN THE TEMPLE IMAGES

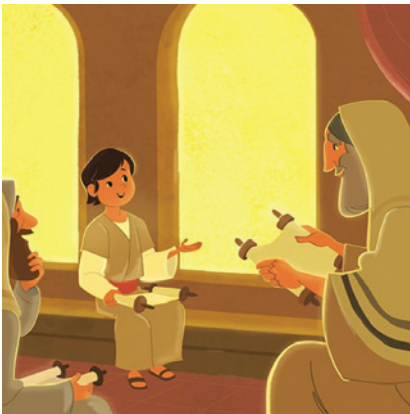


Image 1



Image 2



Image 3

Links to download images:

Image 1 - <https://sundayschoolzone.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/NT01L3-500-x-500.jpg>

Image 2 - https://assetsnffrgf-a.akamaihd.net/assets/m/1102016082/univ/art/1102016082_univ_lsr_xl.jpg

Image 3 - <https://2.bp.blogspot.com/-p4-LKfgKLU/Twn0Elee0cl/AAAAAAAAAP7g/-x-CHRqk5gw/s1600/jesus-as-boy-temple.jpg>

RESOURCE 1.2 - THE PERFECT CHILD¹

The aim of this drama is to look at what we know of Jesus' childhood and what we can learn from it. Here we see a fictional account of what life with two of Jesus' brothers might have been like.

This drama is set in biblical times, in a living room. Jesus is sat eating, James and Simon enter together.

James: Nice one, Golden Boy!

Simon: Yeah.

James: Mum and Dad had to go back to find you! They were looking everywhere for you!

Simon: Yeah, and so we were stuck in the house for days on end being looked after by mad Auntie Elizabeth.

James: While our parents were off looking for you, our older and so-called wiser brother!

Simon: Yeah. But what was that like, staying in Jerusalem on your own for three days?

James: What?

Simon: That would be so cool, wouldn't it? Twelve years old and alone in the big city for three days, with no parents to worry about.

James: But that's not the point, is it? Mum and Dad didn't know where he was.

Simon: Yeah, that's right.

James: Thank you.

Simon: You must have seen some sights though, eh?

James: I bet he didn't.

Simon: So what did you get up to, Jesus?

James: Nothing – he wouldn't get 'up to' anything, would he! Goody Sandals, Golden Boy over there, never does anything naughty or interesting, does he? He never has.

Simon: So where were you that whole time, Jesus?

James: Dad told us what he said. Weren't you listening?

Simon: Yes. So where were you?

Jesus: I was in my Father's house.

James: That's right, of course you were. He was in his Father's house.

Simon: Dad owns a house in Jerusalem?

James: No.

Simon: Then how could he be in 'his father's house' in Jerusalem?

James: Because...

Simon: Isn't this his father's house?

James: No. Well, yes – this is his earthly father's house.

Simon: Earthly father?

James: Jesus is different from the rest of us, isn't he?

Simon: Is he?

James: Of course he is. Haven't you heard Mum and Dad talk about it?

Simon: I don't think so.

James: Haven't you seen how differently they treat him?

Simon: I suppose.

James: Our Dad isn't Jesus' Dad!

Simon: Oh right – Mum was married before she was married to Dad, she...

James: No. Haven't they sat you down and told you the amazing story about our brother's birth?

Simon: I can't remember.

James: Who is your Father, Jesus? Jesus?

Jesus: Yes?

James: Are you the Son of God?

Jesus: Yes, I am.

James: See?

Simon: The Son of God? Him?

James: So they say. Mum was made pregnant by the Holy Spirit, apparently. And our older brother was the result.

Simon: Jesus is the Son of God? The Almighty God?!

James: Yeah. I don't think I believe it myself.

Simon: He doesn't look much like a God, does he?

James: No, but that's why he says he was in his 'Father's house' when he was in Jerusalem. He's talking about his Heavenly Father's house. He was in the Temple.

Simon: You were in the Temple for three days?

Jesus: That's right.

Simon: That doesn't sound much fun, does it?

James: It would be fun for him. He loves looking at the scrolls with the priests.

Simon: Yeah, he always does seem to have his nose in some sort of parchment, doesn't he?

James: He's their favourite, you know!

Simon: Whose? The priests?

James: Yeah, and Mum and Dad's. Haven't you seen how protective they are of him? How they hang on his every word?

Simon: Yeah, I have.

James: That's why they were looking for him so frantically – they didn't want to lose their perfect boy!

Jesus: James, I am very sure that Mum and Dad would have gone looking for any of their children if they'd gone missing.

James: Is that right? But I don't think they would have moved quite as quickly as when they realised we were without you, would they? Golden Boy! How can you be God's own Son? You're just a little squirt!

Jesus: I am what I am.

James: I hate it when he says that!

Simon: I know what you mean now. It's starting to make sense. Mum and Dad almost bow to him when they see him, don't they?

James: They never tell him off either.

Simon: Well, let's face it, he never does anything wrong.

James: No, and that is so annoying!

Simon: He never swears or blasphemes.

James: He never gets into fights or steals anything. He'll do something wrong one day though, he will.

Simon: Yeah. He has to! I mean, come on – nobody's really perfect, are they?

Questions for your Group:

1. How would you treat Jesus if you were in Simon's and James's position?
2. What kind of child do you think Jesus was?
3. How would you have dealt with Jesus if you were his Mum or Dad and he had gone missing?
4. Do you think Jesus' brothers and sisters believed in who he was when he began his ministry?

¹ by Dave Jenkins © 2009 Urban Saints, Energize

RESOURCE 1.4 - GODLY PLAY FACES OF EASTER PLAQUE AND TEXT



The baby grew and became a boy. When he was about twelve years old, he went with Mother Mary and Father Joseph and with many other people from their village of Nazareth to the great city of Jerusalem to keep one of the high holy days.

When the celebration was over, the people from Nazareth started on the road toward home.

Suddenly, Mary and Joseph discovered that Jesus was not there! They thought he had been playing with other children from their village as they walked together. They hurried back into the great city of Jerusalem to find him.

Mary and Joseph looked in the dark and narrow streets. They looked in the marketplace where they had bought their food. They looked where they had spent the night. They looked everywhere... for three days and three nights!

Finally, they even looked in the Temple – and there he was, talking to the priests of the Temple. When he spoke, they listened, because he knew so much. When they spoke, he listened, because he wanted to learn more.

Mary and Joseph then asked Jesus the question all parents ask their children, the question you can never answer: 'Why did you do this?' And Jesus said something very strange. He said, 'Didn't you know I would be in my Father's house?'

Mary and Joseph did not understand. Their house was in Nazareth, where Joseph's carpenter shop was. They did not understand, but they did not forget.

Session 2

THE ANOINTING OF DAVID

1 Samuel 16 (*International Children's Bible*)



SESSION AIMS

- To understand that God calls us into his family
- To understand that God calls even the smallest person to great things
- To reflect on how we serve those we love and how we prepare for our calling



LEADER'S REFLECTION

David modelled a commitment to service

Saul's pride led to God rejecting him as king. All Saul's accomplishments seemed to have gone to his head, so God lined up someone else to become king after Saul died. In 1 Samuel 16, God told the prophet Samuel to go to Bethlehem and anoint one of Jesse's sons. Anointing was the traditional way to show who God had chosen as king.

Samuel was worried that Saul would react badly to someone else being anointed as king, so God advised him to take a sacrifice to offer while he was in Bethlehem. This would give him a reason to be in the town. When Samuel arrived, he assured the town elders that he had come in peace to offer a sacrifice to God. Then he invited them, including Jesse and his sons, to 'consecrate' themselves - make themselves holy - and come to the sacrifice.

