

References

Luke 2:41-49;
The Desire of Ages,
pp. 75-83



Memory Verse

“Serve the Lord your God
with all your heart and
with all your soul”
(Deuteronomy 10:12).



Objectives

The children will:
Know they can serve
God wherever they are.
Feel willing to serve God
wherever they are.
Respond by doing their
best to serve in their family.



The Message

We can serve God
wherever we are.

Lost and Found!

Monthly Theme

We can serve God wherever we are.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

When Jesus’ parents went to Jerusalem for the Passover each year, Jesus stayed home. However, this year Jesus is 12 years old, and He goes to the Passover with them. After the Passover feast ends, everyone leaves for home, except Jesus, who stays behind in the Temple. Mary and Joseph travel for a whole day before they realize He is missing. They go back to Jerusalem to search for Him. Three days later they find Him among the teachers in the Temple. Jesus asks them why they were searching for Him. Didn’t they know that He had to be in His Father’s house? He obediently goes home with His parents and serves them there.

This is a lesson about service.

God wants us to serve Him humbly wherever we find ourselves—in the place that lies nearest. He has put us there for a purpose. We need not search elsewhere to do some great accomplishment for Him. Children can serve at home, at school, or in the community as they help others.

Teacher Enrichment

“The deliverance of Israel from Egypt was an object lesson of redemption, which the Passover was intended to keep in memory. The slain lamb, the unleavened bread, the sheaf of first fruits, represented the Savior” (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 77).

“Rapt in the contemplation of these scenes, He . . . sought to be alone. . . . When the worshipers departed from Jerusalem, He was left behind” (*ibid.*, p. 78).

Jesus “taught that pure and undefiled religion is not meant only for set times and special occasions. At all times and in all places He manifested a loving interest in [people], and shed about Him the light of a cheerful piety” (*ibid.*, p. 86).

Room Decorations

Make and hang a big banner or sign saying “Serve one another humbly in love” (Galatians 5:13). Display pictures that show children serving God by helping people at home and away from home. You might add pictures of Jesus in the Temple as a boy, Jesus helping Joseph in the carpenter’s shop, and/or His mother at home, John the Baptist preparing the way for Jesus’ ministry, and Jesus helping at the wedding at Cana.

Program Overview

| Lesson Section | Minutes | Activities | Materials Needed |
|------------------------------------|----------|---|---|
| Welcome | ongoing | Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled | none |
| 1 Readiness Options | up to 10 | A. <i>Mirror, Mirror</i> B. <i>Round Table</i> | news magazines, scissors, mirror, Bible paper plates, food items (see activity), Bible |
| Any Time Prayer and Praise* | up to 10 | Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer | <i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> offering container, Bible none |
| 2 Bible Lesson | up to 20 | Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study | none chalk/whiteboard, chalk/markers, Bible Bibles, texts on papers |
| 3 Applying the Lesson | up to 15 | <i>Happy Family Role Plays</i> | Bible |
| 4 Sharing the Lesson | up to 15 | <i>Happy Service Buttons</i> | colored paper, markers, scissors, masking tape, Bible |

***Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.**

TEACHING THE LESSON

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Ask if they have something to share from last week's study. Have them begin the Readiness Activity of your choice.

1

Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- news magazines
- scissors
- Bible
- mirror

A. Mirror, Mirror

Give children a few minutes to practice making grumpy and cheerful faces, then let them demonstrate grumpy and cheerful faces. Distribute old news magazines. Have children cut pictures of faces and sort them into grumpy and cheerful. Display the pictures where all can see.

Debriefing

Ask: **Which looks better, a grumpy face or a cheerful face? Which feels better? Whom are you more likely to want to sit near? How might a happy face help at home? at school?** Read aloud Deuteronomy 10:12. **What does it mean to serve with all your heart and soul?** (To serve because you want to; to be happy to do it.) **If you're serving with all your heart and soul, are you cheerful or grumpy?** (cheerful) **Having a happy face and being helpful and positive is one way of serving God. Today's message tells us:**



WE CAN SERVE GOD WHEREVER WE ARE.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- paper plates
- food items
- Bible

B. Round Table

Suggested food: raisins, dried fruit, or properly prepared fresh fruit, crackers, chips and small plates

Form circle groups of not more than five. Each group will be a "family." Give each group a sample of each food item on a plate. Each child is to ask the child to their right what he/she would like on his/her plate. The child who asked is to put some of the requested food on a plate and serve it to the child who requested it. Children continue serving each other until all the children have been served and have had a chance to serve.

