

Living For God

Small Group Lesson



Ages
6-7

Power Point

God wants me to live for Him.

Scripture Memory Verse

"But more than anything else, put God's work first and do what he wants. Then the other things will be yours as well."
—Matthew 6:33

Bible Lesson

A boy gives his lunch to Jesus and He multiplies it to feed thousands.
—John 6:1-13

Overview

A large crowd gathers to hear Jesus teach, and He asks, "How will we feed them?" A boy offers five small loaves and two fish, but the disciples can't imagine how this small gift will help. God's abundance comes through as everyone is satisfied. This young boy sets an example for all of us by giving what he has to Jesus. When we live for Him instead of ourselves, there's no limit to what God can do through us.

Discussion Questions

1. What did the young boy give the disciples? (*Five small loaves of bread and two fish.*)
2. What did Jesus do right before he passed out the food? (*He broke the bread and gave thanks to God.*)
3. What happened to the loaves and fishes? (*God allowed them to multiply so that all 5,000 people were fed.*)
4. What does this story tell you about God's power? (*No problem is too big for God. God is powerful enough to take care of all our needs.*)
5. How would you feel if you were the boy? Would it be hard to live for Jesus by giving up your lunch? (*Allow responses.*)
6. Can you think of a modern-day example of the loaves and fish—something small that becomes very big when we give it to God? (*Allow responses.*)

God Encounter

Materials: Bag of individually wrapped candy (enough for each child to have one); paper lunch bag filled with various types of candy. Optional: use individual-size bagged snacks, such as pretzels or corn chips.

Preparation: Before class, place the paper lunch bag out of view.

(*Begin handing a piece of candy to each child.*) Kids, each one of you will get a piece of candy. But please don't eat it yet! (*Continue distributing the candy until all have a piece.*) If I asked you to give up your treat so other people could have some, would you? Would you miss its flavor while the others were eating theirs? Would you be happy, knowing that you had spread a little bit of joy around? Any volunteers?

(*Take the candy from a child who volunteers, exchange it for the sackful of treats and direct the child to look inside.*) Look at that! She volunteered, and she was rewarded. Kids, (*name of child*) gave up her piece of candy without seeing what was going to happen. Likewise, the boy in today's lesson had no idea that he would allow thousands of people to be blessed. He only had a little bit of food. But he gave what he had to Jesus. Kids, **God wants you to live for Him.** Sometimes that means giving up a little of what we want. It also means trusting that God will meet our every need. We will all be amazed by what He can do when we choose to live for Him.

(Pray over the kids, asking God to open their eyes to the choices they can make for Him every day. Afterwards, allow kids to enjoy their treats, and encourage the child who won the bag of treats to share with the entire group.)



The Jesus Factor

[Jesus said] “My food is to do what God wants! He is the one who sent me, and I must finish the work that he gave me to do.”

—John 4:34

Materials: “Smorgasbord” handout from *Take-Home Challenges* CD-ROM, pencils, whiteboard, dry erase markers, Bible.

Preparation: Print out a copy of “Smorgasbord” handout for each child.

(Leader reads the Jesus Factor verse out loud to the group.) Do you feel good after eating a good meal? I know I do! I’m sure Jesus liked food as much as we do, but His favorite thing was doing the work God gave Him to do. It made Him feel filled up. We can have that good feeling too when we do God’s work. *(Give each child a copy of the “Smorgasbord” handout.)* A smorgasbord is a buffet, with every food we enjoy available for the taking. Who can name some favorite foods for our smorgasbord? *(As children volunteer foods, write them on the white board and direct kids to copy them onto the “Good to Eat” column on their own papers.)* Now, let’s think of a different kind of smorgasbord—some wonderful, feel-good things we can do to serve God. *(Direct kids to follow the same procedure for the “Good to Do” column.)* Kids, don’t just do God’s work—make it your food! Enjoy living for Him.

Small Group Activity

Bread Relay

Materials: One baguette loaf, knife, spreadable margarine, hand sanitizer or handwashing supplies, masking tape.

Preparation: Before class, cut the baguette loaf in half. Mark start and finish lines on the floor of your meeting area.

In John 6:35, Jesus says that He is the Bread of Life. We need Him in our lives, just like we need to eat! If ***we live for Him***, He will make us full and satisfied, just like a good piece of bread. We’re going to use this bread as a baton as we run a relay. Run as though your life depended on it!

(Divide the group into two teams, and have the kids wash their hands or use hand sanitizer. Using half the baguette loaf as a baton, kids will run a relay race. Afterwards, enjoy the bread and butter.)

Take-Home Challenge

Materials: Lesson 1 Ages 6-7 Take-Home Challenge from *Take-Home Challenges* CD-ROM.

Hand out this week’s Take-Home Challenge and encourage kids to complete the activities with their families. Remind kids that you’ll ask them for responses during next week’s K.I.D.S. Church service.

Living For God

Small Group Lesson



Ages
8-10

Power Point

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Scripture Memory Verse

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—Matthew 6:33

Bible Lesson

A boy gives his lunch to Jesus and He multiplies it to feed thousands.

