

Living For God

Lesson Overview

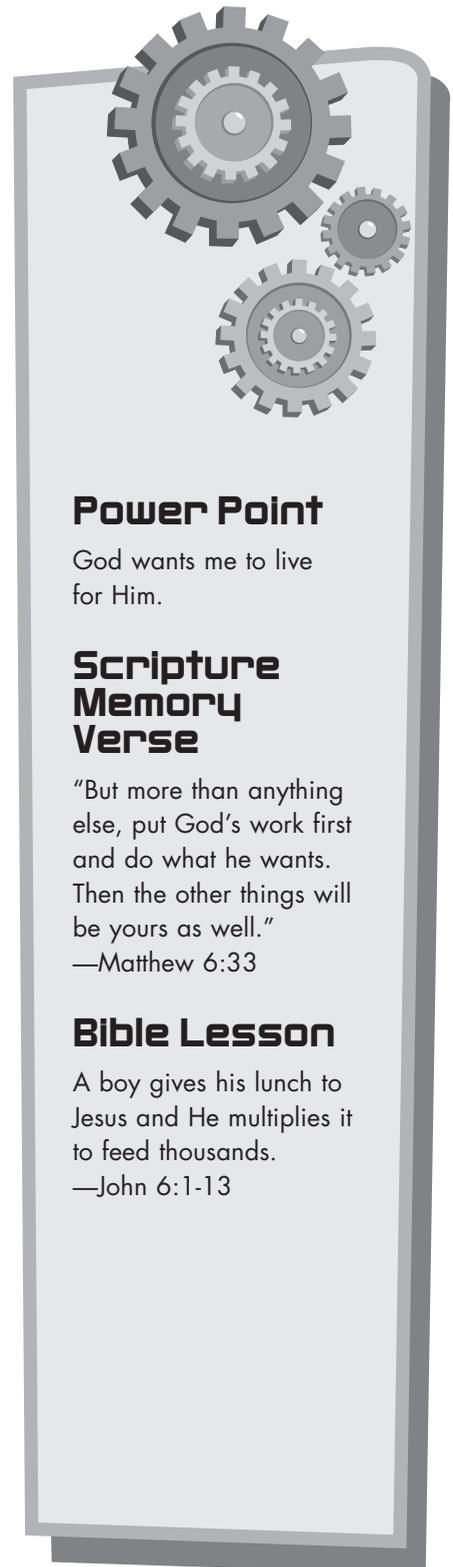
Sharing is never easy. Whether it's a parent's time divided up by siblings or chips out of a bag, the concept of sharing is one all children can relate to. Sharing also is an expectation. Parents "make" their children share with their siblings and other friends and teachers expect children in class to share supplies. Sometimes it is that expected behavior that makes sharing even harder. After all, if children don't have a say in sharing, is it really sharing at all? These are all areas you can address in today's Bible Lesson.

The boy who gives his lunch to Jesus did not have to do so. It was his lunch, after all. *Should he really give it to Jesus? How would his little lunch of loaves and fish really help?* We don't know if those questions entered the boy's mind but we do know that he willingly gave his lunch to Jesus. The end result was a miracle like no other. Not only were the over 5,000 fed, there were basketfuls of leftovers. The boy cared about the plight of the hungry people and was willing to share. He did everything (even giving up a lunch) in love for Jesus and those around him.

What can children learn from this boy? They are not too small to be used by God. What they have, big or small is important. **God wants me to live for Him** and He'll use what I give. What a great concept for your children today!

Going Deeper

God wants me to live for Him. What does that mean for you as a leader? Waking up and praying, "Use me today, Lord." Checking out needs around you and finding practical ways to meet them. Having a heart-change—instead of being me-focused; become God-focused. Live for God today, practically. In other words, do something for Him today!



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

Everything You Need

Note: For a listing of basic supplies to keep on hand, see page 13.

Game #1: 20 feet of thick rope.

