

The Easter Story

It's easy to identify with the joys and struggles of Jesus' disciples as they accompanied Jesus during his last days on earth. The disciples followed their teacher to the Upper Room, where Jesus taught them about servanthood; to Gethsemane, where Jesus taught them the power of faith and prayer; to the cross, where he willingly died for the sins of the world; to the tomb, where he triumphed over death; and to the seashore, where he demonstrated his love. And though we read of these events centuries after the fact, we can still experience firsthand the joy of forgiveness and redemption that Jesus freely offers to all.

The 5- and 6-year-olds in your class are aware of Easter's joy—but that joy may be focused in the wrong direction. Easter bunnies, Easter eggs, and Easter baskets are fun, but too often they mask the true meaning and fullness of the Easter celebration. Children may be surprised to find out that Good Friday wasn't so "good" at all and that in the midst of Easter joy, there's also solemn sadness. This module will help your kindergartners learn more about Easter and why it's an important celebration of Jesus' sacrifice and ultimate victory.

Five Lessons on the Easter Story

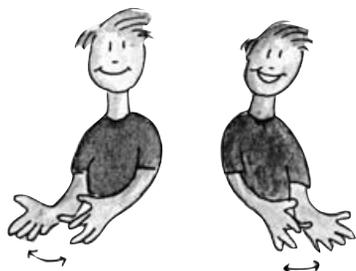
Lesson	Bible Point	Page	Bible Basis
1	Jesus is our Lord.	15	John 13:1-15
2	Jesus is our Lord.	29	Mark 14:27-50
3	Jesus is our Lord.	43	Mark 14:53-72; 15:21-41
4	Jesus is our Lord.	57	John 20:1-9
5	Jesus is our Lord.	71	John 21:4-17

Time Stretchers

■ *a Super Sign!*

One of the joys of Easter is to proclaim and celebrate that Jesus is risen and that he is our Lord. A fun and different way to help children tell others that **Jesus is our Lord** is to teach them to sign the words. Not only will you give the children a unique way to

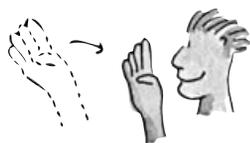




Jesus



IS



Lord (God)

express themselves, but you'll also teach them that the good news is for *everyone* and can be expressed in many ways.

Practice signing the words as shown in the margin during each lesson.

■ What Do I Hear?

Play a variation of I Spy in which children take turns making sounds and guessing what part that sound plays in the Easter story. For example, a “cock-a-doodle-doo” sound would represent the rooster’s crowing and Peter’s denial of Jesus. Use the following suggestions for other sound effects:

- chewing and eating sounds (the Last Supper with Jesus and the disciples),
- “splash, splash” (the water as Jesus washes his disciples’ feet),
- marching feet (soldiers coming to arrest Jesus),
- crying (people mourning Jesus’ death), or
- laughing (disciples happy because Jesus is alive).

■ Feed My Lambs

Young children will enjoy singing “Feed My Lambs” to the tune of “Ten Little Indians.” Choose one group of children to quickly stand up and sit down on words beginning with the letter L and another group to stand and sit on words beginning with the letter F. This song is not on the CD.



SING

**If you love me, feed my lambs.
If you love me, feed my lambs.
If you love me, feed my lambs.
That’s what Jesus says.**

**I love Jesus, yes, I do.
I’ll feed his lambs and love them, too,
Because my Jesus asked me to.
I love him, don’t you?**

Remembering God’s Word

Each four- to five-week module focuses on a key Bible verse. The Bible verse for this module is “And every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (**Philippians 2:11**).

This module’s Bible verse will teach children that Jesus is our Lord and that we want to tell everyone about him. Have fun using the following ideas anytime during the lessons about Jesus’ death and resurrection.

Circle Step



In a circle, tape one paper plate per child to the floor. Draw a simple Bible on two of the plates. On each of the other plates, draw a simple outline of one of the following: an apple, a church, a flower, and the world.

Read **Philippians 2:11** from an easy-to-understand translation of the Bible.

Ask: • **What does it mean to confess something?** (To tell that you did it; to say something; to tell someone.)

• **Why is it important to tell people that Jesus Christ is Lord?** (Because he's so awesome; because he loves us so much; so they can know him, too.)

Say: **Let's practice telling about Jesus with a fun game!**

Play music from a CD of your choice as children walk from plate to plate. Stop the music, and help the children standing on the pictures of the Bible repeat the Bible verse. Then use the *cross stamp* from the Learning Lab to stamp their hands. Have the other children tell what pictures they're standing on and how those pictures tell us that Jesus is Lord. For example, the apple shows that Jesus is Lord because God gives us food and cares for us. The world shows that he's Lord because God made the world and is in control of everything. The flower represents that Jesus is Lord because God created all of nature and makes things grow. And the church shows that Jesus is Lord because it is his house of faith based upon God's love.

Continue playing until everyone's had a chance to say the verse and receive a stamp. Vary the game by having the children hop, walk backward, or jump on both feet from one plate to the next.

Confession Session

Let your children really get on the "soapbox" to tell others the good news about Jesus! Explain that when we "confess" something, we admit it or tell the truth. Tell children they'll get a chance to tell or confess who Jesus is to the whole class. Provide a cardboard box large enough for a child to stand in. Let children take turns standing in the box and repeating **Philippians 2:11**. For extra fun, use an audio recorder with a microphone to let children record themselves repeating the verse. Then play back the recordings, clapping and cheering after each one.

Story Enhancements

Make Bible stories come alive in your classroom by bringing in Bible costumes, setting out sensory items that fit with the stories, or creating exciting bulletin boards. When children learn with their five senses as well as with their hearts and minds, lessons come alive and children remember them. Each week, bring in one or more items to help motivate and involve children in the Bible lessons they'll be learning. The following ideas will help get you started.



If the *ink pad* is dry, moisten it with three to five drops of water.



■ “He’s Alive” Bulletin Board

Decorate a bulletin board that children can interact with each week during the module. Before class, put up a blue sky and green rolling hills for the background. Use a brown paper lunch sack to make a cave for Jesus’ tomb at one edge of the bulletin board. Place the sack on its side so the opening faces the center of the bulletin board or wall. The pieces you’ll add are included in the lesson enhancement ideas that follow.

