

WEEK 4 ELEMENTARY LESSON GUIDE



BLAST OFF

THE BIG IDEA

We can serve others.

THE BIBLE

Jesus Washes His Disciples' Feet: John 13:1-17, 34-15;
Romans 12:3-8

LARGE GROUP TIME

WHAT? What are we talking about today?

MUSIC | Worship

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** You can lead kids in worship with any songs you like best, but here are a few songs that go along with this month's theme. Make sure you have purchased any licenses required to play or perform these songs. For more information, read this!
 - "All I Want to Do" (Shout! Praises Kids)
 - "Chasing You" (Bright Ones/Bethel Music Kids)
 - "My Life His Story" (Kids on the Move)
 - "Get to Give" (Elevation Church Kids)
 - "Love Everybody" (North Point Kids)

ACTIVITY | Space Race

- We're heading back to outer space today! That's because **we're talking about how to "launch" our faith in Jesus to new heights.**
- In space, astronauts have to wear a lot of special equipment, like helmets, suits, gloves, and boots.
- Let's see how ready you are to be an astronaut. All you need to is put on a pair of space boots and race to the other side of the room without stepping on a planet, stepping on a star, or getting hit by an asteroid!

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** For this activity, you'll need at least two pairs of kid-sized rain boots, aluminum foil, and construction paper. Before your program, cut large circles and stars out of construction paper, wrap the rain boots in aluminum foil to look like space boots, and crumple up some loose balls of foil to use as asteroids. When you're ready to play, bring two kids to the front at a time, while other kids help you scatter the planets and stars in a line on the floor from one side of the room to the other. For each round of the race, have two kids race across the room – if they step on a planet or star, or get hit by an asteroid (tossed by adults), have them freeze for three seconds before continuing. Play as many rounds as you'd like.

ACTIVITY | Dirty Feet Mystery

- After a long day in space, an astronaut would probably need to sit back, relax, kick off those astronaut boots, and soak their feet in a nice foot bath. Does anyone want to get their feet soaked in an astronaut foot bath?
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** For this activity, you'll need two chairs, two blindfolds, 10 pie tins, wipes, and five weird mystery foods, like whipped cream, cereal, apple sauce, or spaghetti. Bring two contestants to the front (and make sure they're okay with getting their feet dirty), blindfold them, and have them both put their bare feet in the tins, one at a time. The player who guesses the most ingredients correctly is the winner! Make sure they wipe their feet with the wipes before they put their shoes back on, but first, ask, **"Does anyone want to come clean their feet for them? No? Why not!?"**
 - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Give all of your kids with special needs mystery ingredients to play with during this activity.

QUESTIONS | Let's Talk About Feet

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Ask the following questions. You can have every kid shout their answer, but then ask a few kids to share their answers with everyone. Comment briefly on their answers – and have fun with this!
 - **Have you ever stepped in something really gross?**
 - **What did you step in?**
 - **Would you want to step in that gross thing again?**
- No one likes to step in gross things! That's why we wear shoes when we go outside – to keep our feet from getting too dirty!

SO WHAT? Why does it matter to God and to us?

BIBLE STORY | Jesus Washes His Disciples' Feet

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read or act out the Bible story from John 13:1-17, 34-15 together.
- Jesus' friends (who we call the disciples) had pretty dirty feet. That's because people in those days didn't have boots, sneakers, paved roads, cars, buses, or bikes. Instead, they usually wore sandals and either walked or rode animals down dusty roads. **That means their feet got really, really dirty.**

- Plus, mealtime back then was different from what mealtime might be like at your house. Instead of sitting at a tall table in chairs, people used to sit or lie on the ground to eat. **That means your food would be really close to everyone’s dirty feet!** So you’d probably want to make sure your feet got washed before you sat down to eat dinner.
- Back then, people either washed their feet themselves or they would let the least important person in the room wash their feet for them. That’s why it was so surprising when Jesus decided to wash his friends’ feet!
- **Jesus’ friends knew that Jesus wasn’t the least important person in the room — Jesus was the most important person in the world!**

BIG IDEA | We can serve others.

