

Children's Sunday School Lesson: Serving God and Serving Others

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Use this Sunday school lesson about serving others to train kids in service. Find [more great Sunday school lessons](#) to help kids grow in their faith.

You'll need:

- [Bibles](#)
- newsprint
- markers
- a round plastic tub
- water
- marbles

Service starts with God! When we serve others, we're actually serving God. Today you'll demonstrate this concept for your kids by using a simple pool of water.

Before class, draw the Five Rings of Service on a large sheet of newsprint or a chalkboard. (Draw in concentric circles like the waves in a pond after you drop a pebble into the water.) The Five Rings of Service are *God, family and friends, church family, community, and world*.

Then set the round plastic tub on a classroom table, and partially fill the tub with water.

Defining Service

After children arrive, invite them to sit in a circle on the floor.

Ask:

What does the word "serve" mean?

Let kids offer a few ideas. Then say: **The dictionary says that “serve” has more than twenty meanings! The word “serve” can mean to offer food, to help, to spend time, to work, to give honor, and to be obedient.**

Today we’re going to learn about serving.

Ask:

- **Who do you serve in your life?**
- **What do you do to serve others?**

Using Our Gifts

Say: **The Bible says we all have special gifts or talents we can use to serve others. Listen to this.** Have a child read aloud [Romans 12:4-6a](#). Then ask:

- **What kinds of gifts do you think this passage is talking about?**
- **Which kinds of gifts do you see in your family members or friends?**
- **What gifts do you have that you could use to serve others?**

Say: **God has given each of us special gifts to use for him. Now let’s find out more about how to use those gifts to serve God.** Invite a child to read aloud [Psalm 100:2](#), then ask:

What does this passage say about how we should serve God?

Attitude Matters

Say: **I think a cheerful person is more pleasant to be around than a grumpy person. Let’s do an experiment to see if that’s true.**

Ask for two helpers. One will be the Sunny Servant, and one will be the Grumpy Griper. Ask each volunteer to do a simple task such as getting a book from across the room. Have the Grumpy Griper sigh, complain, drag his or her feet, and whine. Next have the Sunny Servant do the same task quickly and cheerfully.

Have kids sit in a circle. Invite kids to vote whether they’d rather associate with a Sunny Servant or a Grumpy Griper. Then say: **Wouldn’t it be awful if everyone in our lives were grumpy and unwilling to help? Jesus is a great example of how to be a willing servant of God. He even died on the cross for us! Let’s read what Jesus says about serving.**

Invite a volunteer to read aloud [Matthew 20:26-28](#). Then ask:

How do you think a king would treat a servant?

Let kids give examples. Then say: **That's exactly how you would expect a king and his servant to act. But in the passage we just read, Jesus says just the opposite. He says that if we want to be first, we must be servants of everyone who needs our help.**

Serving Those Around Us

Ask:

How can you be a willing servant at home? with your friends?

Ask a volunteer to read the final passage, Joshua 24:15, aloud. Then ask:

- **How can a person's actions show who he or she serves? Give examples.**
- **What do your actions say about who you serve in your life?**

Say: **When we choose to serve God, we start a chain reaction of events. By serving God, we also serve others. I'll show you what I mean.**

Rings of Service Object Lesson

Have kids stand around the tub of water. Pick up a marble and say: **When we serve God, we serve others around us. Let's say this marble is a person who has chosen to serve God.** Drop the marble in the tub.

Say: **See? This one little action affects the whole pool of water. That's just how it is with service. Everything we do as we serve God has an effect on our world.**

Let a few kids take turns dropping the marbles into the center of the water and watching the ripple effect. With older kids you may discuss how the tub is like the world and how even the little things we do can ripple out and affect our whole world.

Show children the Five Rings of Service that you've drawn. Point out how the rings of service are similar to the ripples in the tub. Point to each ring of service as you offer the following explanation.

Say: **At the center of service is God. Then come the people we're closest to, our family members and friends. Next come our church friends, and finally, our neighbors in the community and our neighbors in the world.**

Activity Prayer

Gather kids together to represent the rings of service. Children can pretend to stand on the five radiating circles of service: God, family and friends, church family, community, and world. (If you have fewer than five kids, have them stand in a regular circle.)

Close with the following prayer. Pray: **Dear God, as we stand in a circle, we know that you are at the center of our lives. Please be with us as we try to be your willing servants. Bless our projects and help us to remember that every time we serve a person in need, we're actually serving you! In Jesus' name, amen.**

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