—John 6:1-13

Overview

A large crowd gathers to hear Jesus teach, and He asks, "How will we feed them?" A boy offers five small loaves and two fish, but the disciples can't imagine how this small gift will help. God's abundance comes through as everyone is satisfied. This young boy sets an example for all of us by giving what he has to Jesus. When we live for Him instead of ourselves, there's no limit to what God can do through us.

Discussion Questions

1. Why did the crowd gather around Jesus? (*They wanted to see Him do more miracles.*)
2. How did Philip respond when Jesus began talking about buying bread for the crowd? (*Philip said that even a large amount of money would only buy a little bit of bread.*)
3. How did the boy show faith in Jesus? (*He gave his small amount of food to Jesus.*)
4. If you were the boy, would you have given up your loaves? Why or why not? (*Answers will vary. Some kids might mention sharing the bread with one or two people around them. Emphasize that giving the bread to Jesus invited God's power into the situation.*)
5. Why do you think God allowed leftover pieces of bread and fish? (*The leftovers showed God's abundance.*)
6. The boy in today's story gave up something important to show he lived for God. What could you do to show you live for God? (*Allow responses.*)

God Encounter

Materials: Colorful party invitations with matching envelopes (enough for each child to have one, plus one extra), pens, Bible.

Preparation: Before class, write the name of one group member on the envelope of one party invitation; write "Jesus" on another. Place an invitation inside each, but do not seal envelopes.

(*Hold up party invitation.*) I'm having a party in a couple of weeks. Who do you think I'll invite? I'd like to invite everyone I know, but really, my house isn't big enough! So instead, I'll invite the people I want to be with the most. (*Give the party invitation to the child whose name is on the envelope.*) I'd like to have (*child's name here*) at my party because he's funny and smart. Besides, I know how much (*name*) loves God, and he always encourages me to be closer to Him. But remember—if I don't give him an invitation, he can't come to my party!

(*Hold up the invitation labeled "Jesus."*) In today's lesson, the boy invited Jesus' power into his life by giving his small lunch to Him. He could have kept his lunch, but when he gave it up to Jesus, Jesus created a party for everyone! When we invite Jesus into our lives, ***we are living for Him.***

Will you invite Jesus to take your life and do something wonderful with it? Will you decide to live for Him today?

(Give each child an invitation, envelope, and pen. Lead the kids in a time of prayer, challenging kids to “invite” Jesus to their “party.” On the invitation, kids write a situation in their lives that needs the light of Jesus. On the envelope, write the name, “Jesus.” You may invite kids to share their responses with the group. Praise kids for having the courage to invite Jesus into their lives in a bigger way.)



The Jesus Factor

[Jesus said] “My food is to do what God wants! He is the one who sent me, and I must finish the work that he gave me to do.”

—John 4:34

Materials: Box of doughnut holes, napkins, Bible, pens, index cards.

(Have kids form a circle, and place doughnut holes in the center.) Which would you rather do—eat something tasty or do something fun? *(Allow responses.)* God gave us many good things to eat, and He wants us to enjoy each one. After all, why else would we have taste buds? But food is not the only thing that can fill us up. *(Have a child look up and read the Jesus Factor verse aloud.)* For Jesus, doing what God wanted made him feel full—the way you feel after a delicious meal. When we give our hearts to Jesus, He puts a desire to serve Him within us. It’s almost like a hunger. But sometimes we get distracted by all the things of this world, and we forget our hunger to do what God wants. Let’s get in touch with the hunger Jesus talked about. Let’s decide to be like Jesus and make doing God’s will our food today.

(Pass out index cards and have kids write things they could do to serve God. Go around the circle and allow each child to share. Affirm the power of each suggestion on serving God, then allow the child to place 3 doughnut holes on his napkin. After each child has shared, lead the group in a prayer of thanks and enjoy the doughnut holes.)

Small Group Activity

Bread Sculptures

Materials: Several loaves of white and whole wheat sandwich bread (the soft varieties work better than whole-grain), plastic knives, paper plates, markers, plastic bags to take sculptures home in, Bible.

(Have a child look up and read aloud John 6:35: “...I am the bread that gives life! No one who comes to me will ever be hungry. No one who has faith in me will ever be thirsty.”)

Today, we will make a bread sculpture to help us remember these words of Jesus. Bread can satisfy for a few hours, but Jesus satisfies for a lifetime. I’ll be giving you some bread, and I want you to make a sculpture from it that reminds you of what you’ve learned today. You could make a figure of Jesus, a fish, or a loaf. *(Take out a piece of bread to demonstrate how to work with it.)* If you press the bread, you can mold it, but you can leave some pieces fluffy, too. You can also cut the bread with a knife. After you make your bread sculpture, please don’t eat it! You will use it for the Take-Home Challenge this week.

(Have each child write his name on a paper plate using a marker. Then give each three pieces of bread for the sculpture. As children work, circulate around and admire the different ways each sculpture shows Jesus as the Bread of Life. When sculptures are complete, have each child enlose their sculpture and plate in a plastic bag.)

Take-Home Challenge

Materials: Lesson 1 Ages 8-10 Take-Home Challenge from *Take-Home Challenges* CD-ROM.