Game #2: 1 large rubber ball or inflated beach ball.

Praise and Worship: *Bible & Praise* DVD.

Lesson Introduction: 1st place ribbons (store-bought or make your own).

Scripture Memory Verse: Lesson 1 Scripture Memory Verse from *Leader Resources* CD-ROM, whiteboard and marker, child-friendly magazines (that can be torn up), tape.

Bible Connection: Lesson 1 Bible Connection video segment from *Bible & Praise* DVD.

Bible Story: Script from page 38, cook's apron, brown bag lunch with cheese sandwich and an apple.

Object Lesson #1: Thick piece of wood (or 2 x 4 board), large nail, small hammer.

Object Lesson #2: Large box of saltine crackers, large box of goldfish crackers, small paper cups.

Today's Life Story: Lesson 1 Today's Life Story from *Leader Resources* CD-ROM.

Welcome

Start your service with high energy as you welcome the kids and open in prayer. See page 18 in this *Leader's Manual* for helpful welcoming tips.

Game # 1

Tug-O-War

Review Questions

(Note: These are general knowledge questions, since this is the first lesson of the series. Explain to the children that at your next K.I.D.S. Church service you will ask questions from today's lesson.)

Select one boy and one girl who answer the questions correctly to each choose two other children to be participants in the game.)

▶ How many books of the Bible are in the New Testament? (39.)

▶ How many books of the Bible are in the Old Testament? (27.)

Props: 20 feet of thick rope.

Participants: Three boys and three girls, leader, adult helpers.

Playing the Game

Ask children if they have ever participated in a Tug-O-War? (*Allow for a showing of hands.*) Mention that this game typically shows which team is stronger. Do you think the boys' team or the girls' team will win? Let's play and find out!

Note: Use discretion in choosing the children for this game. Select children for each team that will make each side's pulling power even. Have the boys stand in a straight line holding half of the rope. Extend the remaining rope to the girls, who are in a straight line facing the boys. Allow six feet of rope between the two teams. The leader must stand at the center of the rope.

Tell the children they are not to release the rope during the game as it could cause the other team to fall and possibly cause an injury. Also, don't allow the end child to wrap the rope around his wrist. The leader should station adult helpers at the back of each team and along the sides to catch kids who slip or fall. When you say, "Go" the teams begin pulling the rope toward their side. The first team to pull all the members of the opposing team past the leader is the winner. Have the leader announce the winner! If time permits play best of three tugs!

Game #2

Human Pinball

Review Questions

(Note: These are general knowledge questions, since this is the first lesson of the series. Explain to the children that at your next K.I.D.S. Church

service you will ask questions from today's lesson. Select one boy and one girl who answer the questions correctly to each choose two other children to be participants in the game.)

- ▶ From whose family line (or lineage) did Jesus come? (*King David.*)
- ▶ What is the last book of the Old Testament? (*Malachi.*)

Props: 1 large rubber ball or inflated beach ball.

Participants: One boy and one girl, leader or adult helper.

Playing the Game

Explain to the large group of children that they can help the boy and girl by pretending that they are the sound part of the pinball machine. As the ball rolls encourage the children to shout "BOING" each time it touches a person, either the leader or the children ("pins"). Help the boy and the girl become situated by spacing them near each other but with a five-foot space between them. Each child sits facing the front. They should be able to reach out one arm toward each other but not be able to touch hands. There should be about a foot between their outstretched hands. Their bodies should be at an angle and their arms need to be together and outstretched.

To begin the game mention that you will roll the ball towards one of the participants and they must hit it as hard as they can back to you using only their arms that they will flap back and forth. (*To be fair, try to roll the ball at a participant and not right at the open space between the children.*) For each ball that gets past the "pins" the leader will be awarded a point. Each time a "pin" hits the ball back to the leader the children will receive a point. Play for a set time; the winner will be either the children or the leader. Allow the children to celebrate the winner by making their own pinball noise, such as "PING-PING" or "POW POW".

