

Serving - If Not Me, Then Who?

MATERIALS NEEDED: Pencils/Pens, Paper, Bibles, Skit Scenarios (provided)

INTRODUCTION: Super Bowl Sunday is a day when our nation turns its attention to a football game. Millions are spent on advertising and publicity is huge. Our hope is that on this day people's attention can also be turned to caring for those in need. This Bible Study is part of that hope. The idea for the lesson is that it is something you can take and use as it is. However, you know your group better than us so feel free to add more questions and verses, take some out, or spend a longer amount of time in a certain section. Hopefully this lesson will be a guide to help you communicate the truths of God's word to your students in an interactive setting. This guide is to help you understand the purpose of the lesson and to explain the teaching outline.

Objectives:

1. To consider why service is important and to think about the reasons we choose to serve and what are some of the barriers to serving.

To accomplish this we will encourage a short discussion about service and then act out or discuss scenarios in which youth choose to serve and choose not to serve.

2. To see how we can help.

The goal here is for the students to see that they can make a difference. We hope they will see that they do not have to be rich or older to help others. Students will see some ways the Bible says to help the poor and also brainstorm some ways they can serve.

3. To see how the Souper Bowl of Caring helps us make a difference.

After thinking of ways to serve we will talk about how the Souper Bowl of Caring helps. Students should understand how it works, how it helps the poor, and what difference it can make.

Objective 1

Why Serve?

Spend 5-10 minutes discussing the following questions. This short discussion will serve as an introduction to the lesson and generate discussion about what service is and who should be serving.

Discussion Questions

1. Do you think it is important to serve others who are in need? Why or why not?
2. Whose responsibility is it to serve people that are in need?
3. Have you performed any service activities lately? What were they? Think broadly.
4. Have you ever received service from others when you were in need? What was that like?
5. What are some things that keep us from serving even when we want or need to?

The following are scenarios that youth may encounter regarding service. Break the youth into groups to have them either act out or simply discuss these scenarios. Please do what you think will create the best discussion for your group. (The scenarios are provided on a sheet at the end of the lesson. This sheet can be used to hand out to the youth.) Whether your group is acting out the scenarios or simply discussing the scenarios, have each group address the discussion questions provided at the end of each scenario. Have them write down some of their answers before gathering back into a larger group. When the groups are finished, have them come back together and act out their scenario and/or share their discussion.

Scenario 1

Youth are planning to serve at a food pantry with their youth group but have to wake up early on a Saturday morning to do it. Some of the youth decide to get up and serve for the morning and others do not. What are some of the reasons that the ones who choose to serve make that decision? What are some of the reasons that the ones who choose not to serve make that decision? In general, how do you make the decision of when and where to serve people in need?

Scenario 2

Your friend, Sara, is sick and in the hospital. She has recently been diagnosed with a severe illness. There is not much to do in the hospital, and Sara really enjoys visitors. However, you are nervous about visiting her because she is receiving treatments that make her tired and that make her hair fall out. She will not look like or act like the Sara that you know. How should you respond in this situation? What are the things that would keep you from visiting? What are the things that would motivate you to visit?

Scenario 3

Your youth group is planning to visit members of your church that live in a retirement home. Many of the youth really do not like to visit the retirement home and are very uncomfortable around the elderly. What should the youth do? Is discomfort a reason not to serve?

Scenario 4

You have a friend at school that is going through a really hard time. His mom and dad are getting a divorce and he has been having problems at school. You have noticed that he seems very removed and is distancing himself from his friends. How should you respond? If you help this friend, is that considered service?

Scenario 5

You have the opportunity to go with a friend to the beach for a week. However, during that same week you have a chance to go on a mission trip with youth from churches around your area. You do not know which to do. How do you make this decision? Is it wrong to choose the beach over the mission trip, or are there times when that is an appropriate decision?

Objective 2

TRANSITION: Now that we have thought about why service might be important and what are some of the things that encourage and discourage us from serving, let's look at what the Bible has to say about serving the needy.

Serving the Needy

A. WHO CAN HELP?

Read the following passages with your group and ask the following questions. The goal here is for the students to see that they can make a difference. The 2 Corinthians 8:1-4 passage talks about poor Macedonians giving generously for others. The 1 Timothy 4:12 verse speaks of setting a good example while being young. These verses will hopefully show the students they can help even though they are young and even if they do not have a lot of money. They can still set an example for others to follow in serving the needy.