Debriefing

Ask each "family" to introduce its members. Ask: **How did it go? Was everyone cheerful? How did it feel to be served? How did it feel to do the serving? How is this like the families we live in? How is this like the way we sometimes behave at home? What can you do to make things go more smoothly at home? In what other places can we serve God by helping cheerfully?** (anywhere) Read aloud

Deuteronomy 10:12. **Being helpful is one way of serving God.**
Today's message tells us:



WE CAN SERVE GOD WHEREVER WE ARE.

Say that with me.

Prayer and Praise



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Review the memory verse and allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

"Smile, Smile, Smile" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 107)

"Teach Me, Lord" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 110)

"Be Like Jesus" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 115)

"I Want to Be" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 124)

"A Happy Home" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 136)



Mission

Share a story from *Children's Mission*. Identify someone who had a cheerful attitude and/or respected authority or obeyed. Ask: **What was the result of this service?**



Offering

Read aloud the last part of 2 Corinthians 9:7: "God loves a cheerful giver." Say: **We are serving when we cheerfully bring our offerings.**

You Need:

- offering container
- Bible



Prayer

Prayer is also a way we can serve. In today's prayer time, tell the children that they are going to pray with their eyes open. After you tell the first of the following prayer categories, pause while the children take turns to respond. Then move on to the next category: 1. Praise God for His goodness. 2. Ask forgiveness for wrongdoing. 3. Ask God to help us find ways to serve others cheerfully. 4. Pray for those in need. 5. Give thanks for answered prayers. Close with a short prayer with all eyes closed.

Bible Lesson

Experiencing the Story

Involve the children in an interactive Bible story.

| | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| When you say: | They do: |
| Jerusalem | <i>Raise hands.</i> |
| Temple | <i>Put finger to lips.</i> |
| searched/searching | <i>Look around.</i> |

Read or tell the story.

Jesus was excited! He may have jogged along the dusty road, laughing with His cousins and His neighborhood friends. The road was clogged with joyous, noisy travelers. Everyone was going to **Jerusalem** [*raise hands*] to celebrate the Passover. Jesus gazed around with shining eyes. He had looked forward to this trip for a long time! It was His first trip to **Jerusalem** [*raise hands*] since He was a baby.

As the group from Nazareth drew closer to the city, the people may have sung a very old, much-loved song: "I rejoiced with those who said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord.' Our feet are standing in your gates, O **Jerusalem!**" [*Raise hands.*]

Suddenly the travelers saw the city in the distance. A great shout of joy went up from the crowd. High on the city skyline Jesus saw the **Temple** [*put finger to lips*], all snowy marble and gleaming gold. So this was the building He had heard so much about! He was eager to explore it for Himself.

When Mary and Joseph finally took Jesus to the **Temple** [*put finger to lips*], He saw the priests offering sacrifices for the sins of the people. Jesus may have grown quiet and thoughtful as He looked around. His mother and father had carefully taught

Him about all these things. Now He was seeing them with His own eyes. By the last day of the Passover, Jesus realized that He would someday serve as the Passover Lamb.

Meanwhile, Mary and Joseph were ready to go home to Nazareth. Excited to be with their friends again, they did not notice that Jesus was not with them. The group from Nazareth spread out along the road. Mary walked with the women; Joseph walked at the back of the group with the men. The children ran back and forth between them.

That evening, when it was time to set up camp, Mary called to Joseph. "Where's Jesus?"

"I haven't seen Him," Joseph replied. "I thought He was with you."

Calmly at first, but then more frantically, Mary and Joseph called and **searched** [*look around*] among their friends and relatives. The last place anyone remembered seeing Jesus was in **Jerusalem.** [*Raise hands.*]

Early the next morning Mary and Joseph turned back to **Jerusalem** [*raise hands*], **searching** [*look around*] for their son. They **searched** [*look around*] the city marketplaces and the streets. They **searched** [*look around*] all day and into the night.

The next day, in desperation, they went to the **Temple** [*put finger to lips*] and **searched** [*look around*] around the great marble pillars and porches. At last they heard Jesus' voice. Following the sound, they found Him sitting at the feet of the teachers, listening to them and asking questions. "Son!" Mary exclaimed as she ran up to Him. "Why have You done this to us? Your father and I have been terribly worried trying to find You!"

Jesus looked at His parents in surprise.

"Why did you look for Me?" He asked. "Didn't you know that I had to be in My Father's house?" Jesus felt right at home in the **Temple** [*put finger to lips*], because it was His heavenly Father's house. He felt happy to serve God there.

Jesus obediently returned to Nazareth with Mary and Joseph. God wanted Him to continue serving at home and in the carpenter shop for a while. Like Jesus, we can serve at home, school, and church. We can serve God wherever we are.