Praise & Worship

Lead the children in a powerful time of entering God's presence using the worship songs from the *Bible & Praise* DVD.

Lesson Introduction

Props: 1st place ribbons (store-bought or make your own.)

Presentation

Hold up the 1st place ribbons and ask what these ribbons are. (*They are 1st place ribbons.*) Ask the children, who gets a first place ribbon? (*A first place winner.*) What kinds of competitions might these ribbons be used for? (*A spelling contest, a speech meet, a track meet, field day, sports-team winners, even a dog show!*) Mention that each one of them should live (or run) for God "in such a way as to get the prize" (1 Corinthians 9:24, *NIV*). We are promised crowns in heaven if we live for Him. (2 Timothy 4:8, Revelation 2:10). We might not receive actual 1st place ribbons in this life for living for God but we are guaranteed a reward in heaven.

Have you ever asked this question, "Why am I here?" I believe that God made us for a specific purpose. I believe He has a plan for our lives. One thing is for certain **God wants us to live for Him**. Now, the way we live for Him will be as unique and special as each of us is. For some of you, your purpose today may be to tell a friend about the Lord. For others, God might want you to show love and kindness to someone. It could be as simple as helping your mom with the groceries.

Part of my purpose today is to teach you this lesson. When I'm faithful to be here, I'm living for God. God made each of us unique and with different things we are to do. Today's Power Point is: **God wants me to live for Him**. Don't miss it! We can live for God to the best of our abilities—and God knows our abilities because He created us. Let's do our best for God today.

God has a plan of good works for us to do. He wants us to know and follow His Word. That's why it's important that we're here in K.I.D.S. Church. I feel sad when I hear kids or parents say, "I don't know if I'm going to church; I don't get much out of it." The reason we come to church is not to get, but to give. Worship is one way that all of us can live for God, so let's worship Him as we study further what He wants to say to us today through His Word.

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

Props: Lesson 1 Scripture Memory Verse from *Leader Resources* CD-ROM, whiteboard and marker, child-friendly magazines (that can be torn up), tape.

Preparation: Write the Scripture Memory Verse on the whiteboard, using large letters to fill the board with the words. Place a supply of magazines and tape at the front.

Practice it

(Display the Scripture Memory Verse. Lead the kids in saying the verse a few times. Then call for a few volunteers. Have them stand in front of the whiteboard, blocking the verse. Have kids continue to recite the verse a few times, moving kids as necessary, until kids repeat the verse several times. Have volunteers remain up front.)

Understand it

When these kids stood in front of the whiteboard, they blocked the words of the verse. The first part of this verse says, “But more than anything else, put God’s work first....” Let’s explore this more. *(Have kids look through the magazines and tear out pictures that could represent some things that people might put before God. [For example, electronic gaming devices, sports, money, toys, television, etc.] Then have kids tape their pictures over the words of the verse on the board.)* Just like these pictures cover up the words of our Scripture Memory Verse, putting too much attention on these things can make it difficult to put God first in our lives.

Live it

Today’s Power Point is ***God wants me to live for Him***. Our Scripture Memory Verse says “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 Some of these other things are blessings in this life; other blessings won’t be ours until heaven. They will be far greater, however, than any thing this world offers. Living for God is

well-worth any sacrifice. God knows us better than we know ourselves. If we put God’s work first, doing what He wants, everything else will fall into place.

Bible Lesson

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

—John 6:1-13

Bible Connection

Use the Bible Connection DVD segment before your Bible Lesson as a way to introduce the point of today’s lesson.

A young man helps carry groceries out to a customer’s car. He is approached by a shivering homeless man. He tells him he doesn’t have anything, but then remembers he has a coat in his car. He gets the coat and gives it to the man. The manager of the store watches this scene from inside. The manager is impressed with the young man’s generosity and rewards him with more work hours.

Ask the questions below to discuss the DVD segment.