When they arrived, Samuel thought the chosen king stood before him; but one by one each of Jesse's seven sons were rejected. The Bible doesn't give the reason they were rejected, but it is thought that while outwardly they seemed qualified, God saw into their hearts and found them unworthy.

Samuel presumed he would be anointing one of Jesse's older sons, but God told him, 'The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart' (v7 NIV). Instead, God chose David, despite him being the youngest of eight siblings. Samuel went on to anoint David, and

after his anointing David did not know how God will use him but he feels the power of God's Spirit guiding him. Even though God chose him, David was not prideful and continued to do his regular shepherd duties. By serving those he loved, he grew in status and responsibility through God's power.

David is an example of how God uses the youngest and smallest of lives to do incredible things. In this session there is the opportunity to explore how God can use young lives to do incredible things. David's commitment to serving, even after his anointing gives an example of how all can continue to grow in service.

David lived an extraordinary life, but we must remember that he achieved all he did because he allowed the power of God to work through him. This is in contrast to Saul, who was convinced of his own greatness, so God's spirit left him (v14). God needs our willingness if he is going to transform us into people after his own heart. He wants us to put his desires above our own. He also wants us to be patient and give him time to change us from the inside out.

As you plan for this session, consider:

What expectations does our culture have for those who will become effective leaders? How does God challenge this?

How is the truth that 'God looks at the heart' both bad news and good news for you?

How does this story challenge the way you live?

**MEMORY VERSE**

'But the Lord said to Samuel, "Don't look at how handsome Eliab is. Don't look at how tall he is. I have not chosen him. God does not see the same way people see. People look at the outside of a person, but the Lord looks at the heart.'"

1 Samuel 16:7 (ICB)

**COULD YOU...**

You will need:

- *Small bowls*
- *Olive oil*

As the children arrive for today's session, have adults on the doors welcoming them and offering to anoint them. This will be exciting, as many will not understand the term. Ask each child if they would like to receive an anointing. If they say yes, put the anointing oil on your fingertips and spread on the child's forehead as you say, '*God loves you; you are his child.*'

**SCRIPTURE: 1 SAMUEL 16:1-13**
(INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S BIBLE)

¹ The Lord said to Samuel, 'How long will you continue to feel sorry for Saul? I have rejected him as king of Israel. Fill your container with olive oil and go. I am sending you to Jesse who lives in Bethlehem. I have chosen one of his sons to be king.'

² But Samuel said, 'If I go, Saul will hear the news. And he will try to kill me.' The Lord said, 'Take a young calf with you. Say, "I have come to offer a sacrifice to the Lord."' ³ Invite Jesse to the sacrifice. Then I will show you what to do. You must appoint the one I show you.'

⁴ Samuel did what the Lord told him to do. When he arrived at Bethlehem, the elders of Bethlehem shook with fear. They met him and asked, 'Are you coming in peace?' ⁵ Samuel answered, 'Yes, I come in peace. I have come to make a sacrifice to the Lord. Make yourselves holy for the Lord and come to the sacrifice with me.' Then he made Jesse and his sons holy for the Lord. And he invited them to come to the sacrifice.

⁶ When they arrived, Samuel saw Eliab. Samuel thought, 'Surely the Lord has appointed this person standing here before him.' ⁷ But the Lord said to Samuel, 'Don't look at how handsome Eliab is. Don't look at how tall he is. I have not chosen him. God does not see the same way people see. People look at the outside of a person, but the Lord looks at the heart.'

⁸ Then Jesse called Abinadab and told him to pass by Samuel. But Samuel said, 'The Lord has not chosen this man either.' ⁹ Then Jesse had Shammah pass by. But Samuel said, 'No, the Lord has not chosen this one.' ¹⁰ Jesse had seven of his sons pass by Samuel. But Samuel said to him, 'The Lord has not chosen any of these.' ¹¹ Then he asked Jesse, 'Are these all the sons you have?' Jesse answered, 'I still have the youngest son. He is out taking care of the sheep.' Samuel said, 'Send for him. We will not sit down to eat until he arrives.'

¹² So Jesse sent and had his youngest son brought in. He was a fine boy, tanned and handsome. The Lord said to Samuel, 'Go! Appoint him. He is the one.' ¹³ So Samuel took the container of olive oil. Then he poured oil on Jesse's youngest son to appoint him in front of his brothers. From that day on, the Lord's Spirit entered David with power. Samuel then went back to Ramah.

**TELL THE STORY**

- Invite the children to act out the anointing of David (Resource 2.1).
- Retell the story of David's anointing with objects to help engage children's thinking. Hiding the objects in boxes/bags could build intrigue and suspense as you tell the story. Objects could include¹:
 - An animal horn or a picture of one (this held the oil for anointing)
 - A baby doll or a small child figure (indicating that David was the youngest)
 - Binoculars (symbolising Samuel's search for the new king)
 - A crown (kings wear crowns - David was anointed king)
 - A dirty sock (David didn't have time to clean up before coming inside)
 - A family picture with lots of children (eight would be perfect - for David and his brothers)
 - A picture of a heart (God looks on the heart)
 - Index card with the Bible memory verse written on it
 - A picture of a dove or flames (Holy Spirit came upon David when he was anointed)
 - Index card with 'Old Testament' written on it (where this story is found)
 - A picture of a shepherd or small shepherd's crook (David was a shepherd)
 - A small bottle of oil (Samuel anointed David with oil)
 - A small stuffed sheep (David cared for his father's sheep)
 - A picture of praying hands (Samuel prayed to God)

¹ Adapted from <https://www.rotation.org/topic/wt-david-gods-chosen-king---games-1>



GET READY

Warm-Up Games

1. The Line Up Game

Split the children into mixed teams of five. Call out 'Everyone line up...' and fill in the blank with a statement. The children race to line up in the right order and signal when they have finished.

Statements could include:

- *in age order*
- *in first name alphabet order*
- *by height – shortest first*
- *according to your birthdays – first in the year goes first*
- *based on how many cousins you have – least cousins in front etc*

To make the game more challenging, you could try making the odd round silent, having the children communicating with gestures.

2. Sheep Herding

You will need:

- *Blindfolds*
- *Percussion instruments*

Split the children into teams. Appoint a 'shepherd' in each team and tell the rest of the children they will be 'sheep'. Explain that all sheep will be blindfolded and led to a space in the room. The aim of the game is for the shepherd to guide their sheep into a pre-designated 'pen' area using only an instrument.

Give teams 10 minutes to plan their strategy and have leaders overseeing the activity to watch for anyone struggling.

Rules:

- *No verbal communication is allowed after the preparation phase.*
- *Sheep must not remove blindfolds until the end of the exercise.*
- *The shepherd must not touch any sheep.*
- *The shepherd can only communicate with an instrument. The sheep can only return communications without speaking.*
- *If a leader shouts 'STOP' all must stop.*

3. Sheep Shearing (Messy Game)

You will need:

- *Several large pictures of sheep*
- *Shaving cream*
- *Paintbrushes / large lolly sticks*
- *Buckets or trays*
- *Dice*

Stick the picture of the sheep to a wall and spray shaving cream all over their wool. Place paintbrush 'shears' and buckets beside the shaving cream sheep. Split the children into teams and give each team a die. When teams roll a six, a child has five seconds to run up and use their team paintbrush to 'shear' their sheep. Once their time is up, they return to their team and the next child will get ready to go once another six is rolled. The winning team is the first to shear their entire sheep.

Introduce the Story

Ask the children if they know of any famous Davids (eg, David Attenborough, David Tennant, David de Gea, David Beckham, David Walliams). Then explain that while we know a little bit about these people – because they play sports; they care about the environment; they star on TV etc – we don't know everything. Ask the children if they know of any Davids in the Bible and to share what they know about the story.