■ Lesson 1

- Bring a variety of sandals to class for the children to model. Explain that in Jesus’ time, people wore sandals and their feet became dusty and dirty and had to be washed before they went into homes. Ask the children how sandals are different from the shoes they’re wearing.

- Bring in bread and grapes for the children to enjoy. Tell them that today they’ll hear a Bible story about how Jesus ate a meal which included bread and the juice from grapes.

- For the bulletin board, let children draw pictures of the 12 disciples and Jesus. Place the pictures in the center of the bulletin board.



■ Lesson 2

- Create a quiet garden in one corner of the room. Set up a table, and drape a large bedsheet or blanket over the table to make a private area. Sprinkle pretty silk flowers around and under the table on the floor. Explain to the children that this is a quiet place to talk to God. Tell them that Jesus especially liked to pray to God in a beautiful, quiet garden. Let each child spend 10 or 15 seconds inside the quiet garden. Encourage them to tell God, “I love you” or “Thank you.”

- Bring green and black pitted olives for the children to taste and touch. Tell the children that in Jesus’ time, olives were an important food that grew in special gardens. Explain that the garden Jesus prayed in was called Gethsemane, which means “oil press.” Have the children feel the oily olive skins, and explain that olives are pressed to make oil that’s used in cooking.

- For the bulletin board, make three brown paper crosses, and have children tape them to one of the hills in your picture.

■ Lesson 3

- Cut eight or nine footprints from construction paper. Set the footprints on the floor in an unusual pattern. Have the children follow the footsteps. Then rearrange the footprints into a new pattern for children to follow. Talk about how difficult it sometimes is to follow someone exactly, and tell children that we want to follow Jesus the best we can.

- Bring in a small bottle for the children to touch and hold. Explain that long ago, people sometimes kept their tears in bottles. Ask children to think of how many tears it would take to fill a bottle. Tell children they’ll hear a Bible story about a time when many people cried because their best friend died.

- On the bulletin board, have a child place the picture of Jesus in the lunch sack and fold it closed.



■ Lesson 4

- Bring in a wilted or dead flower. Pass the flower around, and ask children if the flower can come alive again. Explain that we can't make a dead flower live. Tell children they'll hear a wonderful Bible story of how Jesus died but came back to life and is alive today.
- Bring in a butterfly or a picture of a butterfly. Give children time to talk about any butterfly adventures they wish to share. Explain that a caterpillar is given new life as a butterfly and that Jesus came back to life and went back to heaven.
- Bring in candy gummy caterpillars (worms) for the children to eat. Talk about the fact that a caterpillar stays in a cocoon before it turns into a butterfly. Explain that a cocoon is like the tomb that Jesus was placed in. When a butterfly emerges from the cocoon, it reminds us of Jesus' coming to life again!
- For the bulletin board, remove the picture of Jesus from the lunch sack before class, and hide it in the room. Reseal the sack. Let children open the sack and peek inside. Ask them where they think Jesus could be. Explain that Jesus' followers didn't know where he was, either. Have children hunt for the picture of Jesus. When it's been found, tape it to the bulletin board.