- This story can teach us something really important about how we can launch our faith in God to new heights. But I need your help to find out what it is!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *For this activity, you’ll need a [large cardboard rocket ship](#), extra cardboard, a [rocket launch sound effect](#), and paint (black, white, and gray). Before your program, paint the back of the rocket ship cutout black. When it’s dry, add the Big Idea for this week in white paint. Cut the extra cardboard into large cloud shapes and paint them shades of gray. When you’re ready to reveal the Big Idea, have your students shout, “3 . . . 2 . . . 1 . . . blast off!” When they say “blast off,” cue the rocket ship sound effect. While the sound effect plays, have at least one volunteers run to the front of the room holding the cloud cutouts. Use the clouds to obscure the rocket ship, while another volunteer turns the rocket ship so the Big Idea is facing out. Have your volunteers return to their seats and lower the volume of the sound effect.*
- **We can serve others!** Repeat that with me. **We can serve others.**

VIDEO | Blast Off, Episode 4

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Play this week’s episode of [Grow TV](#).*

OBJECT LESSON | The Opposite Direction

- **Other than Jesus, who is someone really important?**
 - When most people think of important people, they think about people with lots of power, or money, or servants.
 - Some of the people the world thinks are important are presidents, kings and queens, famous people, or rich people. Those people would never do what Jesus did in this story!
- Because Jesus never acted like an important person, some people were confused about who Jesus was. They thought that, if Jesus was important, He would be acting the way rich and powerful people act.
 - Instead of collecting lots of money, building big houses for himself, or wearing a fancy crown, Jesus **gave away all of His stuff!**
 - Instead of having lots of servants do His work for Him, **Jesus spent His whole life serving others.**

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** For this activity, you'll need a tall glass, water, a piece of paper, and a marker. As you talk, draw a big arrow on the piece of paper. Explain that Jesus is kind of like this glass of water. Hold the arrow behind the glass and watch it change directions.
- What happens when we hold the arrow up to this glass of water? It changes directions!
- Like this glass of water, Jesus always surprised people by doing the opposite of what they thought He was going to do.
- Jesus was the most important person in the world, but **instead of demanding that other people serve Him, Jesus served other people.**

OBJECT LESSON | Foot-Washing

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** For this object lesson, you'll need a small basin filled with water, a towel, and a chair. Invite a kid or volunteer to join you at the front of the room and wash their feet as you talk.
- **Why do you think Jesus decided to wash His friends' feet?**
 - Because His friends needed it. Foot-washing was gross, but Jesus' friends needed their feet washed!
 - Because He loved them. By washing their feet, Jesus was showing His friends that He cared about them so much that he'd even do something gross to serve them.
 - Because He wanted to set an example. He told His disciples to wash each other's feet now that He had washed their feet.
- **Do you think Jesus wants you to wash your friends' feet?**
 - Maybe washing a friend's feet could be nice! But that's not exactly what Jesus meant.
 - Jesus knew there are all sorts of ways we can serve and take care of each other. He wanted His friends to take care of others like He had taken care of them.

BIBLE | Romans 12:3-8

- In the early days of the church, Jesus' followers tried really hard to figure out how to serve other people well, like Jesus had said. One Jesus-follower named Paul wrote a letter to help them understand how to serve and care for each other.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read the passage together.
- There are so many ways for us to serve others, and not everyone needs to serve others in the same way.
 - Here at church, you'll see people serving by playing music, reading Bible stories, cleaning up, decorating, or making sure you have something to eat.
 - Outside of church, there are even more ways to serve others!
- We can serve each other by helping each other, encouraging each other, sharing with each other, and giving to each other. Just like Jesus did for His friends, **you can serve others too.**

NOW WHAT? *What does God want us to do about it?*

OBJECT LESSON | God's Gifts

- Just like Paul said, God has given you gifts that you can use to serve others! When I say “gifts,” I don’t mean new LEGO sets, dolls, or video games. God has given us even better gifts than that!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *For this object lesson, you’ll need the printable provided in your Week 4 folder (or index cards and a marker), and a small decorative gift bag. If you’re using the cards we’ve provided, cut them out and place them in the bag. If you’re making your own, write a card for every “gift” you’d like to include. Draw a card one at a time, and ask kids to help you think of ways you could use each gift to serve others.*

ACTIVITY | Cardboard Rocket Ships

- God doesn’t give all of us the same gifts, and that’s okay! When we all work together, our unique gifts can all work together too.
- To help us see how our different gifts can be a good thing, let’s work together to make something new.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *For this activity, you’ll need a bunch of large cardboard boxes, a bunch of small cardboard boxes, duct tape, and art supplies. Split everyone into groups (one group per large box). Divide up the remaining supplies of small boxes, tape, and art supplies among the groups. Then tell everyone to use their supplies to create a rocket ship, reminding them to work together and help each other!*
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** *Have your preteens help younger groups by serving as their “engineers.” You might even take them aside earlier in the program to let them build their own rocket ship together in advance.*
- Let’s see if we learned anything about our different gifts while we built our rocket ships!
 - **Who really loved decorating their rocket ship?**
 - **Who loved figuring out how to build a rocket ship that was strong and sturdy?**
 - **Who loved keeping all of their supplies neat and orderly?**
 - **Who loved taking charge and showing others what to do?**
 - **How were the people on your team different from each other?**
 - **How did the people on your team help each other?**
- You probably noticed that some of you have different gifts than others. That’s great! No one’s gifts are better or worse than anyone else’s. **Everyone’s gifts are important, because everyone’s gifts can be used to serve others.**