Explain that we might know a little about the story of David and Goliath or may have heard of a small boy defeating a giant, but that there is lots more of the story to know. Then share the following video clip which tells the story of David and Goliath: <https://youtu.be/7zLAcUZkxHA>

Say: David was only able to defeat Goliath because God had put him there and prepared him for the task. Today we are going to find out how God chose David and helped him prepare for all the things God wanted him to do. David was anointed with oil; this means he had oil poured over him in a ceremony. In the Bible, anointing was a way of giving a person a blessing, for example, guests were anointed as they visited a home and children were anointed when they received a blessing or were chosen for a special task.



I WONDER

- *I wonder where you are in the story?*
- *I wonder why Samuel thought Jesse's oldest son would be the new king?*
- *I wonder why God chose David to be a king even though David was the youngest?*
- *I wonder how David responded to being chosen by God?*
- *I wonder how David felt being welcomed into God's family?*
- *I wonder how it would feel to be anointed?*
- *I wonder how David's brothers felt about David being picked?*
- *I wonder why David continued to be a shepherd for his father?*
- *I wonder if God has ever chosen you to do his work?*
- *I wonder how God will show you what he has chosen you to do?*
- *I wonder how we can serve those we love?*



IDEAS & ACTIVITIES

Get Thinking

You will need:

- Different sized boxes
- Wrapping paper
- Variety of small but important items (seeds, matches, magnets, keys, glasses, pin etc)

Before the session, put the small items inside different boxes and gift-wrap them. Ask: *Can you guess what is in this box? Do you think it is something important or not?*


As the children open the boxes, talk about each object inside. Ask: *What do we use it for? Why is it important? Do people have to be grown up to be important to Jesus? How did our story today highlight this? Remind the children that people who love Jesus also think that everybody else is important and valuable, and so they treat them with respect.*

Family Tree

You will need:

- Paper
- Pens/pencils

Share an example of a personal family tree and then ask the children to think about their own family tree. Who is part of their immediate family? Who is part of their extended family? Invite the children to draw their family trees; you can provide templates or allow the children to be creative. Allow discussions about the children's understanding of belonging and see if they consider themselves part of God's family.

 **Be aware this activity may not be easy for some children.**

A.C.H.I.E.V.E.

This activity is a chance for children to recognise their achievements and how God is preparing them for their calling. Each letter of ACHIEVE stands for a different area:

- Aspirations
- Church/community
- Home
- In-school
- Extra-curricular
- Volunteering
- Enjoyment

Give the children the space to write or draw their response to each area.

To make this a group activity, allow the children to add to a large collective display. This ensures children who don't have a lot to contribute to an area won't have blank spaces.

Stay And Serve

You will need:

- Large maps of the local area
- Sticky notes
- Pens/pencils

Print a large map of the area and ask the children to talk about the places they know and visit. Invite them to share about the different people they meet and interact with. Remind them that after being anointed, David continued to serve, staying as a shepherd for his family. Ask the children to think about different ways they can serve those they love and care for. Give them Sticky Notes and invite them to write down ways they can serve their family, friends and church and stick these on the map.

Art Craft²

You will need:

- White card or paper
- Watercolour paints and brush
- White wax crayon

Give the children some card, and using the white wax crayon have them write a message on the white card (wax 'resist art' technique) that communicates the idea of God knowing the real us. They can write 'God knows me', 'I love you', draw a picture of a heart etc. Discuss the fact that no one can see what they have written – only they know what is there. This is like judging people on appearances; we don't really know what they are like. Then tell the children to paint over the card. This will reveal the wax writing. Talk to the children about how God sees the beautiful people we are on the inside, even if other people can't. Challenge them with the question: *Who could you try to get to know better?*

² <http://flamecreativekids.blogspot.com/2014/02/god-knows-us-wax-resist-painting.html>



COULD YOU...

Many communities in the UK have seen a rise in the number of people who have sadly been made homeless. The Government has promised to end rough sleeping by the end of this Parliament in 2024, but since 2010 there has been a 165 per cent increase in the numbers of people on the streets. The Salvation Army is campaigning to ensure the Government keeps to this priority to end rough sleeping.

Could you:

- Create some learning experiences to help children empathise with those who are homeless (shelter building, how to eat with no heat, how to stay clean)
- Facilitate a discussion around how young people can safely support those who are homeless
- Write to your local MP individually or as a group
- Create a book of messages/postcards for those who are homeless which could be placed in local Salvation Army corps



PRAYER TIME

Before the session, cut out identical paper hearts, one for each child. Fold the hearts in half and cut out the middle sections. Open out the hearts and make a cut through one side of each heart.

Say: *Adults sometimes use the phrase 'What's on your heart?' meaning 'What do you care about?' Today we learned that God looks at our heart, not what we look like on the outside. God knows what we care about, our thoughts and our feelings.*

What is on your heart? What do you care about and want God to know?

Play some music and invite the children to use this time to share their thoughts with God, by writing their ideas around the heart.

Link the hearts together by overlapping the cut edges and glueing them (like making a paper chain).



CREATIVE SPACE

Ask the children to find a space on the floor and to lie down, relax and close their eyes. Everything you are going to ask them to do, they just need to think about – no need to talk. Say to them:

God wanted to choose someone special to be the king. He looked at all the people in the land and chose David, a shepherd boy. David was so busy taking care of the sheep that people had to go and look for him. When they found David, Samuel anointed him with oil. God has a job for each one of us to do. David's job was to be the King of Israel and he worked hard to be a good king. We can each do our best to do a good job at whatever God chooses us to do. We are all different, but God has a plan for each of us – whatever our size, wherever we're from, whatever we've done. Take some time to think about what God might be calling you to do and how you can prepare for it.

Within a sensible timeframe, sense the atmosphere in the room; then say, *When I say 'go' you can get up quietly. Count down from 3... 2... 1... Go.*



SUGGESTED SONGS

- 'Peace like a river' (Listener Kids)
- 'Ask, seek, knock' (Hillsong Kids)
- 'You are good' (Bethel Music Kids)
- 'Feels good' (Rend Co Kids)

RESOURCE 2.1 - NARRATOR'S SCRIPT - THE ANOINTING OF DAVID

The following script requires a few lead actors to take on roles, but then either leaders or children could be Jesse's children.

Suggested actions and responses are in brackets. Pause in the narration and encourage the students to use their imagination. There should be a child acting as Samuel in the drama as well as Samuel the narrator.

You will need:

- A board/paper with the words 'No! People look on a person's outside, but God looks on the inside' written on it

[Samuel appears] Good morning. My name is Samuel. I am a judge, a prophet, and a priest, called by God. I could tell you many stories – about Saul, the first King of Israel; about his son Jonathan; about a giant named Goliath; and about a great king named David. I don't have time to tell all the stories today, but I do want to tell you a story about David. Did you know that he was not always a great king? It all started like this...

God was unhappy with the way Saul, the person the people of Israel chose to be their first king, was behaving. He was not following God's way. One day, God talked to me about it. I was told that God had already chosen a new king and I was to go and anoint him. I argued with God for a while, because it would be pretty dangerous! We already had a king, and I was afraid King Saul would kill me if he knew I was going to anoint a new one. But God told me to go on, to plan a sacrifice as a cover-up, and anoint this new king – a son of Jesse of Bethlehem.

So I packed my bag and was off to Bethlehem for an anointing and a sacrifice to the Lord. The town leaders were a bit concerned when I showed up, but I told them it was a peaceful visit. Everyone got cleaned up and gathered for the sacrifice, including Jesse and his seven sons. Such handsome young men! But which one was to be king? I trusted that God would tell me which to choose.

[Jesse arrives on stage and greets Samuel] Well, I could tell it wouldn't be a problem finding a king in this crowd of fine young men! I started with Eliab, the oldest.