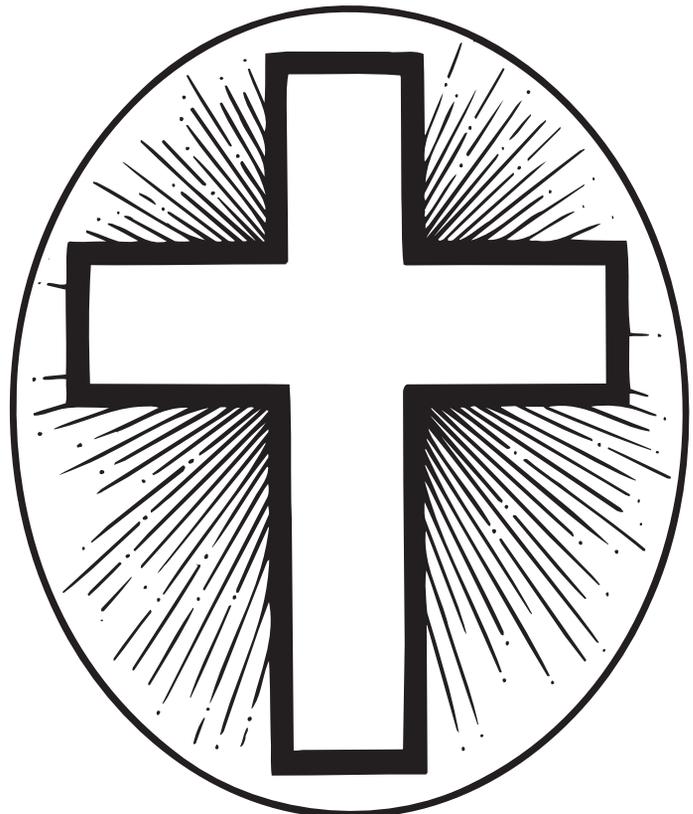
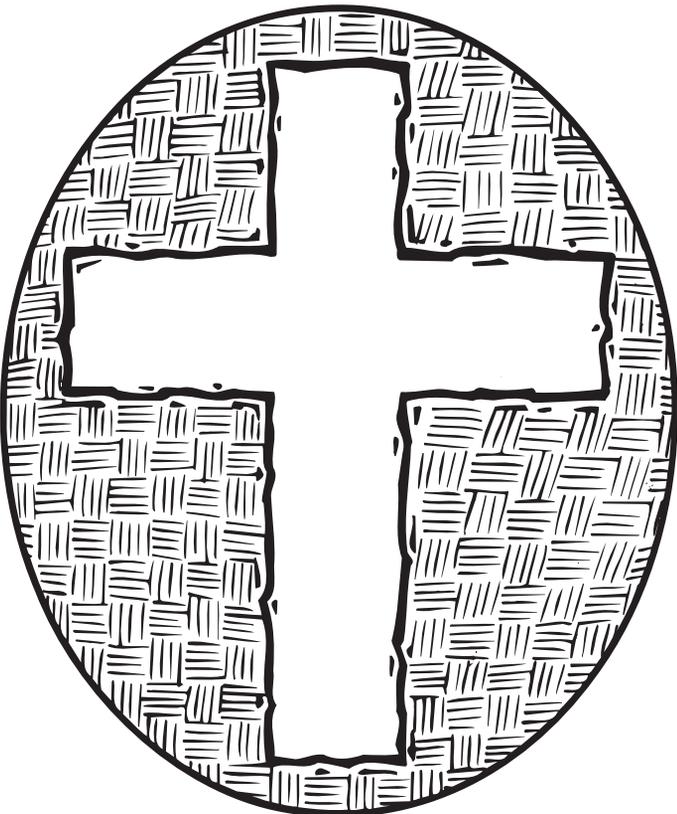
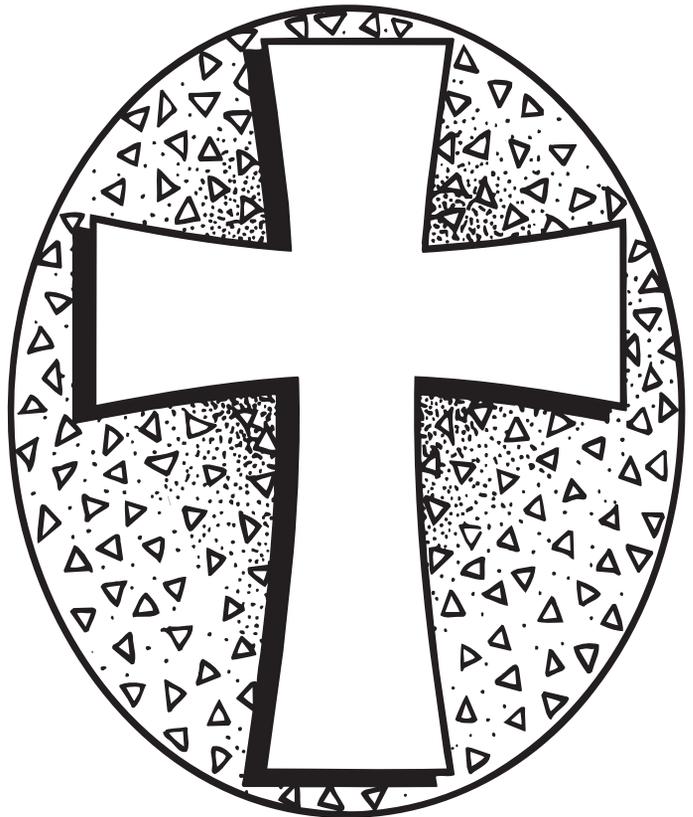
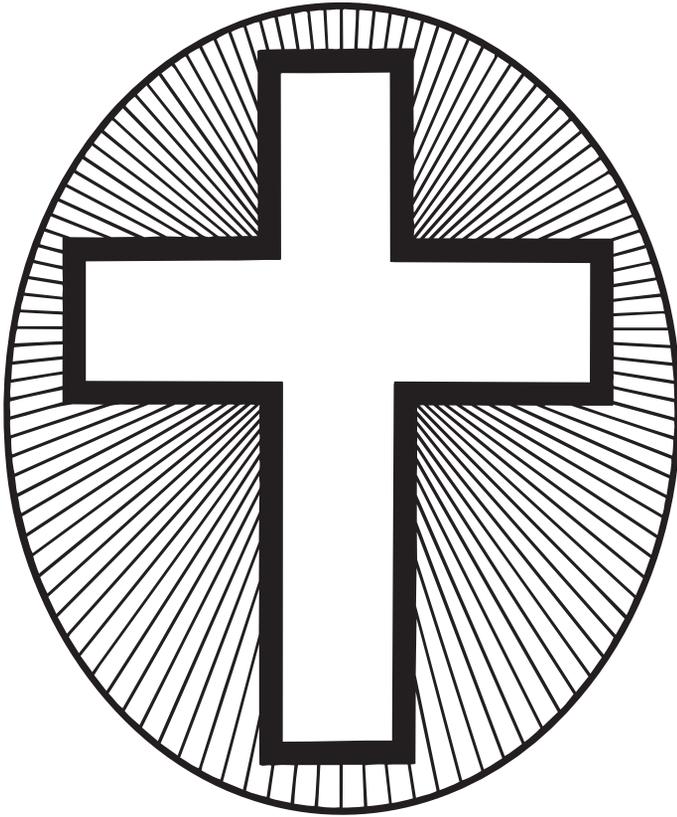
■ Lesson 5

- Bring in fishing props such as a fishnet, fishing poles with no hooks, hip boots, or a tackle box. Let the children hold the items and talk about fishing trips they have taken. Encourage children to tell what kinds of fish they've caught. Explain that fishing was important in Jesus' time and that they'll hear a story about a sad fisherman who was forgiven by Jesus.
- Bring in fish-shaped crackers or candies. Explain that in Jesus' time, many people ate fish for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Tell children they'll hear a story about some fishermen who shared breakfast with a very special guest!
- For the bulletin board, let children twist chenille wires into fish shapes. Glue or tape the fish anywhere on the bulletin board.



Cross Name Tags

Photocopy this page. Have children cut out the name tags, decorate them, and write their names on the crosses.





Bible Point ▶

Jesus is our Lord.

Bible Verse

“And every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Philippians 2:11).

Growing Closer to Jesus

Children will ■ discover that Jesus is our Lord,

- understand that Jesus showed his love and care for others by serving them,
- teach Pockets that serving others can be fun, and
- experience ways they can serve others.

Teacher Enrichment

Bible Basis

■ Jesus washes his disciples' feet.

**John
13:1-15**



Jesus knew that one of his disciples was going to betray him, that another would deny him three times, and that all of them would scatter and desert him. Still, he was determined to show them his love.

It is especially significant that Jesus washed the disciples' feet, because none of the disciples were willing to stoop below the others to do this demeaning task. The washing of feet, necessary because people in Jesus' day all wore sandals, was customary before the beginning of any meal and was normally done by a servant as guests entered the house. However, since this was a private meal, there was apparently no servant there. The water, the basin, and the towel were there, and certainly the disciples thought about the fact that no one had washed their feet. But none of them took the initiative to do the washing before the meal. After the food had been set out, Jesus took action.

Peter's resistance to allowing Jesus to wash his feet revealed that Peter didn't understand what was really happening, part of which was Jesus illustrating the cleansing power of his death. Peter also exhibited pride in his refusal to let Jesus wash his feet. He didn't yet understand that Jesus came to serve, not to be served. Peter's rejection of Jesus' act was based on an understanding of the Messiah that didn't allow for such a humble, servantlike action.