Hand out this week’s Take-Home Challenge and encourage kids to complete the activities with their families. Remind kids that you’ll ask them for responses during next week’s K.I.D.S. Church service.

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Discussion Questions

1. Why had the crowd gathered around Jesus? (*They had already seen Him do miracles, and they wanted to see what He'd do next.*)
2. Why do you think Jesus asked Philip, "How will we feed all of these people?" (*He wanted to test him.*)
3. Did Andrew show faith in Jesus? Why or why not? (*Answers will vary. Andrew was eager to solve the problem by bringing forward the boy with the loaves and fish. However, Andrew didn't believe that Jesus could use those fish and loaves to take care of so many people.*)
4. If you were the boy, would you have given up your loaves? (*Answers will vary. Some kids may feel that their amount of food was not enough to help, or might have only helped a few.*)
5. Can you think of another miracle like this story, where Jesus used something humble to do an extraordinary work? (*Examples might include blind Bartimaeus being healed with mud; Jesus turning the water into wine, etc.*)
6. What could you give Jesus that would show Him you wanted to live for Him? (*Allow responses.*)

God Encounter

Materials: Small votive candles (one for each child, plus one extra), matches or lighter.

Preparation: Light one of the candles a few minutes before beginning this activity.

(*Have kids form a circle and sit down. Light one candle. Take another candle out and pass it around the circle.*) In science class, you've probably learned how heat changes a substance. Put on some imaginary science goggles for me now and describe the unlit candle (*responses may include cool, hard, smooth*). Now, I'm going to pass around the lit candle. Be careful to not touch the flame or the hot wax. Can you contrast the two? (*The lit candle is soft, warm, glowing.*) A lit candle gives up its mass to supply fuel to the flame—it will burn down to nothing. An unlit candle keeps all of its mass, but it can't give off any light.

(*Set the candle in the middle of the circle. If possible, turn out or dim the overhead lights.*) In today's lesson, the boy faced the choice of the lit or the unlit candle. He could have kept his lunch. But if he didn't bother to

give that little gift, he would have missed out on an opportunity to display God's love and light through Jesus Christ.

(Set the lit and unlit candles in the middle of the circle.) If you are ready to live for Him, here's your challenge. Take a candle and light it as a symbol that you want to live for Jesus. But remember—you will have to give something up to do it.

(Allow a quiet time of reflection as kids take and light candles. Close with a simple prayer, thanking God for the great things He does when we live for Him.)

Kids, take a candle home as a reminder to live for Him. If you lit it today, remember to light Christ's light in your heart. Let Christ's light in you shine out in the world with your friends. If your let your candle remain unlit, consider asking Christ to become the light of your life today.



The Jesus Factor

[Jesus said] "My food is to do what God wants! He is the one who sent me, and I must finish the work that he gave me to do."

—John 4:34

Materials: Container of Cool-Whip, paper plates, plastic spoons, construction paper, markers, tape.

Preparation: Before class, make a label for the Cool-Whip container that reads, "GOD'S WORK." Secure the label on the Cool-Whip tub with tape.

(Ask a child to look up the Jesus Factor verse and read it aloud.) According to Jesus, what is our food? *(Doing God's work!)* Today, we're going to finish the whole tub of God's work. As a matter of fact, it will be really sweet! Are you ready to get filled up?

(Divide the group into two teams, and place equal amounts of Cool-Whip on two plates. At the signal, teams race to finish their plate of "God's Work" first. For sanitation, use a clean spoon each time you eat a spoonful—no "double dipping." The first team to finish their plate of Cool-Whip wins.)

How did you like finishing God's work today, kids? Having a little dessert makes us feel good. Many people talk about heaven as "pie in the sky when you die." They think that heaven is the only desert, the reward you get for denying yourself here on Earth. But those who are on fire for Jesus know better. Doing God's work is actually MORE fun and fulfilling than just living for yourself. You can make new friends, see new places, and do more than you ever thought you could. So take the opportunity to live this verse, kids. Go after God's work just as eagerly as you attacked the Cool-Whip!

Small Group Activity

"Living for Him" Bowls

Materials: Disposable white bowls (thick, uncoated paper, such as Chinet—Styrofoam will not work), markers, Bibles.

Preparation: You may choose to make an example bowl before class per the instructions below.

(Hold up a bowl for the group, tilting it to show the inside and outside.) This bowl is like a person's life. It can be boring and empty, or filled with the good things of God. **God wants us to live for Him** so that He can fill up our "bowl" with the blessings of serving Him. This bowl is also a reminder of the baskets from today's story, filled to overflowing with God's abundant blessings. You will decorate this bowl with encouraging word, Bible verses, and Christian symbols. After class, you will take them home to share with others as part of your Take-Home Challenge.

(Distribute Bibles, bowls, and markers. Encourage creativity by admiring the different colors, verses, and decorations used.)

Take-Home Challenge

Materials: Lesson 1 Ages 11-12 Take-Home Challenge from *Take-Home Challenges* CD-ROM.

Hand out this week's Take-Home Challenge and encourage kids to complete the activities with their families. Remind kids that you'll ask them for responses during next week's K.I.D.S. Church service.