[Eliab comes on stage. Samuel faces him] This first son of Jesse is such a fine young man. Since he is the eldest and has an important role in this fine family, I was sure this was the chosen one.

But God said, **[child playing God]** 'No! People look on a person's outside, but God looks on the inside.'

Well, I asked for the next son, Abinadab. **[Abinadab comes on stage]** I thought, 'See how tall this one is! Everyone will have to look up to this one as king. Good choice, God.' **[child playing God holds up the poster board, and points to it encouraging everyone to say the phrase]** 'No! People look on a person's outside, but God looks on the inside.'

So I called for Shammah, the third son. **[Shammah comes on stage]** He was so handsome, a splendid example of one who should be king. The people would be proud of such a king. I started to ask him to kneel, when God said, **[God points to the poster board and all say together]** 'No! People look on a person's outside, but God looks on the inside.'

So I asked for son number four. By this time, I was confused about all their names. I still can't remember them all! **[The fourth son comes on stage]** This son had big bulging muscles, and I thought he would be a strong leader. But God said, **[poster board]** 'No! People look on a person's outside, but God looks on the inside.'

Then came son number five. **[The fifth son comes on stage]** This son had such a wonderful smile. I was sure this would be a jolly king. But again God said, **[poster board]** 'No! People look on a person's outside, but God looks on the inside.'

I was getting used to this now, so I called for son number six. **[Son number six comes on stage]** This son was very well-dressed. He would make a proper king. But God said, **[poster board]** 'No! People look on a person's outside, but God looks on the inside.'

Finally, I called for the seventh son. **[Seventh son comes on stage]** This one had such magnificent curls – truly a crowning glory for a king. But once again, God said, **[poster board]** 'No! People look on a person's outside, but God looks on the inside.'

Well, I knew something was wrong. And I didn't think it could be the Lord. I had met all seven of Jesse's sons, and not one of them was the one God wanted. There had to be another son. So I asked Jesse. Then he told me of his youngest, the one who just watched the sheep and made up songs. **[Samuel and Jesse face each other. Then David comes on stage].**

When this son arrived, David was his name and I could see he was young. He had been looking after the sheep, and judging by how dirty he looked he must've been in the pasture for ages. Still I could see he was a handsome, healthy young man. How his eyes sparkled when he came into the room! And the Lord spoke to me again – but this time God said, 'Yes, this is the one I choose. People look on a person's outside, but God looks on the inside.'

[Samuel anoints David] Well, my job was done. I made the sacrifice to the Lord and returned home alone, but with this secret. I could see the Spirit of the Lord was with David. David would be OK there in Bethlehem until it was time for him to serve God and God's people as king of Israel.

<https://www.rotation.org/topic/drama-puppet-storytelling-workshop-lessons-for-anointing-of-david>

Adapted by Amy Crane and Jan Marshall

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Session 3

THE LITTLE SERVANT GIRL AND NAAMAN

2 Kings 5:1-19 (*International Children's Bible*)



SESSION AIMS

- To reflect on the boldness and strong faith of the servant girl
- To consider some of the unfair issues and injustices that are going on locally, nationally and globally
- To understand that we can play a part in God's Big Story by speaking out against injustices and taking appropriate action



LEADER'S REFLECTION

The servant girl modelled compassion and faith

This story takes place during Elisha's ministry, when Israel had divided into two kingdoms. Elisha was God's prophet to the northern kingdom of Israel, having succeeded Elijah. Elisha was a courageous prophet – a man of God who stood firm against the evil kings of Israel and performed amazing miracles for those in need.

Israel's neighbour to the north east was the kingdom of Aram (modern-day Syria). These two kingdoms didn't get on. Aram was growing in power, and often raided Israel taking captive Israelites back across the border. One of the people they kidnapped was a young girl. We don't know her name but she was given to an important military leader called Naaman to be a slave in his house. There she served as a maid to Naaman's wife.

Naaman was a mighty leader and warrior. As commander of the King of Aram's army, he had a powerful position. But he had contracted the skin disease, leprosy. This would have been a dreadful

shock for him as leprosy then was a dreaded disease that would force people to leave their homes to live in quarantine camps and, in its worst form, could lead to death. There was no cure for leprosy, and Naaman would have known that his disease meant the beginning of the end of his power, status and health. But the Jewish servant girl knew that her God could heal him. She remembered the prophet Elisha, how God was with him and used him to do miracles. She had held on to her faith in God, even though she was a young girl taken away from her home to be a slave in a foreign land. She felt sorry for Naaman and, filled with compassion and faith, she spoke up. What faith and courage she had to do this! If Naaman had gone to the trouble of seeing Elisha and he wasn't healed, she would have been in danger when he returned. However, she still spoke up and played her part in his healing and ultimately his salvation. Naaman travelled to Israel, sought out Elisha, and when he finally agreed to do what Elisha said – dip in the River Jordan seven times – he was cured immediately, causing him to come to faith.

What do we learn from this little servant girl? In what ways should we try to follow her example?

- She was full of faith, even though she was young
- She had compassion for Naaman, her slave master
- She was trustworthy enough for her message to be passed on
- She was a blessing to Naaman by sharing the truth about God
- Despite her situation, she was still able to serve God and show kindness
- Her faith was effective, generating hope that Naaman would be cured. It opened up opportunities to witness to Naaman's family, the king of Aram and the king of Israel

As you plan for this session, consider:

Which of the girl's qualities would you like to have more of?

In what ways do you bring hope to others, or are a blessing to others?

Is there a situation where you ought to be playing your part, even if it is small?

Pray about these things now.



MEMORY VERSE

'Now I know that there's no god in the whole world, except the God of Israel'

Excerpt from 2 Kings 5:15
(*God's Word translation*)



GET READY

Warm-Up Game

River/Bank

Make a long line through your room with masking tape. Name one side of the tape the river and the other side the bank. Get all the children to line up, shoulder-to-shoulder, on the bank. Shout out one of two commands – 'river' or 'bank'. If you shout 'river', the children must jump forward across the boundary line into the river. For bank, children must jump back to the bank. You can call bank or river many times in a row to try and catch someone out. If a child jumps when they are not supposed to (or fails to jump on time), they are out and can help you judge the game.

Introduce the Story

You will need:

- A bowl of water
- Washing-up liquid
- Finely ground black pepper

Wash and dry your hands, then shake some black pepper evenly on to the water. It will float. Stick one finger in the water six times, let the children count as you do this. Nothing much happens. Now put a drop of washing-up liquid on the tip of your finger and dip it into the water. The pepper will immediately rush to the edge of the bowl. This is caused by the washing-up liquid rupturing the surface tension of the water.

Make sure you practise first. You need enough pepper on the water to see it easily, but the more you shake on, the less the pepper will move to the edge of the bowl. Watch a demo: <https://youtu.be/eR-ZV-fQok>

Say: *Maybe you didn't expect a difference when I put my finger in the last time, but there was! A tiny drop of washing-up liquid made a big difference. In our story today there was a young servant girl who boldly spoke up. At first you might think the servant girl didn't do much, but by playing her part an amazing thing happened.*



SCRIPTURE: 2 KINGS 5:1-16 (INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S BIBLE)

¹ Naaman was commander of the army of the king of Aram. He was a great man to his master. He had much honour because the Lord had used him to give victory to Aram. He was a mighty and brave man. But he had a harmful skin disease. ² The Arameans had gone out to steal from the Israelites. And they had taken a little girl as a captive from Israel. This little girl served Naaman's wife. ³ She said to her mistress, 'I wish that my master would meet the prophet who lives in Samaria. He would heal Naaman of his disease.'