Through his actions and words, Jesus commands us to serve one another as he served his disciples, but not specifically in the washing of feet. To claim to be exempt from such service would be to claim to be greater than Jesus himself. And it would not be enough for the disciples to recognize that they were to serve one another; they needed to take action if they were to receive the blessing promised in John 13:17.

Prayer

- Read Romans 12:9-13.
- Are you following each of the instructions in those verses? What can you do better?
- Pray: Lord, please help me to serve you faithfully, no matter what. Help me to be an example and to teach my students to serve you, too. In Jesus' name, amen.

Before the Lesson

- Collect the necessary items for the activities you plan to use, referring to the Classroom Supplies and Learning Lab Supplies listed on the chart.
- Make photocopies of the “Today I Learned...” handout (at the end of this lesson) to send home with your children.
- Pray for the children in your class and for God’s direction as you teach the lesson.

This Lesson at a Glance

	What Children Will Do	Classroom Supplies	Learning Lab Supplies
Welcome Time	Welcome! —Receive name tags, and be greeted by the teacher.	“Cross Name Tags” (p. 14), markers, safety pins or tape	
Let’s Get Started Direct children to one or more of the optional activities until everyone arrives.	Option 1: Lemonade Stand —Make cool lemonade, and serve it to each other.	Plastic pitcher, presweetened lemonade mix, cold water, spoon, small paper cups, measuring cup	
	Option 2: The Wonder Wash — Help each other wash their hands with soap and water.	Washtub, warm water, bar of soap, towels or paper towels, plastic tablecloth	
	Option 3: Smile ‘n’ Serve Cafe —Prepare a pretend meal to serve each other.	Paper plates and cups, magazines, box, plastic tableware, place mats, napkins, scissors, tape	
	Pick Up Our Toys —Sing a song as they pick up toys, and gather for Bible Story Time.	CD player	
Bible Story Time	Setting the Stage —Use charades to act out different ways to serve others.	“Serving Charades” page (p. 27), scissors, basket or box	
	Bible Song and Prayer Time —Sing a song, bring out the Bible, pray together, and learn the Bible verse song.	Bible, construction paper, scissors, CD player, basket or box	
	Hear and Tell the Bible Story —Learn from John 13:1-15 about a special way Jesus served his disciples.	Bible, warm water, washtub, plastic tablecloth, towels	
	Do the Bible Story —Play an exciting game of serving others.	Bible	
Closing 	Chalk Talk —Teach Pockets that serving others makes everyone feel good.	Chalk, damp towel	
	Finger-Fold Prayer —Identify ways to serve, and pray together.		

*See the end of this lesson for extra-time ideas and supplies.

Welcome Time

SUPPLIES: “Cross Name Tags” (p. 14), markers, safety pins or tape

- Bend down and make eye contact with children as they arrive.
- Greet each child individually with an enthusiastic smile.
- Thank each child for coming to class today.
- Say: **Today we’re going to learn that ► Jesus is our Lord.**
- Give each child a “Cross Name Tag.” Help children write their names on their name tags, and pin or tape them to their clothing. You may want to laminate the name tags or cover them with clear adhesive paper so they’ll last for the entire quarter.
- Direct the children to the Let’s Get Started activities you’ve set up.

Let’s Get Started

Set up one or more of the following activities for children to do as they arrive. After you greet each child, invite him or her to choose an activity.

Circulate among the children to offer help as needed and to direct their conversation toward today’s lesson. Ask questions such as “How does it feel when someone does something for you?” or “Who’s a person you’ve helped or served?”

■ Option 1: Lemonade Stand

SUPPLIES: presweetened lemonade mix, plastic pitcher, measuring cup, cold water, spoon, small paper cups

Before class, use the directions on a package of presweetened lemonade to measure the correct amount of cold water into a plastic pitcher. Do not stir in the lemonade mix.

On a small table in one corner of the room, set out a spoon, small paper cups, the lemonade mix, and the pitcher of water. Let children take turns pouring lemonade mix into the pitcher until the package is empty. Then let them take turns stirring the lemonade. Remind the children that ► Jesus is our Lord and that he wants us to serve other people.

Let children take turns serving one another. Have children fill small paper cups halfway. Request that all “customers” enjoy their lemonade at the lemonade stand—not anywhere else in the room. Supply a wastebasket so children may serve by keeping the lemonade stand clean.

■ Option 2: The Wonder Wash

SUPPLIES: plastic tablecloth, washtub, warm water, towels or paper towels, bar of soap

Spread a plastic tablecloth on the floor in one corner of the room. Fill a washtub halfway with warm water, and set the tub in the center of the tablecloth. Place a bar of



◀ **BIBLE POINT**



Five- and six-year-olds love familiar adults, so use your welcoming presence to affirm each child. You can help strengthen developing friendships by encouraging children to welcome each other as well.



◀ **BIBLE POINT**



For extra excitement, use a sheet of poster board to create a sign for the lemonade stand, such as “Friendly Service Lemonade.” Tape the sign to a large box, and set the box beside the stand.

**BIBLE POINT**

soap in the water. Set a few terry cloth towels or paper towels beside the washtub. Allow children to work with partners and take turns washing and drying each other's hands. As the children "clean up," mention that they'll hear a Bible story about a special way that Jesus served his friends. Remind children that ► Jesus is our Lord and that Jesus is also our friend.

■ **Option 3: Smile 'n' Serve Cafe**

SUPPLIES: box, place mats, paper plates and cups, plastic tableware, napkins, magazines, scissors, tape

Place the following items in a box beside a table: place mats, paper plates and cups, plastic tableware, napkins, and magazines. Let children each take a turn being a Waiter, a Chef, or a Customer. The Waiter may seat the Customers and set the table with place mats, tableware, cups, and napkins. Let Customers order a meal. Have the Chef tear out pictures of food from the magazines and tape the pictures on paper plates for the Waiter to serve. Encourage children to exchange roles often. Sit down as a Customer, and make comments such as "My! What friendly service you have at this cafe" or "You have such a nice smile; you must enjoy serving people." Tell the children that they'll hear a Bible story about one way Jesus served his friends. Remind them that ► Jesus is our Lord and wants us to serve others, too.

**BIBLE POINT**

After everyone has arrived and you're ready to move on to the Bible Story Time, encourage the children to finish what they're doing and get ready to clean up.