1. Read 2 Corinthians 8:1-4.

- What situation were the Macedonians in (i.e. rich or poor)?
- What was their attitude towards giving?
- What does that mean to us?

2. Read 1 Timothy 4:12.

- How can we set an example in caring for others?
- Do you think you can make a difference?

B. PROMISES TO REMEMBER AS WE SERVE.

Read these passages and find out if they are encouraging to the students. Philippians 4:19 is Paul's assurances to people after they have supported his ministry. Deuteronomy 15:10 speaks of blessings as we serve the poor. Ask what kind of blessings this might be referring to. Point out that it need not always be financial. Hopefully, keeping these passages in mind will ease some fears about giving and teach the youth about trusting God as they serve and obey God.

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"BIBLE STUDY: SERVING - IF NOT ME, THEN WHO?"

1. Philippians 4:19

- How important is it to remember this in serving?

2. Deuteronomy 15:10

- What is important to remember when we make sacrifices to take care of the poor? How might God bless us?

C. **SOME THINGS WE CAN DO.**

Here the hope is to show a couple of ideas from scripture on serving the poor and get the students thinking about what they can do. Galatians 2:10 refers to apostles telling Paul to always remember the poor. The goal is to get them to think about how they can remember the poor in different areas of their life. The James 2:1-4 passage talks about favoritism and will hopefully challenge them not to be exclusive. As they start to think about these things they may see where this favoritism exists and ways they can stay away from it. After these ideas hopefully the youth will have more and also have some practical ways to put the Deuteronomy 15:7-8 and Leviticus 19:9-10 passages into their lives.

1. Galatians 2:10

- How can we remember the poor in what we do?

2. James 2:1-4

- Where does favoritism exist and how can we avoid it?

3. Lev. 19:9- 10 and Deuteronomy 15:7-8

- Find out what they think are some ways we can put verses like these into practice?

Objective 3

TRANSITION: Now that we have talked about ways we can serve the poor, we are going to look at how we can help them by participating in the Souper Bowl of Caring.

Your Group's Participation

This part explains how to participate in the Souper Bowl of Caring. Encourage students to think about the program and see how it fits with the ideas and passages you have already looked at. This is a good time to talk about where your collection will be sent and how it will help people there. If your group will be doing the Service Blitz this is also a good time to put that into perspective. Remind them that there are thousands of other youth groups doing this at the same time they are and see what they think about that. Emphasize that together with other groups, you can make a significant impact.

STEPS FOR PARTICIPATION

1. Stand at our church exits to collect a dollar from people as they leave.
2. Report our totals at souperbowl.org or 1-800-358-SOUP.
3. Send the money directly to the charity that we choose.
4. Serve at the charity where we give our money.

The following are some questions you can ask about your group's participation:

1. How can these things help?
2. Where is our money going and what kind of needy people will it help?
3. How will our Service Blitz activity help?

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4. What difference does it make that we are doing these things at the same time as thousands of other churches? How does it make you feel to be a part of that?

Making a Difference

Here we hope the students can see how the Souper Bowl of Caring addresses the various issues in the passages discussed. Use the points made about Souper Bowl of Caring, as well as the Bible verses, to emphasize this point. Use as few or as many of these as are helpful.

1. Money goes to charities that help all needy people (Matt. 25:35-36).
2. It is a way that we can leave something for the poor (Lev 19:9-10).
3. It is a way for us to open our hearts to the poor (Deut 15:7-8).
4. Anyone can participate because it only asks for a dollar (2 Corinth 8:1-4).
5. This effort sets an example of caring for the needy (1 Tim 4:12).
6. It helps us remember the poor on a day when many are thinking about other things (Gal. 2:10).
7. Does not exclude people from receiving the collection (James 2:1-4).
8. We get to help others while trusting God to meet our needs (Phil 4:19).
9. We can see how God blesses us when we open our hearts (Deut 15:10).

Conclusion

Remind the students that Souper Bowl of Caring began with one youth group getting others involved. The point is that when we take action together big things happen. The Souper Bowl of Caring is an example of God blessing our efforts to help others. The goal here is to help them see that what they are doing on this day along with thousands of others is making a difference. Use the following points to help them understand this concept.

1. Souper Bowl of Caring started with one youth group getting others involved.
2. Since then, it has raised over \$41 million.
1. In joining with thousands of other groups, we can make a difference and care for the poor like God wants us to.