⁴ Naaman went to the king. He told him what the girl from Israel had said. ⁵ The king of Aram said, 'Go now. And I will send a letter to the king of Israel.' So Naaman left and took about 750 pounds of silver. He also took about 150 pounds of gold and ten changes of clothes with him. ⁶ He brought the letter to the king of Israel. It read, 'I am sending my servant Naaman to you. I'm sending him so you can heal him of his skin disease.' ⁷ The king of Israel read the letter. Then he tore his clothes to show how upset he was. He said, 'I'm not God! I can't kill and make alive again! Why does this man send someone with a harmful skin disease for me to heal? You can see that the king of Aram is trying to start trouble with me!'

⁸ Elisha, the man of God, heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes. So he sent a message to the king. It said, 'Why have you become so upset that you tore your clothes? Let Naaman come to me. Then he will know there is a prophet in Israel!' ⁹ So Naaman went with his horses and chariots to Elisha's house. And he stood outside the door. ¹⁰ Elisha sent a messenger to Naaman. The messenger said, 'Go and wash in the Jordan River seven times. Then your skin will be healed, and you will be clean.'

¹¹ Naaman became angry and left. He said, 'I thought Elisha would surely come out and stand before me. I thought he would call on the name of the Lord his God. I thought he would wave his hand over the place and heal the disease! ¹² Abana and Parpar, the rivers of Damascus, are better than all the waters of Israel! Why can't I wash in them and become clean?' So Naaman went away very angry. ¹³ But Naaman's servants came near and talked to him. They said, 'My father, if the prophet had told you to do some great thing, wouldn't you have done it? Doesn't it make more sense just to do it? After all, he only told you, "Wash, and you will be clean."' ¹⁴ So Naaman went down and dipped in the Jordan seven times. He did just as Elisha had said. Then Naaman's skin became new again. It was like the skin of a little boy. And Naaman was clean!

¹⁵ Naaman and all his group came back to Elisha. He stood before Elisha and said, 'Look. I now know there is no God in all the earth except in Israel! Now please accept a gift from me.' ¹⁶ But Elisha said, 'I serve the Lord. As surely as the Lord lives, I won't accept anything.' Naaman urged him to take the gift, but he refused.



TELL THE STORY

- As you read 'The Helpful Servant' in the Lion Storyteller's Bible, ask some of your team and/or the children to act the story out. If you don't have the Lion Storyteller's Bible, read the International Children's Bible translation and show a set of pictures from freebibleimages.org. Search '2 Kings' on the website and you will find some pictures that you can paste into a PowerPoint presentation.
- Watch the story (3:21) <https://youtu.be/xcltsWKbvyM> or play the animation in the Friends & Heroes DVDs (episode 20).
- Ask the children to gather some small objects from around the room. Then stick self-adhesive 'googly eyes' on to each object to transform them into people – one object for every character in the story. Eg, use a hole punch to play Naaman, and a hairbrush to be the servant girl – whatever the children bring back. Use some brown felt or other material to be the dirty River Jordan. Invite the children to hold and move each object as you tell the story.



I WONDER

- I wonder which part of the story you liked best?
- I wonder which part is the most important?
- I wonder if the servant girl had a name?
- I wonder why the servant girl wanted to speak up?
- I wonder why Naaman decided to listen to the girl?
- I wonder why God healed Naaman?
- I wonder what good qualities the servant girl showed in this story?
- I wonder if you have ever spoken up about something or for someone?
- I wonder if you have ever spoken up about your friend Jesus?



COULD YOU...

If you have more time, consider exploring:

- Modern slavery. Human trafficking is nothing new. The servant girl in today's story was taken from her home and forced to work for a foreign employer. Perhaps you could get older groups to research the subject of modern slavery. More info here – www.salvationarmy.org.uk/modern-slavery
- Malala Yousafzai, the young Pakistani activist for female education. Malala's website, www.malala.org and the BBC Newsround page, www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/46865195 are good places to start reading more about Malala's story.



CREATIVE SPACE

Ask the children to find a space on the floor and to lie down, relax and close their eyes. Everything you are going to ask them to do they just need to think about – no need to talk. Say to them:

Imagine each part of you coming under the shower of God's special washing. First your head – imagine God's special washing cleaning away unhelpful thoughts. Now your mouth and tongue – washing away rude or unkind words. Your heart – washing away selfishness. Your hands – washing away any bad activities you've been involved in. Your feet – washing away the memory of unhelpful places you have been. Because Jesus died for us, the Holy Spirit can wash us clean on the inside like this. Thank you, Holy Spirit, for washing us clean. Thank you, Jesus, because we can come back to be made clean again and again.

Within a reasonable timeframe, sense the atmosphere in the room; then say, *When I say 'go' you can get up quietly. Count down from 3... 2... 1... Go.*



IDEAS & ACTIVITIES

Storyboard

You will need:

- Bibles
- Paper
- Colouring pens/pencils

Give each child a part of the Naaman story below, and ask them to draw a picture representing that part of the story. Some children will need to draw two pictures or more so you have the whole story covered. Others might prefer to work in pairs. Ask the children to draw big pictures so everyone can see it. When everyone has finished, ask the group to lay the pictures on the floor and go through the story together by asking each artist to tell their part of the story.

You could suggest that the children draw simple shapes with facial features, like Mr Men characters, instead of trying to draw realistic people.

2 Kings 5:

- v1 - a picture of Naaman, showing sores on his skin
- vv2-3 - the servant girl talking to Naaman's wife, about Elisha
- v4a - Naaman talking to the king of Aram
- v4b - Naaman travelling to Israel, with silver, gold and clothing as gifts
- v7 - the king of Israel reading the letter from the king of Aram and getting nervous
- v8 - Elisha's messenger telling the king of Israel to send Naaman to him
- vv9-10 - Naaman, with his horses and chariots at Elisha's front door
- vv11-12 - Naaman angry about Elisha's response
- v13 - Naaman's men reasoning with him
- v14a - Naaman dipping in the Jordan
- v14b - Naaman with his healed, smooth skin
- vv15-16 - Naaman offering gifts to Elisha, which he refuses

Freeze-Frame

Similar to the storyboard, but instead of drawings use a digital camera and take a series of photographs of the children acting out scenes from the story. Print the photos, stick them together, and display them. You could use washable felt-tip markers to draw sores on to Naaman's face.

Reporter

Have the children write a newspaper report of the story. Get them to think about what the main headline would be. The

report could also include a picture. Some children could imagine what happened to:


- Naaman and his family once he was cured and discovered God
- the servant girl when Naaman returned from seeing Elisha and write a report about that.

Speaking Up For Injustices

You will need:

- A range of pictures from the internet/newspapers representing injustice, eg people who have been trafficked, disease, poverty, famine, lack of clean water to drink, homelessness, bullying, abuse, climate change, child labour, deforestation, pollution, plastic in oceans, war, crime, lack of NHS hospital beds, animal cruelty.

Have a discussion with the children about injustices (unfair things) that exist in the world, their neighbourhood or school, then show the pictures that represent injustice. For an older group you can use newspaper cuttings with headlines and articles. Lay out the pictures on the floor so the children can see them all.

 **Be very sensitive to which pictures and subjects you choose based on the children you are working with.**

Ask the group some questions, such as:

- What is the injustice you see in the picture? / What bad or unfair thing is happening here?
- Who needs help?
- What needs to change to make things right again?

Discuss what they, as children, could do to help stop injustice happening – eg telling a parent or teacher; standing up for someone; writing a letter or email to an MP or the Prime Minister; writing to a newspaper to raise awareness; starting a petition.

Ask each child to choose an injustice they feel strongly about, then invite them to do one of the following:

1. Write a letter to an MP, the PM, their headteacher or a newspaper. The letter should say what the issue is, what harm this is causing, how they feel about it, and what you want them to do about it.
2. Make a poster to raise awareness about the injustice.