Debriefing

Ask: **How did the travelers feel on their way to Jerusalem?** (excited, joyful)

Why was this trip to celebrate the Passover so exciting for the people? (It was the most important feast of the year for the Jews.) **What is the most exciting holiday for you? Why?**

How do you think Jesus felt when He finally got to the Temple? Why did Jesus linger at the Temple? (He felt at home in His Father's house. He wanted to serve there. He wanted to think about the meaning of the sacrificial Lamb, etc.) **Was He disobeying His parents?** (No; they had lost track of Him.)

What did Jesus do when He realized Mary and Joseph meant for Him to go home with them? (He went. Jesus still had service to do at home, and He did it cheerfully.) **Do you cheerfully help at home? Remember today's message. Let's say it together:**



**WE CAN SERVE GOD
WHEREVER WE ARE.**

You Need:

- chalk/white-board
- chalk or markers
- Bible

Memory Verse

"Serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul" (Deuteronomy 10:12).

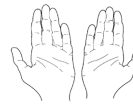
Before teaching it, make a rebus of the memory verse on the board. Help the children read the pictures as they say the verse with you. Repeat several times.

Words

Serve

Pictures

two hands



Lord your God

Jesus or cross



Heart

heart



Soul

a happy face



Bible Study

Ahead of time, write the following on slips of paper, one text on each.

Luke 2:41-43 Luke 2:44-46
Luke 2:47-49 Luke 2:50-52

Form four groups, or whatever works best for your size group. Put some readers in each group. Assign one of the texts to each group. Have the children read their passage in unison. Then ask a child from each group to stand and tell the story from their passage in their own words. Be sure the story is told in the correct order.

Debriefing

Ask: **In what two places did Jesus serve God in today's Bible story? See verses 49 (the Temple) and 51 (home in Nazareth).** **How should we serve God at home, at church, or wherever we are?** (Refer to memory verse—"with all your heart and soul.") **What does "with all your heart and soul" mean?** (Happily doing something because you really want to do it.) **Let's say our message again:**



**WE CAN SERVE GOD
WHEREVER WE ARE.**

You Need:

- Bibles
- Bible texts on paper

3

Applying the Lesson

You Need:

- Bible

Happy Family Role Plays

Have the children form groups of four. (Small church: Everyone forms just one family.) Ask each “family/group” to choose a father, a grandmother, and the children—Bobby and Rachel.

Explain that you are going to describe some family situations. The groups will figure out a way to serve in that situation and do a role play to show the service and the difference it makes to the family. Invite one group to do their role play for the entire class.

Situation 1: Father has a broken leg. Grandma is tired so she asks Rachel to clear the dishes away from the table. Rachel cleared the dishes yesterday, and she is also tired.

Situation 2: Bobby and Rachel want Father to play catch with them. But Father has to rake the yard before it gets dark.

Situation 3: Father expects Bobby and Rachel to make their beds before

breakfast. They don’t see why the beds can’t wait.

Situation 4: Grandma, Bobby, and Rachel are praying that Father will give his heart to God and worship with them at church.

Debriefing

Which situations were solved with words? (Children describe a situation, if any, that they solved with words.) **Did any group solve a situation by someone serving?** (They name one such situation.) **What did you do to serve? What were the results?** (Children describe the change in the family after the service was rendered.)

Read aloud Luke 2:52. **What happened when Jesus returned to Nazareth to serve His family?** (He grew wiser, taller, and people loved Him. He worshipped God by serving.) **What can we learn from that?** (We should be like Jesus and unselfishly serve wherever we are.) **Let’s say our message together:**



**WE CAN SERVE GOD
WHEREVER WE ARE.**

4

Sharing the Lesson

Happy Service Buttons

Read aloud Deuteronomy 10:12. Say: **When we serve with all our hearts and minds, how do we feel? (happy) So let's make a happy service button to remind us to serve that way this week.**

Have each child cut out a four-inch circle and draw a happy face in the center. Around the edge of their button, help them write "I serve wherever I am."

As the children make their buttons, tell them a story about service from your childhood. Encourage the children to share about their service experiences.

Secure the finished buttons to their clothing with a circle of masking tape attached to the back of the button.

Debriefing

Encourage the children to wear their buttons proudly. Ask: **What will you say to someone who asks you about your button?** Allow response time.

Say the memory verse one more time. Remind the children: **It always brings happiness when we serve God. And** (say together):



**WE CAN SERVE GOD
WHEREVER WE ARE.**

Closing

Have the group stand in a circle. Ask a child to pray that all of us will find our special place to serve God this week.

You Need:

- colored paper
- markers
- scissors
- masking tape
- Bible

Lost and Found!

