



SESSION **2**

The servant king



MEETING AIM

To explore how Jesus calls us to be servants.



BIBLE PASSAGE

John 13:1-20



BACKGROUND

As with Palm Sunday, there is plenty of symbolism here that younger children won't understand. However, children will appreciate the idea of someone doing something kind for them, and also the fact that Jesus did something that someone so special would not normally have done. Exploring these stories at a basic level will provide the building blocks for children to understand more deeply when they return to them later in life. As long as we don't teach children anything they will have to unlearn later, we're laying a good foundation of faith.

+ CIRCLE TIME



Welcome the children by name and invite them to join you sitting in a circle. Share out your refreshments and chat about what the children have been doing that week. Ask if anyone did anything special for them this week. Perhaps someone made them a cake, or they went to a soft-play area. How does it feel when someone does something for you? Tell the group about a time when someone did something special for you, or when you did something special for someone else.

+ INTRO ACTIVITY



You will need: tray; flour mixed with cocoa powder; flip-flop; leader wearing shoes and socks who is happy to show off their feet!

Show the children how dusty the disciples' feet would have been by asking a leader to take off one of their shoes and put a flip-flop on instead. Explain that everyone wore sandals in Jesus' time. Put the flour and cocoa powder mix into the tray. Ask the leader to put both feet in the tray and wiggle them about, as if walking.

When the leader removes the flip-flop from one foot and the shoe from the other, the children will see how dirty feet get walking in the dust in sandals compared with shoes and socks. Describe how servants would wash the feet of guests. You are now ready to tell the story, but don't let your leader wipe their foot just yet.

+ BIBLE STORY



You will need: pitta bread (and gluten-free alternative, if needed); a bowl of warm water; a towel

Arrange the children on chairs in a semi-circle. Be ready to tell part of the story kneeling down, as it's effective for the children to see an adult beneath them. If you can't do this, ask a leader who can to tell the story:

Jesus was eating dinner with his friends. *Share out the pitta bread.* He knew the time was coming for him to put God's big plan into action.

He got up from the table, put a towel around his waist and took a bowl of water. *Do this as you speak.* He began to wash the feet of his disciples. *Wash your leader's floury foot, still kneeling if you can.*

Jesus came to his friend Simon Peter. *Kneel in front of another leader.* Simon Peter said: "You can't wash my feet! You're Jesus!" *Get the leader to say Simon Peter's words.*

Jesus told him: "You don't understand yet, but you will. If you want to be my friend, you will let me wash your feet."

Simon Peter wanted this more than anything, so he let Jesus wash his feet. *Wash the leader's feet.*

Then Jesus got up and said to all his friends: "You call me Teacher and Lord, but I have just done the job of a servant. That's how it should be because in God's kingdom the master is not more important than the servant. We must serve each other."

It would be nice at this point to allow the children to wash each other's feet. This may depend on practicalities, such as the type of flooring you have and whether anyone in your group is wearing tights. You may prefer to provide plastic dolls for the children to play with.

+ CHATTING TOGETHER



Ask the children these questions, making sure everyone has a chance to contribute:

- What was your favourite part of the story?

- How do you feel about what Jesus did?
- When has someone done something kind for you?
- Has Jesus ever done anything kind for you?
- Have you done something kind for someone else?

+ CREATIVE RESPONSE



You will need: sugar paper; scissors; felt-tip pens

Explain that we are going to think of ways we can serve the people we know. Perhaps we can help with tidying up at home, fetching something for Mummy or finding Grandpa's glasses. Ask the children to share their own ideas. Draw around the foot of each child and cut it out. Encourage them to help each other with the drawing where possible. Inside, the children can draw a picture of something they could do to serve someone else. Talk about how we feel when someone does something kind for us.

+ PRAYER



You will need: foot shapes from 'Creative response'

Gather all the paper feet together and stand around them in a circle. Ask everyone to put a foot inside the circle and say this prayer:

Thank you, Jesus, that you came to earth to show us that the smallest and weakest are important in your kingdom. Help us to serve others at home, at school and at play. Amen.

Encourage the children to take their foot shapes home and put them somewhere they'll be seen regularly. Ask them to bring the feet back next time you meet and share how they did what they drew.

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