■ **Pick Up Our Toys**

SUPPLIES: CD player



Lead children in singing "Pick Up Our Toys" (track 2) with the CD to the tune of "Skip to My Lou." Encourage children to sing along as they help clean up the room.

You'll be using this song each week to alert children to start picking up. At first they may need a little encouragement. But after a few weeks, picking up and singing along will become a familiar routine.

If you want to include the names of all the children in the class, sing the song without the CD, and repeat the naming section. If you choose to use the CD, vary the names you use each week.



**We will pick up our toys.
We will pick up our toys.
We will pick up our toys,
And put them all away.**

**There's [name] picking up toys.
There's [name] picking up toys.
There's [name] picking up toys,
Putting them all away.**

(Repeat.)

Bible Story Time

■ Setting the Stage

SUPPLIES: photocopy of “Serving Charades” (p. 27), scissors, basket or box

Tell the children you’ll clap your hands to get their attention. Explain that when you clap, the children are to stop what they’re doing, raise their hands, and focus on you. Practice this signal a few times. Encourage children to respond quickly so you’ll have time for all the fun activities you’ve planned.

Before class, make one photocopy of “Serving Charades.” Cut the cards apart, and place them in the basket or box.

Pretend you’re an usher, and help each child find a special place to sit on the floor. Act as though you’re seating them for a formal movie or play. When all the children are seated, ask:

- **What did I just do for each of you?** (Helped us sit down; found us a place to sit.)
- **How did it feel to have me serve you like that?** (Good; I felt special; it felt a little funny.)

Say: **I helped you find a special place to sit for our Bible story. I wanted to do something nice for you and to serve you.**

Ask: • **When is another time someone served you?** (At a restaurant; when I was sick; at a party; at school.)

- **Do you like having someone serve you? Why or why not?** (I like it because then I don’t have to do it; I don’t like it because I want to serve others instead.)

Hold up the basket or box containing the charades cards. Say: **There are lots of ways to serve others. Let’s play a game called Serving Charades. Take a card, and act out what the picture shows. The rest of us will guess how you’re serving.** Let each child have a turn acting out a charades card. If you have more children in your class than cards, repeat some of the cards or let children create their own serving charades to act out. When everyone’s had a turn, ask:

- **Why do you think it’s good to serve others?** (Because we can help them; maybe someday we’ll need help; because Jesus wants us to serve others; it shows we like the people we serve.)

Say: **Serving others is a good way to show our love. Today we’re going to hear a Bible story about a special time when Jesus served his disciples. And we’ll also learn that ► Jesus is our Lord.**

■ Bible Song and Prayer Time

SUPPLIES: Bible, construction paper, scissors, CD player, basket or box



tracks 3 & 4

Before class, make surprise cards for this activity by cutting construction paper into 2x6-inch slips. Prepare a surprise card for each child, plus a few extras for visitors. Fold the cards in half, then stamp the *cross stamp* inside one of the surprise cards. Bookmark **John 13:1-15** in the Bible you’ll be using.

Have the children sit in a circle. Say: **Now it’s time to choose a Bible person to bring me the Bible marked with today’s Bible story. As we sing our Bible song, I’ll hand out surprise cards. Don’t look inside your surprise card until the song is over.**

teacher tips

It’s important to say the Bible Point just as it’s written in each activity. Repeating the Bible Point again and again will help the children remember it and apply it to their lives.

teacher tips

Five- and six-year-olds can understand and follow rules. Help them understand that they’re following the classroom rules when they pay attention to the clapping signal and focus on you.



BIBLE POINT

teacher tips

If the *ink pad* is dry, moisten it with three to five drops of water.


teacher tips

You'll probably be able to reuse most of the surprise cards. Each week, throw out any torn or crumpled cards, and make enough new ones for each child to have one. Keep a list of who's had the stamped surprise card to ensure that everyone gets a turn to be the Bible person.



BIBLE VERSE ►


teacher tips

Choose children to be the surprise-card collector, the Bible replacer (to put the Bible away), and the cheerleader. Just be sure to keep track of who fills your roles each week so each child gets a chance to feel special.



Lead children in singing "Read God's Book" (track 3) with the CD to the tune of "The Muffin Man." As you sing, hand out the folded surprise cards.

**Now it's time to read God's book,
Read God's book, read God's book.
Now it's time to read God's book.
Let's hear a Bible story.**

(Repeat 3x.)

After the song, say: **You may look inside your surprise cards. The person who has the cross stamped inside his or her card will be our Bible person for today.**

Identify the Bible person. Ask the Bible person to bring you the Bible. Lead the class in clapping for the Bible person, cheering, and making fun applause sound effects by slapping your thighs with your palms. Help the Bible person open the Bible to the marked place, and show children where your story comes from. Then have the Bible person sit down.

Say: [Name] **was our special Bible person today. Each week we'll have only one special Bible person, but each one of you is a special part of our class! Today we're all learning that ► Jesus is our Lord. And we'll find out how Jesus served his disciples.**

Let's say a special prayer now and ask God to help us learn that ► Jesus is our Lord. I'll pass around this basket. When the basket comes to you, put your surprise card in it and say, "Jesus, please help me know that you are Lord, and help me serve others the way you did."

Pass around the basket or box. When you've collected all the surprise cards, set the basket aside, and pick up the Bible. Lead children in this prayer: **God, thank you for the Bible and for all the stories in it. Teach us today that ► Jesus is our Lord. In Jesus' name, amen.**

Before we hear our Bible story, let's learn a great new song! Some of the words are from our Bible verse, Philippians 2:11. Open your Bible to Philippians 2:10-11, and read the verses to the children: "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ► and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father!"

Have the children say the verses with you several times. Then play "The Name of Jesus" (Philippians 2:10-11) from the CD (track 4) and encourage kids to sing along. If you have time, play the song several times to cement the words in children's heads and hearts.



That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow *(clap, clap)*
In heaven and on earth and under the earth *(clap, clap),*
Under the earth *(clap, clap),*
And every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

**To the glory of God the father;
To the glory of God the father;
To the glory of God the father;
Every knee, every tongue, every one!
Every knee, every tongue, every one!**

That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow *(clap, clap)*
In heaven and on earth and under the earth *(clap, clap),*
Under the earth *(clap, clap),*
And every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

To the glory of God the father;
 To the glory of God the father;
 To the glory of God the father;
 Every knee, every tongue, every one!
 Every knee, every tongue, every one!
 Every knee, every tongue, every one!
 Every knee, every tongue, every one!