PRAYER TIME

Prayers for injustices

Gather around in a circle with the pictures from the 'Speaking Up For Injustices' activity placed in the middle as prompts for prayer. Let each child choose a picture they feel strongly about (more than one child can pray for the same situation) and invite them to say a prayer for that situation and the people involved in it.



SUGGESTED SONGS

- 'You can reach out' (Doug Horley)
- 'Supernatural' (Hillsong kids)
- 'On the march' (Hillsong kids)
- 'Live humbly trusting God' (Doug Horley)
- 'Shout your fame' (Hillsong kids)

Session 4

TIMOTHY

2 Timothy 1:5-14 (*International Children's Bible*)

SESSION AIMS

- To understand that Jesus equips us as his followers
- To explore practical ways in which we can serve one another
- To explore how we serve those in our communities and church



LEADER'S REFLECTION

Timothy modelled how to be an unwavering disciple of Jesus

Home means different things to different people. For many, but not all, it's a place of safety, comfort and happiness. For Timothy, home was Lystra, a city in what is now Turkey. Like many young children, Timothy was raised in his faith by his mother and grandmother. His faith was tied to family and home, and he became respected in his home church. But God's plan for Timothy didn't involve just Lystra. Instead, Timothy ended up following Paul, visiting churches and carrying his message to places like Corinth.

When disputes between leaders caused division in the church in Ephesus, Paul counted on Timothy to sort it out (1 Timothy 1 and 2). Timothy faced an uphill struggle in Ephesus. This was a church that had relied on direct instruction from the apostles, and now seemed lost. Paul had to deal with teachers who had different beliefs about everyday life that weren't consistent with Jesus' teaching (1 Timothy 1:3-11). Paul sent Timothy to take charge, remove the false teachers and put new, honest teachers in their place. It was a long journey for a boy who learned about Jesus by going to church with his mother

and grandma, but Paul's teaching and mentorship had equipped Timothy well for the task ahead. Paul reminds us that if we stick close to the teaching of Jesus, then nothing can lead us astray (2 Timothy 3:15).

Timothy was also timid (1 Corinthians 16:10) and struggled to find his voice. In 2 Timothy we see Paul telling Timothy that God has given him a spirit of bravery, not timidity, and that he has to stand up and make a difference. Timothy may even have helped Paul with writing some books in the Bible, and throughout the remainder of his life he never wavered as a disciple of Jesus. Even when he was imprisoned for a time, he remained true to his calling (Hebrews 13:23).

Timothy's legacy was that of faithful Christian service. As you plan for this session, consider:

How does Timothy's example encourage you to meet the needs of people in your community?

How can you and your team model practical ways of showing God's love and service to the children?

No matter the situation, Timothy was faithful in his calling because God equipped him. Thank God for the ways God has equipped you for your calling.

**MEMORY VERSE**

'You have been taught the holy Scriptures from childhood, and they have given you the wisdom to receive the salvation that comes by trusting in Christ Jesus.'

2 Timothy 3:15 (NLT)

**TELL THE STORY**

- Create a 'prison wall' backdrop and ask a leader to learn the words of the Bible reading. Tell the children that Paul is writing to Timothy, and as they listen, ask them to think about what Paul is telling Timothy. What stands out to them? Then, with passion and enthusiasm, get the leader to share the reading with children. In small groups, ask the children to come up with questions they would like to ask, and invite them to be visitors to the prison where they can speak to Paul and ask him questions.
- Watch the summary of Timothy as a part of God's Story www.youtube.com/watch?v=w4GSFluzBSA

**SCRIPTURE: 2 TIMOTHY 1:5-14**
(INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S BIBLE)

⁵ I remember your true faith. That kind of faith first belonged to your grandmother Lois and to your mother Eunice. And I know that you now have that same faith. ⁶ That is why I remind you to use the gift God gave you. God gave you that gift when I laid my hands on you. Now let it grow, as a small flame grows into a fire. ⁷ God did not give us a spirit that makes us afraid. He gave us a spirit of power and love and self-control. ⁸ So do not be ashamed to tell people about our Lord Jesus. And do not be ashamed of me. I am in prison for the Lord. But suffer with me for the Good News. God gives us the strength to do that. ⁹ God saved us and made us his holy people. That was not because of anything we did ourselves but because of what he wanted and because of his grace. That grace was given to us through Christ Jesus before time began. ¹⁰ It was not shown to us until our Saviour Christ Jesus came. Jesus destroyed death. And through the Good News, he showed us the way to have life that cannot be destroyed. ¹¹ I was chosen to tell that Good News and to be an apostle and a teacher. ¹² And I suffer now because I tell the Good News. But I am not ashamed. I know Jesus, the One I have believed in. And I am sure that he is able to protect what he has trusted me with until that Day. ¹³ Follow the true teachings you heard from me. Follow them as an example of the faith and love we have in Christ Jesus. ¹⁴ Protect the truth that you were given. Protect it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.

**I WONDER**

- *I wonder how God helped Timothy to share his faith?*
- *I wonder how God helps us to share our faith?*
- *I wonder how it felt for Timothy to be away from home?*
- *I wonder how we could help the communities we're part of even when we're not comfortable?*

**COULD YOU...****Get children serving?**

Set up some opportunities for your children to spend 10 or 15 minutes serving their church or community. This could be litter-picking the area outside, picking up leaves outside the hall, praying for situations in the local area or wider world, making biscuits to serve the congregation. Or you could arrange for the children to interview someone from the congregation about what serving looks like to them.

See flamecreativekids.blogspot.com/search/label/serving for inspiration!



GET READY

Warm-Up Games

1. My Friends

Start by having the children place their chairs into a large circle. Stand in the middle and say, 'All my friends like...'; filling in the blank with anything you enjoy – swimming, sushi, reading etc. Any child who also enjoys the thing you mentioned has to switch spots with another person in the circle. Whoever doesn't have a spot goes in the middle and says, 'All my friends...', starting the process again.

2. Rock, Paper, Scissors Tag

Before you begin, mark out boundaries and position a home base at either end. Divide the children into two teams and have them line up facing one another. On your signal have all players flash rock, paper, scissors, shoot! The kids on the losing team must run back to their base before one of the kids on the winning team tags them.

3. Mingle, Mingle Groups

Tell the children to walk around the room whispering 'Mingle, mingle, mingle.' When a number is called, the children will need to break into groups of that size. The goal is to form different groups of individuals every time. Vary the length of time between calling out numbers to allow the children to mix.

4. I'm Going On A Trip...

Announce that the children are going on an imaginary trip but they can only bring certain items along. Any object they bring must meet a specific criterion and their goal is to figure out what that is. If the children think they've figured it out, they need to guess to confirm, rather than shouting out what the criterion is.

For example, say, 'I'm going to Hawaii, and I'm going to bring [a swimsuit]'. Then the children take turns saying what they are going to bring – 'I'm going to Hawaii, and I'm

going to bring [a palm tree]'. Based on your criteria, after each statement, respond 'Yes, you can' or 'No, you can't.'