References

Luke 2:41-49;
*The Desire of
 Ages*, pp. 75-83

Memory Verse

“Serve the Lord
 your God with
 all your heart
 and with all
 your soul”
 (Deuteronomy
 10:12).

The Message

We can serve
 God wherever
 we are.

Do you ever feel that adults think you are too young? Do you wish that they would let you do something really important? Could you do a good job on something important? If you said Yes to any of these questions, today’s story is for you.

Every year Mary and Joseph went to Jerusalem for the Passover, but Jesus had always stayed home. This was to be His first visit to Jerusalem since He was a baby. Considering how King Herod wanted to kill Jesus when He was a baby, perhaps His parents were nervous about this trip. But they all wanted to go to the Temple in Jerusalem and worship God.

The family soon found a place to stay. Then Mary and Joseph took Jesus to the Temple to the evening sacrifice service. Perhaps Jesus grew quiet and thoughtful as He saw the lamb on the altar. Maybe He realized that the sacrifice pointed to Him. He would someday serve as the Lamb of God, dying for the sins of the world.

When the great festival was over, the

crowds packed up and started home. The group from Nazareth spread out along the road. Mary walked and visited with the women up front. Joseph and the other men followed behind. The children probably ran back and forth between the two groups.

That evening, when it was time to set up camp, Mary called to Joseph, “Have you seen Jesus?” Together they called and searched. But Jesus was nowhere to be found. No one had seen Him all day. The last place anyone remembered seeing Him was in Jerusalem.

It was already too dark to travel. There was nothing they could do except pray. Next morning, Joseph and Mary quickly turned back to Jerusalem to look for Jesus.

All day they searched the city market-places and streets. Finally, they went to the Temple and searched among all the pillars and porches. At last they heard the sweet sound of Jesus’ voice.

Jesus had stayed at the Temple, trying to learn all He could. Joseph and Mary found Him sitting at the feet of the teachers, listening and asking questions. The teachers were amazed by all that He knew.

“Son!” Mary exclaimed as she ran up to Him, “why have you done this to us? We have been terribly worried! We searched all over trying to find You!”

Jesus looked at His parents in surprise. “Why have you been looking for Me?” He asked. “Didn’t you know that I had to be in My Father’s house?” Jesus felt at ease in God’s house.

Jesus saw how concerned Mary and Joseph were. He loved them, and He obediently returned to Nazareth with them. God wanted Him to continue serving at home and in the carpenter shop for a few more years.

Like Jesus, we can serve at home, school, and church. We can serve God wherever we are.



Daily Activities

Sabbath

- With your family, walk along a quiet path. Stop and read your lesson story together. Make believe that you see Jerusalem in the distance. Say together, "I rejoiced with those who said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord.' Our feet are standing in your gates, O Jerusalem!"
- Read Deuteronomy 10:12 together. Teach the verse to your family.
- Sing "Be Like Jesus" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 115).

Sunday

- Look for a picture of the Temple. How is it different from your church?
- For family worship, build a model of the Temple, using what you can find at home. Make one room the room in which Jesus talked with the teachers of the law. Read Luke 2:41-52 together.
- Say the memory verse together.
- Ask God to bless the members of your church.

Monday

- Bring some simple materials such as paper, cloth, etc., to family worship today. Talk about how you can use each object to serve the Lord.
- Read Galatians 5:13 together.
- Tell how you served at school today. Thank God for helping you.
- Say your memory verse together.

Tuesday

- With your family, read Luke 2:51. What does this text tell about how Jesus served? How can you serve in the same way?

- Ask God to help you follow Jesus' example.
- Talk about the things your parents ask you to do.

Wednesday

- Collect some things around the house, such as a piece of wood, a hammer, a bowl, a jug, a broom. During worship, act out and tell your family what Jesus might have done with each object.
- Sing "I Want to Be" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 124) and "A Happy Home" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 136).
- After family worship, be like Jesus. Do something to help someone in your family.

Thursday

- During family worship, read Deuteronomy 10:12 together. What is our service to be like? Which words in this verse suggest that we serve out of love?
- Ask an adult to tell you what they did to serve when they were children. Whom can you serve with a glass of water or juice? Do it today.
- Say your memory verse together.

Friday

- For family worship, tell your family three things about your Bible lesson story.
- Read Luke 2:40 together. Jesus was a "preteen" in this story. Pretend that you are a talk-show host. Ask a preteen or an adult what activities, or privileges they enjoy. Ask what the preteen does to serve God.
- With your family, plan an activity to serve God tomorrow. Say your memory verse together. Sing a song about serving, then thank God for opportunities to serve.