Jesus Christ is Lord!
 Jesus Christ is Lord!
 Jesus Christ is Lord!
 Jesus Christ is Lord!

"The Name of Jesus" (Philippians 2:10-11) by Carol Smith. © 2004
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After the song, say: **Thanks for that singing! Now let's get to our Bible story!**

■ Hear and Tell the Bible Story

SUPPLIES: Bible, plastic tablecloth, washtub, warm water, towels



Bring out the *Bible Big Book: Peter Tells the Easter Story*. Spread the plastic tablecloth from Option 2 in the center of the floor, and set the washtub on the tablecloth. Be sure the tub is filled halfway with warm water. Place the towels beside you.

Ask: • **What do you think this water is for?** (Washing hands; cleaning up.)

Say: **You'll find out what the water is for as you hear our Bible story today. So listen carefully. In Jesus' time, people didn't wear socks and shoes like we do today. They wore sandals or went barefoot. Their feet got very dusty and dirty!**

Ask: • **How would you feel visiting someone if your feet were all dirty?** (I'd feel embarrassed; I wouldn't care.)

• **What would it be like if visitors to your house had dirty feet?** (It would be gross; I'd feel sorry for them.)

Say: **You'd want visitors to your house to feel comfortable and clean. In Bible times, servants washed the feet of guests who came to visit. Today we'll hear how Jesus was a loving servant to his good friend Peter and to the other disciples.**

But before we open our Bible Big Book, stand up with me. Pause. **Let's see what Jesus and his disciples had been doing. All day they'd been walking in the dusty streets around Jerusalem.** Walk in place, and encourage children to follow your actions. **It was time for supper, and they were tired and hungry.** Rub your stomach. **Earlier in the day, Jesus had sent Peter and John to prepare a meal, and it was ready. Jesus spoke to Peter, "It's time for the Passover meal. Go into Jerusalem and find a man with a water jug.** Pretend to hold a heavy jug. **Follow him to the house he goes into.** Walk in place. **Say to the man there, 'The Teacher asks: Where is the guest room where I can eat the Passover meal with the disciples?'** "

Jesus and the 12 disciples walked to the house. Walk in place. **Then they walked up the steps of the house.** Pretend to climb stairs. **Then they went into**

This Bible story is featured in *My First Hands-On Bible™*. Order several now for your ministry at group.com.



a room called the Upper Room. Jesus was sad because he knew this would be his last supper with his disciples before his arrest. Jesus knew that soon he would die on the cross to take away our sins. Jesus also knew that one of his disciples didn't love him. But Jesus sat down to eat with all the disciples gathered around. Sit on the floor.

Hold up the Bible opened to the book of John. Show the open Bible to the children, and say: **Our story is found in the book of John in the Bible.** Hold up the *Bible Big Book* and say: **Our Bible Big Book shows us pictures of the Bible story. Now let's hear the rest of the story. It's written as Peter might have told it. You can help tell today's Bible story. Whenever you hear the word *feet*, take off one of your shoes and set it beside you.**

Open the *Bible Big Book* to page 1. From the back cover, read:

Hi. I'm Peter—one of Jesus' disciples and best friends. I want to tell you a story about the last days Jesus was with us on earth. Let me begin with what happened one surprising night at suppertime.

Jesus and the rest of us disciples were in an upstairs room in Jerusalem. We sat on the floor and shared the Passover meal that John and I had prepared earlier in the day. (We didn't know it would be Jesus' last supper before he died—but Jesus knew.)

During supper, Jesus did a surprising thing. He stood and wrapped a towel around his waist. Then he poured water in a bowl and began washing our feet! (Pause while children each remove one shoe.) **"No, Lord," I cried. "You'll never wash mine!" That was a servant's job, and ► Jesus is our Lord! I was embarrassed. How could I let Jesus serve me?**

Jesus said, "If I'm your Lord and I wash your feet, (pause while children remove their other shoes) you should also wash each other's."

Even though Jesus was our Lord, he loved us and wanted to serve us. And Jesus wanted us to serve other people, too.

It was an amazing meal. But what would happen next?

Close the *Bible Big Book* and ask:

- **How did Jesus serve his disciples?** (He washed their feet.)
- **Was it right for Jesus to wash the disciples' feet instead of them washing Jesus' feet? Explain.** (Yes, Jesus wanted to teach them; no, Jesus was more important.)

Ask: • **Can anyone be too important to serve or help others? Why or why not?** (No, everyone can serve and help others; no, because Jesus wants us to serve others.)



BIBLE POINT ►



BIBLE POINT ►



Say: Peter knew that ► Jesus is our Lord. That's why Peter thought Jesus was too important to wash the disciples' feet.

But Jesus wanted to show Peter and the disciples that he loved them so much that he was willing to serve them by washing their feet. And that's not all! Jesus was willing to do much more than that! Jesus was willing to die on the cross so we can be forgiven for our sins and go to heaven. All we have to do is believe in Jesus, and we have him as our forever friend.

You know, Jesus wants us to serve others, too. When we serve and help people, that's a way to spread Jesus' love.

I see lots of toes that need shoes! Let's serve each other in a fun game.

Have the children gather their shoes to use in the next activity.

■ Do the Bible Story

SUPPLIES: Bible



Say: **Find a partner to serve.** Pause while children get into pairs. If you have an uneven number of children, make one group of three. **Now look at your partner's shoes.** Then direct children to place their shoes at one end of the room and then stand with their partners at the opposite end. Place the *cross stamp* and *ink pad* at the same end of the room as the shoes. **Choose which partner will go first. When I flip the lights off and on, the first person will skip and gather his or her partner's shoes and bring them back. That person will help his or her partner put on the shoes. Then it's the second person's turn to serve by helping his or her partner with the shoes. When both of you have your shoes on, hop to the other end of the room, and stamp your hand to show you're both servants.**

After each child's hand has been stamped, gather children in a circle on the floor. Say: **Peter learned that even though ► Jesus is our Lord, he was still willing to serve others. And Jesus wants us to serve others, just as he did. Listen to what the Bible says about serving others.** Read aloud **Matthew 25:40**.