Example criteria could be:

- *You must say 'um' or 'uh' before you make the statement*
- *The items must go in alphabetical order*
- *The items must have a double letter in it*
- *The items must all consist of the same number of letters*

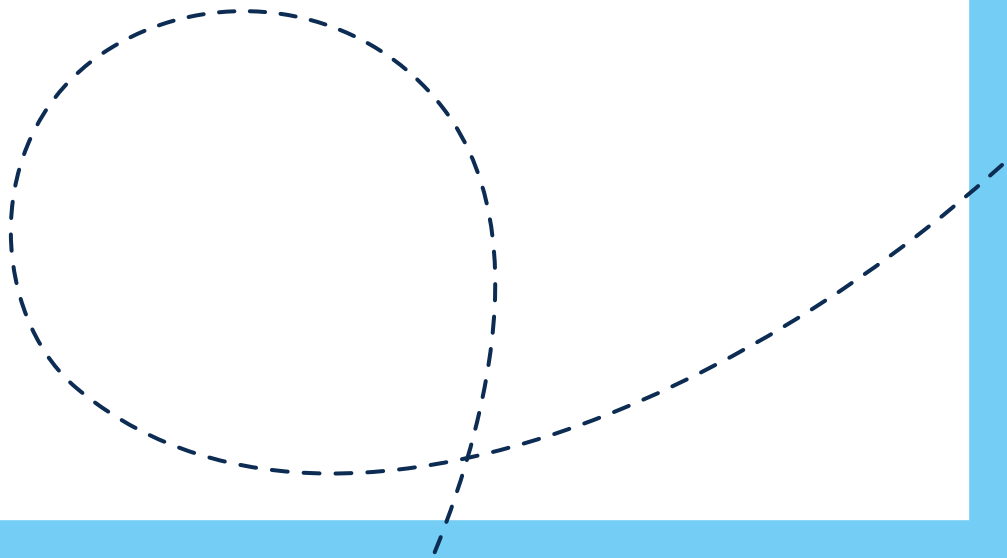
Introduce the Story

Give each child a different word from the memory verse. If you have a lot of children, give several children the same word. Have the children mix themselves up and crouch down. As you read the verse, the children should each jump up when they hear their word. Then have them quickly crouch down again. Reread the verse a few times in several ways – fast, slow, in a high voice, in a low voice. Finally, read the verse and have kids jump up and stand in a line in order, like the verse.

Timothy is a great role model. As a young boy he wanted to learn more about Jesus and went to live in his community to share the good news of Jesus with them. Timothy had role models in his family – close family members who showed him how to follow Jesus.

Our role models are often people who have particular skills and people we want to be like. Create a giant wall using a roll of wallpaper and ask the children to draw their role models and label them with reasons why. When they have finished, get the children to share their examples with the others in the group.

Our role models have particular skills and strengths. As Christians, we believe God equips us with all we need to follow him and serve those who need our help in the world.





IDEAS & ACTIVITIES

Acts Of Random Kindness Challenge

An act of random kindness (ARK) is something that is unexpectedly done by a person in an attempt to help someone else. Ask the children to choose two people they would like to help during the next week and think about what action they could take to show kindness towards those people. Challenge them to share the idea of ARKs with some of their friends. Watch the video: www.youtube.com/watch?v=T4c0QZG01YE for more information.

Human Knots

Have at least six children sitting together in a circle. Tell them to randomly gently grab someone else's wrist and hold on to it. Once everyone's wrists are accounted for, the children need to try to untangle themselves, without letting go of anyone's wrists. Warn the kids to play this game slowly at first so that no one gets hurt.

Challenge the children not to speak during the activity; this will force them to communicate only with body language.

Real-Life Examples

Invite the children to make a list or a spider diagram of famous people who have changed the world by going against what society says is normal (eg Greta Thunberg, William Wilberforce, Malala Yousafzai, Anne Frank, Louis Braille).

There are also examples of young people who are not as famous but who have still made a profound difference. Perhaps leaders in your group could research different young people and share inspirational stories with the children.

Ask the following questions, and give the children time to think of their answers:

- *How could you make a difference?*
- *Where might you be able to make a difference?*

You've Got Talents¹

You will need:

- *Four A3 sheets of paper*
- *Four boxes of colouring pens/pencils*

Tell the children that you would like to create four identical drawings and you need their help. Place the paper and colours in the four corners of the room making sure that the others can't see each corner's

sheet. Ask four volunteers to go to each piece of paper, and draw a head toward the top of the paper with a black marker, then turn the paper over so no one else can see.

Send four new volunteers to the corners and ask them to add red hair on the head, again turning the drawing over once they're done. The next four volunteers are to draw a blue hat on the person.

Continue having the volunteers sit down and getting new volunteers, and give instructions about what to draw and what colour to use. Be as specific as you can – what colour to use and where to draw it (for example, eyes, nose, mouth, freckles, a shirt, trousers, shoelaces etc). When you've finished, have the last volunteers bring the posters up to the front and make a big deal about how they are going to look exactly the same because of your exact instructions. When you reveal them, of course, they don't! Talk about how unique we are, even when we have some of the same things like blond hair, brown eyes or other abilities. God made us all different, he has given us all gifts and talents to use, and that is what makes us special, and the world such a great place.

Small Group Activity

You will need:

- *Paper*
- *Markers*
- *Ink pad*

Have the children trace an outline of a hand on the paper with a marker. Then using the ink pad, have them put a fingerprint in the middle of the picture of their hand. On each finger ask them to write a talent or skill that they have and allow them to decorate the drawings. Compare and see that the drawings – and even their fingerprints – are different!

Discussion Questions:

1. *Why do you suppose God chose to make everyone different?*
2. *Why does God give us gifts and talents?*
3. *If we are the only ones with our specific combination of gifts and talents, how important is it that we learn what our gifts are?*
4. *Why is it important to use the gifts and talents we have?*

¹ http://storage.cloversites.com/shorelinechurchofchrist/documents/DT_Gifts_Isn_1.pdf



CREATIVE SPACE

Ask the children to find a space on the floor and to lie down, relax and close their eyes. Everything you are going to ask them to do they just need to think about – no need to talk. Say to them: *Timothy's faith in God was strong, partly due to the great influences around him. His mother and grandmother brought him up in faith; and as a mentor, Paul challenged and pushed him to stretch his faith. Who has been a great influence in your life? Who has challenged you to stretch your faith? Think of a few people that you would like to thank, and thank God for the role they play in your life. Think about the people you spend time with regularly. Ask God to help you to be a great influence in their life.*

Within a sensible time frame, sense the atmosphere in the room then say, *when I say 'go' you can get up quietly.* Count down from 3... 2... 1... Go.



SUGGESTED SONGS

- 'My Lighthouse' (Rend Co Kids)
- 'Tell the world' (Hillsong Kids)
- 'Let your light shine' (Hillsong Kids)
- 'Shine' (Elevation Kids)



PRAYER TIME

Reflective Chatterbox

You will need:

- Chatterbox (resource 4.1)

Split the children into smaller groups. Give them a chatterbox which will help them to think about prayer and God. They can discuss the questions in their groups.

Prayer Through Movement

There are ways to pray with kids that teach how their minds and bodies communicate with God. Take the children through the actions and then invite each child to find a space in the room. Read out the following whilst doing the actions.

1. (Take three deep breaths)
2. God, you are above (reach toward the sky), below (touch your toes), inside (hands to heart) and all around (big arm circles)
3. I worship you (reach toward the sky), and give my life to you (touch your toes)
4. And I love you (hands to heart) with all that I am (big arm circles)
5. (Take three deep breaths)

Breath Prayers

You will need:

- A bottle of bubbles

Sit the children in a circle and ask them to think of a person or situation they would like to pray for. Explain that sometimes we don't need words to pray and that today they are going to pray with the help of the bubbles. Pass the bottle of bubbles around the circle and ask each child to blow some bubbles as they think quietly about the person or situation they are praying for.


RESOURCE 4.1 - CHATTERBOX


 <http://flamecreativekids.blogspot.com/2012/11/reflection-question-origami-chatterbox.html>

Instructions:

1. Cut out the black square
2. Fold the square in half lengthways and across the middle
3. Turn the square over so the writing is facing down. Fold the four corners into the middle
4. Turn the square over again and fold the new four corners into the middle
5. Fold in half so the questions face in
6. Put your fingers in the pockets and use your chatterbox



Session 5

JESUS CALLS THE CHILDREN

Matthew 18:1-6; 19:13-15 (*International Children's Bible*)

SESSION AIMS

- To know we are loved by the God we serve
- To know that we have got all it takes to serve and be an example to others



LEADER'S REFLECTION

The children modelled an innocent trust in God

This session doesn't follow the story of a child in the Bible who served; instead it empowers children to be servants. The Scriptures show how Jesus used children as an example of the qualities we need, in order to have a place in the Kingdom of God.