- ▶ What happened to the young man while he was working? *(A homeless man asked him for help.)*
- ▶ What did the young man do for the homeless man? *(Gave him a coat from his car.)*
- ▶ What did the manager do for his worker? *(Praised his actions and rewarded him with more work hours.)*

The young man in the video gave the homeless man a coat so he could stay warm. He did what he could with what he had. Today we’ll meet a boy who also used what he had to help others. Let’s explore his story.

Bible Story

Props: Script from page 38, cook’s apron, brown bag lunch with cheese sandwich and an apple.

Preparation: Before class, recruit an adult or teen volunteer to play the cook, and a child to play the boy. Make three copies of the script and practice reading it. Make the brown bag lunch.

Object Lesson # 1

Note: For added impact, have volunteers prepare enough finger sandwiches and apple slices for all the children. Have the cook return to deliver the “multiplied” rations. Screen for any allergies, like wheat or dairy.

Presentation

(Tell the children they will be the crowd of cafeteria kids in the following skit. Present the Bible Story skit from page 38. Boy returns to seat while the cook exits with the lunch. Note: If possible have cook return at the end of the Bible Story with multiplied portions for all the children.)

Today we’re going to learn about a boy in the Bible. If you have your Bible with you, hold it up high so I can see it. Excellent! Today’s story comes from the Gospel of John in the New Testament, chapter six. *(Read John 6:1–6 aloud.)*

Can you imagine being in Philip’s shoes? It would be like going to a big football game and having the coach ask you, “(Name of child in audience), how are you going to feed all these people?” But listen again to what “he [Jesus] said to Philip, ‘Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?’” (John 6:5, NIV) Jesus already knew what he planned to do. (v. 6). The boy in this story may not have known it, but Jesus had big plans for him.

Do you know that God already has plans to use you, too? *(Read aloud John 6:7–9.)* Now imagine yourself as the boy with the loaves and fish. You’ve been with Jesus all morning in a huge crowd. You notice everyone talking about how hungry they are. You’re hungry too. You can hear Jesus talking with His disciples about the problem: There’s no food. So you march up to Andrew, tug on his robe and show him your food. “It’s not much,” you say, “but I’ll be happy to share.” Andrew seems pleased and goes to relay your offer to the Master! *(Read aloud John 6:10–11. If you have additional food prepared, pass it out before reading verses 12–13.)*

This boy was willing to give his entire lunch away! God took the little bit that this boy gave and multiplied it so that everyone’s plate, including the boy’s, was filled to overflowing. Our Power Point reminds us that **God wants us to live for Him**. That is what this boy did, and you can too.

Props: Thick piece of wood (or two-by-four board), large nail, small hammer.

Preparation: Drive the nail into the wood about two-thirds of the way through, choose an older child or adult volunteer to use the hammer claw later on.

Presentation

How many of you would say math is one of your best subjects? *(Allow responses.)* In today’s lesson of the boy with the loaves and fish God was able to take a little and turn it into a lot by multiplying it. (There’s your math lesson!) Let’s see if you can take a little, multiply it and turn it into a lot.

I see some pretty smart and strong kids. If you work together, you should be able to figure out a way to get this nail out of this board. The only rule is that you cannot use any kind of tool. *(Give a few volunteers a chance to remove the nail—it should be impossible.)* Even if you all pulled together, you wouldn’t be strong enough to get this nail out. None of us is strong enough. *(Call up an older child or adult volunteer.)* But what if we multiplied our strength? What if *(name of volunteer)* were like a superhero...10, 50, even 100 times stronger than any human? Could he pull that nail out then? *(Allow responses.)*

Well, *(name of volunteer)* is great, but he’s no superhero. So try this instead. *(Hand the hammer to an older child or adult volunteer and have him use the claw to remove the nail. It should come out fairly easily but supervision is necessary.)*

A hammer can also be called a lever, a simple tool that helps you move things...like nails! A see-saw, a wheelbarrow, a fishing rod and a bottle opener are also types of levers. Levers don’t make you stronger, but they do help you do more work with the strength you already have. In other words, they multiply your efforts! A great mathematician was a man named Archimedes who lived about 200 years before Jesus was born. Archimedes once said, “Give me a lever long enough and a place to put it and I will move the world.”