STORY | Talk about a time someone served you.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Tell a story from your own life (or ask a volunteer to share a story) about a time when someone used their gifts to serve you. You might talk about a teacher who taught you something important, or someone who comforted you when you were afraid, or someone who said something kind to you when you were sad. Try to choose an example that a kid could imitate!*
- **Can you think of a time when someone served you? What did they do for you?**

RESPONSE | The Compassion Challenge

- There are so many ways to serve others! Some of the ways we can serve others are easy, but others can be really hard.
- When Jesus washed His friends' feet, it was a dirty and uncomfortable job. Their feet probably smelled weird, and it probably hurt to kneel on the ground for so long. But foot-washing isn't the most difficult thing Jesus did to serve others.
 - Shortly after the dinner where Jesus washed His friends' feet, Jesus was arrested and then killed because of the things He did and said.
 - A few days later, Jesus rose from the dead! But that doesn't mean He didn't suffer. **Jesus' sacrifice was one way He served us, because His pain gave us the chance to have forgiveness, salvation, and life forever with God.**
- When we remember the huge sacrifice Jesus made to show us love, it makes our job of showing love to others seem a lot easier!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *For this activity, you'll need a roll of butcher paper, the rocket ship Printable provided in your Week 4 folder, markers or crayons, and tape. Before your program, print the rocket ship Printables and tape a long sheet of butcher paper to a wall. When you're ready, give each kid a rocket ship and markers or crayons. Have them write (or have an adult help them write) one way they are going to serve someone this week. Display the rocket ships on the butcher paper when they're finished.*
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** *Add an extra step to this response for your preteens by challenging them to share what they wrote with a partner, then brainstorm action steps and pray together.*
 - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** *Consider adding to this response as a ministry by choosing to support an organization that cares for people with special needs. There are so many local and national organizations that make dreams possible for kids and adults with special needs, but they need volunteers, donations, and funding! Consider giving kids and families ideas about how they can support causes and organizations like Wheels of the World, Best Buddies, a local Special Olympics event, or Joni and Friends.*
- When we serve others with the gifts God has given us . . .
 - We help meet others' needs.
 - We show others that we love them.
 - We show others that we love Jesus.
 - We show Jesus how much we love Him.
 - We get to see our faith grow!
- This week, I hope you remember how exciting it is that **we can serve others!** When we serve others like Jesus served others, we get to see God "launch" our faith (and other people's faith too) to even greater heights!

MEMORY VERSE | Light-Up Path

- One of the ways we spend time with God is by hearing and remembering God's words!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Hide the index cards from previous weeks around your space and make the room as dark as possible. Give kids flashlights and have them search for the words. Once they are all found, have the group work together to put them in order.*
- Let's all say the memory verse together: "Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path."

PRAYER

- Dear God, thank you for showing us how to serve. Help us to find out what gifts we each have and how we can use them for you and for others. Amen.

SMALL GROUP TIME

DISCUSSION

- **What did Jesus do to serve His friends?**
- **Why do you think Jesus wanted to wash His friends' feet?**
- **What did Jesus tell His friends to do after He washed their feet?**
- **Let's read Romans 12:6a. Why do you think God gives each of us different gifts?**
- **What are some of the gifts God has given you?**
- **How can you use the gifts God has given you to serve others?**

✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** *At the end of your program, break your preteens into small groups for a smaller foot-washing experience. First, have adults offer to wash their feet (or shoes, if they don't want to take off their shoes), being careful not to pressure or persuade any kids to participate if they aren't comfortable. Then allow your preteens to wash each other's feet if they'd like to. During the activity, discuss the experience by asking questions like . . .*

- **What was it like to have your feet washed?**
- **What was it like to wash someone else's feet?**
- **Why do you think washing someone's feet was an act of service in Jesus' time?**
- **What did you think about, notice, or realize because we washed each other's feet?**

ACTIVITY | Kindness Charades

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Challenge each kid to think of one random act of kindness they can do to serve a friend or family member (like doing the dishes, picking up toys, helping a friend with homework, or giving food to someone who's hungry). When they've thought of one, have them act it out in a game of charades, while the rest of the group tries to guess what it is.*

MEMORY VERSE | Psalm 119:105 (NIV)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Practice this month's memory verse with the signs (a combination of SEE and ASL) available in your Programming folder or at growcurriculum.org/Psalm119-105.*
- Let's practice this month's memory verse together!
- **"Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path."**