The fact the disciples turned children away wouldn't have seemed cruel in biblical times. In Jewish culture, children weren't considered important or even to have a place in society. The disciples would have presumed that Jesus didn't want to see the children and were showing respect to his position as a teacher. This was the norm in society.

As he did with many of his actions, Jesus turned 'normal' on its head. He welcomed the children, blessed them and used them to teach his disciples a better way; he told his disciples to be like children. He was not telling them to be *childish* but *childlike*.

- He wants them to live with humility. Jesus used the children's humble position in society as a symbol of the way we must approach God - with humility.
- He wants them to have a trusting faith. The children ran past the disciples when Jesus called them because they trusted him. They had no fear of him.

Jesus wanted his disciples to see that trust, and put it into action themselves.

- Jesus hints towards the innocence of children. In Jewish society, their innocence was seen as immaturity. When Jesus talks about becoming like a child, he is saying we can only enter the Kingdom when we are depending on Jesus and not on ourselves.

The children in the Scriptures came (with their parents), trusting in what Jesus would do for them - that he would show love and compassion. In his interaction with these children, Jesus lifts their status higher than the disciples would have seen them.

This session, the children will be empowered by the fact that Jesus loves them and lifts their status to feel that they too can go out and serve.

As you plan for this session, consider:

In what areas of life do you need to become more childlike?

How can you increase your humility, trust and dependency on Jesus?

How do you view your children? Are they 'just' children or are they truly capable of being used by God?

**MEMORY VERSE**

'Don't let anyone think less of you because you are young. Be an example to all believers in what you say, in the way you live, in your love, your faith, and your purity.'

1 Timothy 4:12 (NLT)

**SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 19:13-15**
(INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S BIBLE)

¹³ Then the people brought their little children to Jesus so that he could put his hands on them and pray for them. When his followers saw this, they told the people to stop bringing their children to Jesus. ¹⁴ But Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to me. Don't stop them, because the kingdom of heaven belongs to people who are like these children.' ¹⁵ After Jesus put his hands on the children, he left there.

**SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 18:1-6**
(INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S BIBLE)

¹ At that time the followers came to Jesus and asked, 'Who is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?' ² Jesus called a little child to him. He stood the child before the followers. ³ Then he said, 'I tell you the truth. You must change and become like little children. If you don't do this, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.' ⁴ The greatest person in the kingdom of heaven is the one who makes himself humble like this child.

⁵ 'Whoever accepts a little child in my name accepts me.' ⁶ If one of these little children believes in me, and someone causes that child to sin, then it will be very bad for that person. It would be better for him to have a large stone tied around his neck and be drowned in the sea.

**GET READY****Warm-Up Games****1. Stuck In The Mud**

Pick two children (depending on your numbers) to be 'disciples' and get them to stand in the middle of the room. The rest of the children have to get from one side of the room to Jesus on the other side, avoiding the disciples. When the disciples tag a child, they must stop moving because they're 'stuck in the mud'. They stand with their arms open and are only released if another child goes under their arms.

2. Pin The Children Next To Jesus

You will need:

- A large picture of Jesus
- Pins / Blu-tack
- Cut-out pictures of children

Put the picture of Jesus up on the wall and blindfold the children. Spin them around and get them to pin the child's image next to Jesus.

Introduce the Story

Say: *In the Bible, it says that Jesus talks about children and uses them as an example to others. Our Bible verses for this session are some examples of this. Jesus uses the qualities children have to show the adults around him what they should be like. What do we think these qualities could be?*

Jesus wanted the adults around him to know how important it is to be like a child. He talks about childlike faith and being humble. This would have been a shock to the people around him as they didn't think children were very useful or important.

These stories show Jesus thinks children are very important, and can teach adults a thing or two! In church, we talk about being followers of Jesus. Children are called to be followers as much as adults are, and you can do your bit to serve others.



TELL THE STORY

- Put the words of Matthew 18:1-6 into balloons and invite the children to pop each balloon and put the Bible verses together.
- Ask one of the leaders to be Jesus, the others will play the disciples or parents. The children will play either the crowd or children in the story. Have a narrator read the passage from a story Bible while the characters act. Challenge the leaders and children to retell the story without a narrator.



I WONDER

- *I wonder how we serve?*
- *I wonder where we could serve?*
- *I wonder who we serve?*
- *I wonder why we serve?*
- *I wonder how we feel when we serve?*
- *I wonder how others feel when we serve?*
- *I wonder how God feels when we serve?*



IDEAS & ACTIVITIES

Small Group Discussion

In small groups look at the Bible memory verse (1 Timothy 4:12) and discuss why people might look down on young people. Together with the children, come up with a list of ideas of how young people can set an example to older people. Think about the words 'speech', 'love', 'faith', 'purity'. *Can we think of some young people who have been an example to others? How do we feel about their stories?*

News Report

Split children into small groups and give them different roles:

- Reporter
- Interviewer
- Jesus
- Disciples
- Parents
- Children

Challenge the children to create a news report on either Scripture and present it back. Have someone available to record the reports. Let the groups try different roles to deepen their understanding of the story.

Drama

Ask the children to write and perform a play about one of the stories in this session.

Poem

Invite the children to write a poem about how we can serve others. You could share an example with the children first. They can make an acrostic poem or a short rhyming verse. If there are any rappers, they could write their lyrics to a beat. Spend some time sharing each child's poem.

Get Arty

You will need:

- Paint
- Paper
- Colouring pens / pencils
- Paintbrushes

Give the children art materials and space to create an image of God's Kingdom, with themselves within it. Remind children that God loves them all and he has a place for each of them in his Kingdom.

Poster

Have the children design a poster around the theme 'Children of God Serve.' Inspire them by asking: *What would you put on the poster? How can you draw different ways we serve? How can we share with others the opportunities we have to serve others?*



CREATIVE SPACE

Ask the children to find a space on the floor and to lie down, relax and close their eyes. Everything you are going to ask them to do they just need to think about – no need to talk. Say to them:

Jesus was teaching the disciples how much God loves children, and how important they are to him. He believes in every child's ability to be a role model in all they do. Our memory verse says, 'Don't let anyone think less of you because you are young. Be an example to all believers in what you say, in the way you live, in your love, your faith, and your purity.' We are called to serve but also to receive from others. We do this by being open to learn from and support each other.

Draw a picture of yourself and place it around the memory verse as a symbol that you believe what God says about you.

Play some music and allow the children to reflect on the words they've heard today. Within a reasonable timeframe, sense the atmosphere in the room; then say, *when I say 'go' you can get up quietly.* Count down from 3... 2... 1... Go.



PRAYER TIME

You will need:

- A large canvas or paper
- Ink pads and pens

As this session ends, the children should be sent out feeling empowered, assured that God loves them and capable of serving others around them. In this response time, read the memory verse and remind them that even though they are young, they can still serve God. Allow the children to respond to the calling of Jesus to serve others.

On the canvas/paper write the words 'I live to serve'. Play some music and invite the children to add their thumbprint and draw on arms and legs to make a figure. They can also add their name. Take the opportunity to pray with each child and invite them to share their thoughts about today's session or particular prayer requests at the end of this time together.



SUGGESTED SONGS

- 'Who you say I am' (Hillsong Kids)
- 'Take it all' (Hillsong Kids)
- 'Here I am to worship' (Kids Praise! Company)
- 'With God's power working in us' (Doug Horley)



Youth and
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