When you and I allow ourselves to be used by God, giving Him what little we have, He multiplies our efforts and helps us to accomplish great things! It all starts with living out today's Power Point **God wants me to live for Him**. He takes care of the rest.

Object Lesson #2

Props: Large box of saltine crackers, large box of goldfish crackers, small paper cups.

Preparation: Place one saltine cracker and a few goldfish crackers in a small paper cup for each child.

Presentation

How many of you have ever been hungry? (*Invite a show of hands.*) What happens when you're hungry? (*Have children call out their responses. Our tummy growls, we feel weak, our heads hurt; we act grumpy or tired.*) What happens once you've eaten something healthy? (*You have energy again. You're able to play and think and do many things.*)

Let's pretend we are the large crowd listening to Jesus in today's Bible Lesson. Everyone grumble aloud about how hungry you are! (*Invite the large group to talk amongst themselves until it is so noisy that no one can hear anything!*) Get everyone's attention by clapping and saying, "Listen up!"

When it is relatively quiet again, mention that you have something for every person here that will help fill up his or her tummies! (*Allow for cheering.*) Then say, it's bread and fish! (*Allow for moans!*) Do you think the people in today's Bible Lesson moaned and complained when Jesus offered them unlimited bread and fish? (*Probably not!*) To quiet the complaints mention that what you really have is a saltine cracker (to represent bread) and goldfish crackers (to represent fish). Doesn't that sound better?

God knows what we need. In today's Bible Lesson Jesus prayed and everyone in attendance, 5000-plus people, were filled up with good food. We hope all of you will leave here with a full tummy as well. Remember Today's Power Point is **God wants me to live for Him**. There are many ways we can live for God, but one way is to feed people who are hungry. (*As you pass out the snack cups invite children to share about a time they helped*

someone who was hungry. It could be by providing money for a charity or making a gift box that was mailed overseas. Conclude by having children think of one way they can help feed hungry people this week.)

Today's Life Story

Let's welcome the bright birds from the Fowl Plays Theater Company to do Today's Life Story for us. They haven't quite made it to stardom yet, but they'll do their wing-flappin' finest performance for y'all!

Multiplying Mushrooms

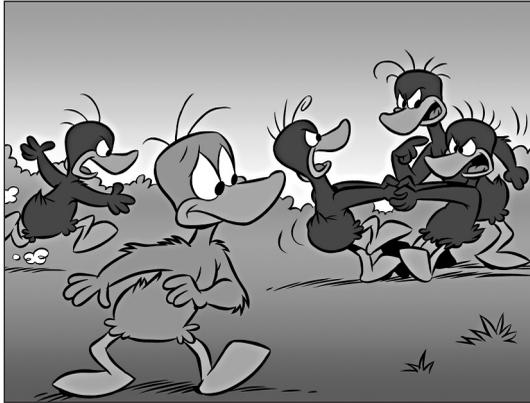
Illustration 1-1



► Today's story takes place deep in the heart of Lizard Lick, a strange town known for its short-legged ponies and purple ducks. Of course, were it not for the miraculous fungi, our purple heroes would surely have perished and wound up as finger food at the Lizard Lick Oriental Buffet.