It's important to know that ► Jesus is our Lord. It's also important to know that we can serve others, just as Jesus did. Jesus washed his disciples' feet to show how to serve others. Think of a way you can serve someone this week.

Remove the *fun masks* from the Learning Lab. Explain that serving others is a way to honor God and can be a way to worship him. Let children take turns, each choosing a *fun mask* to wear and silently acting out the service idea he or she thought of. Let the rest of the class guess what act of service each child acts out. If a child has trouble thinking of an idea, suggest actions such as helping with the dishes, picking up toys, being nice to a friend, or comforting a little brother.

After everyone has had a turn to wear a mask and act out an idea, lead children in a round of applause for their participation. Then return the *fun masks* to the Learning Lab and have kids form pairs to answer the following questions. After each question, invite partners to share their answers with the rest of the class.

Ask: • **Why do you think Jesus served his disciples by washing their feet?** (To show he loved them; to show them how to serve; because their feet were dirty.)

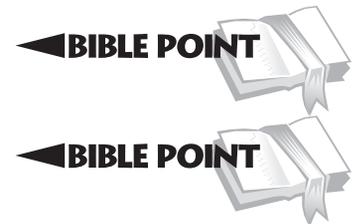
• **Why do you think Jesus wants us to serve others?** (To be like him; to be nice; to do what he says to do.)

• **When we serve others, how does it show our love for Jesus?** (It shows we want to do what he says; it shows we want to be like him.)

• **Who is one person you can serve this week?** (My mom; my friend; my grandmother.)



If you have a large class, let just a few volunteers wear the masks and act out their service ideas. The rest of the children will be involved by guessing the actions.




BIBLE POINT ▶

Say: ▶ Jesus is our Lord, and he showed us how to love and serve others. Let's see if Pockets knows how important it is to serve others.

Closing



■ Chalk Talk

SUPPLIES: chalk, damp towel

Before class, make a few chalk-dust smudges on Pockets' face. Place the dampened towel from the "Hear and Tell the Bible Story" activity beside you. Let the children call for Pockets the Kangaroo. Then go through the following puppet script. After you finish the script, put Pockets away and out of sight.



- Teacher:** (*Looking at watch*) I wonder where Pockets is. She's usually here by this time. Can you help me call her? (*Encourage the children to call Pockets' name with you.*) Pockets! Pockets, where are you?
- Pockets:** (*Out of breath*) Here I am. Sorry I'm late.
- Teacher:** You must've been having a good time. What were you up to, Pockets?
- Pockets:** I was drawing with chalk on the sidewalk. It's really fun, you know.
- Teacher:** I'm sure it was fun, Pockets. But I see that your face is dirty. We can help you wash your face.
- Pockets:** I don't need anyone's help. I'm a big kangaroo now, and I can wash my own face.
- Teacher:** Yes, you're a big kangaroo, but it's nice to be helped, and we'd like to serve you. We've been learning about serving others. Children, can you tell Pockets what Jesus did for his disciples? (*Allow time for children to tell about the Bible story. Lead children in saying, ▶ "Jesus is our Lord."*)
- Pockets:** Washing the disciples' feet? Icky! But you said, ▶ "Jesus is our Lord." Why would Jesus wash someone's feet?
- Teacher:** Children, why did Jesus wash his disciples' feet? (*Encourage children to respond with answers such as "Jesus served his disciples" and "Jesus wanted to teach us to serve other people."*)
- Pockets:** Wow! If Jesus can serve others, I can, too. And I can let you serve me! Would you help me wash my face? (*Call on one or two children to use the damp towel to wipe Pockets' face.*) I feel better. Serving makes you feel good, and being helped makes me feel good. Thanks for reminding me that even though ▶ Jesus is our Lord, he was willing to serve others and wants us to serve others, too. Goodbye!

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■ Finger-Fold Prayer

SUPPLIES: none

Say: ► ***Jesus is our Lord***, and Jesus wants us to serve others just as he served his disciples when he washed their feet. We can serve others in many ways. Have children each find a friend.

Hold your hands in front of you so your palms face your partner's palms. When I tell a way to serve others, put the thumbs of both your hands against both your partner's thumbs. When I tell another way to serve, put both your first fingers against both your partner's first fingers. We'll continue until all your fingers and palms are touching your partner's. Repeat the following rhyme to name ways to serve.

When we help,
when we share,
when we love,
when we care, and
when we're in prayer.

Say: Now that our hands are together, let's pray. Pray: Dear God, thank you that ► ***Jesus is our Lord***. And please help us serve others in all we do and say. In Jesus' name, amen. When I flip the lights, one of you will tell your partner one way you can serve someone this week. Then it will be your partner's turn to tell one way he or she will serve someone. When children have told their ideas, say: I'm so happy that ► ***Jesus is our Lord*** and that we can serve others as Jesus serves us.



Growing closer to Jesus extends beyond the classroom.

Photocopy the "Today I Learned..." handout (at the end of this lesson) for this week, and send it home with your children. Encourage parents to use the handout to plan meaningful family activities to reinforce this week's topic.



For Extra Time

If you have a long class time or want to add additional elements to your lesson, try one of the following activities.

■ **Lively Learning: Finger-Rhyme Fun**

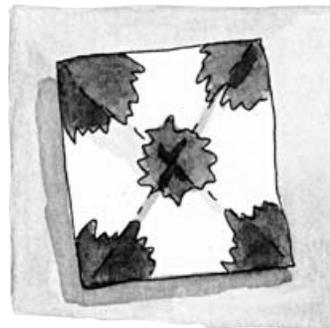
Have children repeat the finger rhyme they learned in the Closing activity to remind them of ways they can serve others as Jesus served. For a variation, encourage children to name ways they can help someone, share with someone, or love and care for someone this week.

**When we help,
when we share,
when we love,
when we care, and
when we're in prayer.**

Remind the children that ► *Jesus is our Lord* and that we can serve others in many different ways.

■ **Make to Take: Dip 'n' Dye Towel**

Give each child a section of a heavy paper towel or a coffee filter. Fold the paper towel or coffee filter in half two or three times. Place one teaspoon of water in each of five muffin-tin cups. Add a few drops of a different food color to each cup. Demonstrate how to dip the edges of the paper towel into the colored water. The colors will “bleed” into the paper towel, making unique designs. As children work, tell them that the towel is to remind them how Jesus served the disciples when he washed and dried their feet at the Last Supper.



■ **Treat to Eat: Servant Sandwiches**

Let children serve each other by cooperatively preparing delicious finger sandwiches. Have a couple of children use plastic knives to cut each of three slices of bread into four squares. Other children may spread jelly on some of the bread squares. Another group may spread honey on the other squares. And the last group of children may fold the sandwich squares in half. As the children work, remind them that Jesus served others and wants us to serve others, too.

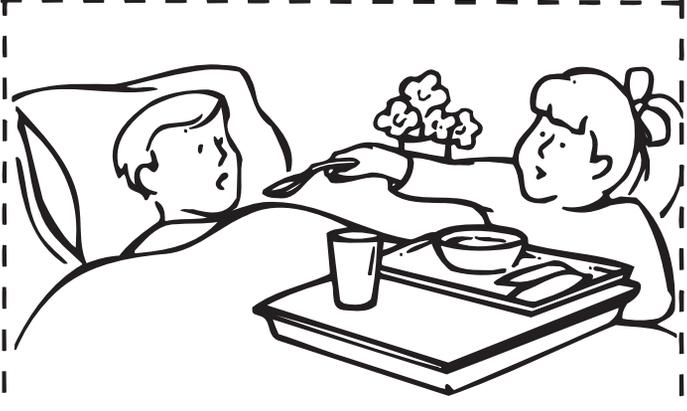
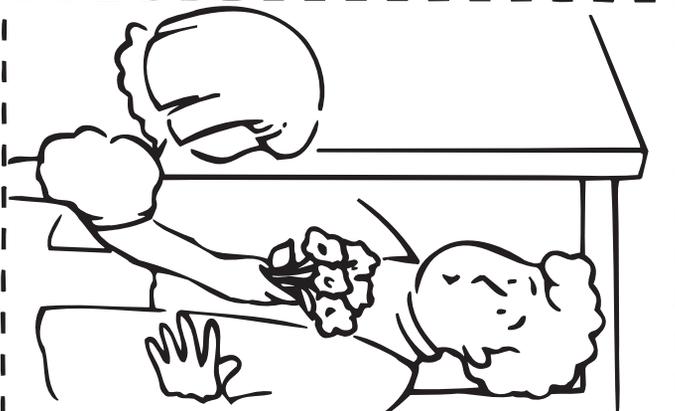
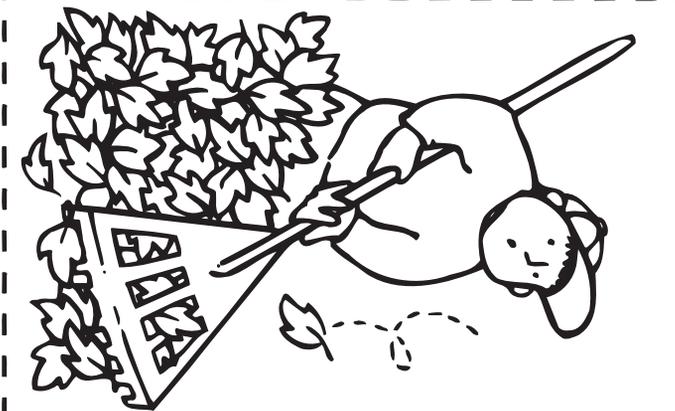
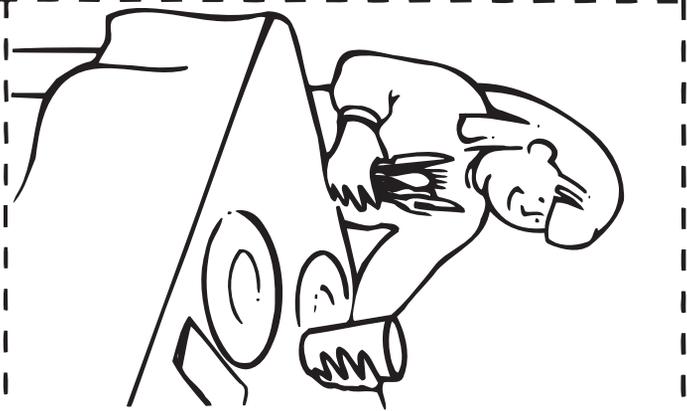
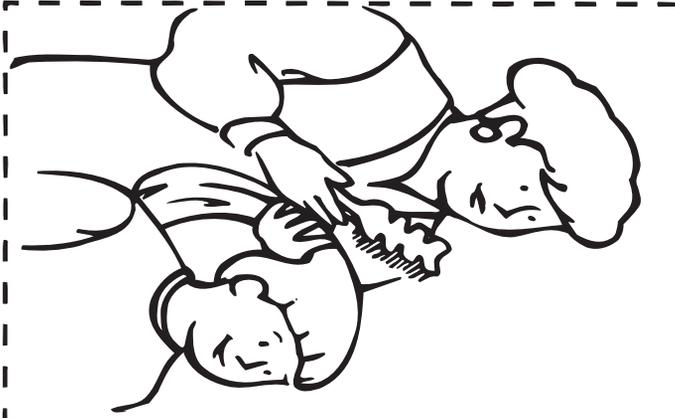


■ **Story Picture: Jesus Washes His Disciples' Feet**

Hand each child a photocopy of the “Today I Learned...” handout. Set out markers, glue, and 2x2-inch pieces of fabric or paper towels. Let children glue the fabric pieces in Jesus’ hands as towels to dry the disciples’ feet. As children work, talk about the ways Jesus served people and the ways we can serve others.

Serving Charades

Photocopy page and cut the cards apart. Act out each way to serve.



Today I learned...

Jesus is our Lord.

Today your child learned that Jesus is our Lord. Children learned how Jesus served his disciples by washing their feet. They talked about the importance of serving others as Jesus served.

Verse to Learn

"And every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:11).

Ask Me...

- Why did Jesus wash his disciples' feet?
- What's one way you can serve others?
- How can we serve each other in our family?

Family Fun

- Have a servant supper one night. Let your child help prepare a simple meal for the family. Before eating, wash and dry one another's hands. Share a family prayer asking God to help each family member look for ways to serve one person every day that week. Finally, let your child serve food to each family member at the table.
- Let your child use fabric paints to decorate a plain hand towel. Use the towel in your kitchen as a reminder to serve as Jesus served.

Jesus Washes His Disciples' Feet (John 13:1-15)