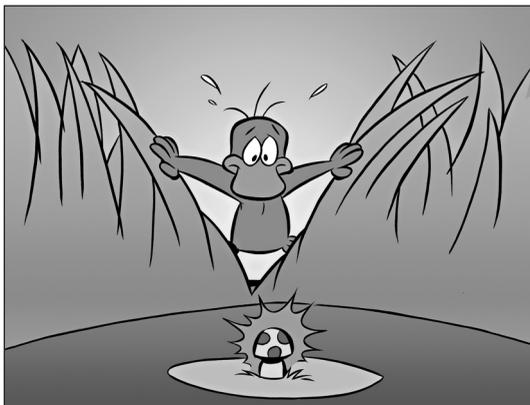
Now, a "fun-guy" isn't someone who's a hoot to hang around with. A fungi is a plant, like a mushroom. Even though mushrooms aren't very big, you're going to see how even a little, itty-bitty mushroom can make all the difference in the world to someone if they're starving. You see, a terrible, terrible famine had hit the Lizard Lick wetlands that Flapper D. Duck and his friends called home. They were so hungry, they would've eaten just about anything. But none of them could find any food.

Illustration 1-2



► It was awful. There never seemed to be enough food for anyone. All the edible plants were gone, all the little cream-filled bugs had flown away and the worms were far, far underground. Even those short-legged ponies were having trouble finding any good southern oats. None of Flapper's friends could find enough to eat, and when one of them did find something, a fight broke out! If you've ever seen hungry ducks fighting over a cricket, then you know what I mean when I say, "It ain't a pretty sight." If the famine kept up, it looked like the ducks wouldn't be friends much longer!

Illustration 1-3



► And then one day, as he searched tirelessly for something to eat—a bug, a crawdad, a stuffed-crust pizza with bell peppers and onions—Flapper saw it! Not just any it, but a big, juicy, glowing IT: a mushroom hidden behind some reeds. A mushroom may not sound like much to you right now,

but put yourself in poor Flapper's webbed shoes. He hadn't eaten anything in days, and here was a plump, juicy mushroom calling his name! His mouth began to water just seeing it!

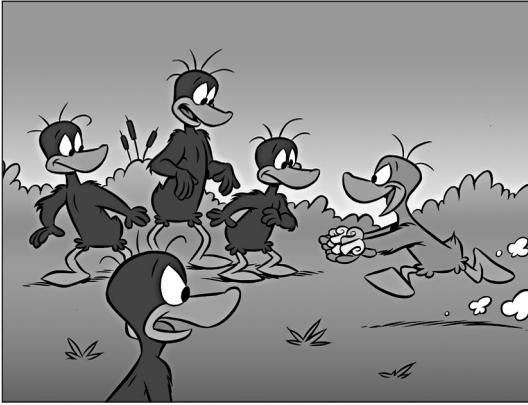
Illustration 1-4



► Flapper almost lost control. He lunged for the fungus and started to eat it right on the spot! His tummy was way past empty. Forget that low, gurgling stuff—his tummy was roaring, "Need...food...NOW!" And the mushroom looked so yummy, so tempting, that Flapper almost popped it right into his mouth. But Flapper didn't do that. You see, no matter how empty Flapper's tummy was, his heart was full—full of care and concern for his friends. Flapper knew that if he ate the mushroom he would be full, but what about all of his starving friends? As much as he wanted that mushroom, Flapper knew he couldn't be happy watching his friends go hungry.

Boys and girls you know what? That's like what Jesus did on the cross. He put others before Himself. He didn't want to suffer, but He did it anyway...all because He was thinking about you and me!

Illustration 1-5



► Now, even though Flapper was so hungry that he was ready to start eating mud pies, he did what he knew God would want him to do. He broke the little mushroom into equal pieces and gave one piece to each of his starving friends. At first, some of the other ducks grumbled, “What good is a tiny little piece of mushroom when we’re all about to become Peking Duck?” But it didn’t take long for the grumbling in their tummies to talk louder than the grumbling in their beaks, so they all ate their little mushroom snack. Besides, even a little something in their stomachs was better than nothing at all.

Illustration 1-6



► Now, what Flapper and his friends didn’t know was that God has a plan for everything, even in Lizard Lick, North Carolina. And part of God’s plan when He created mushrooms was to give them tiny spores. These spores are like seeds. When Flapper

broke the mushroom apart to share it, all these spores spilled out onto the ground.

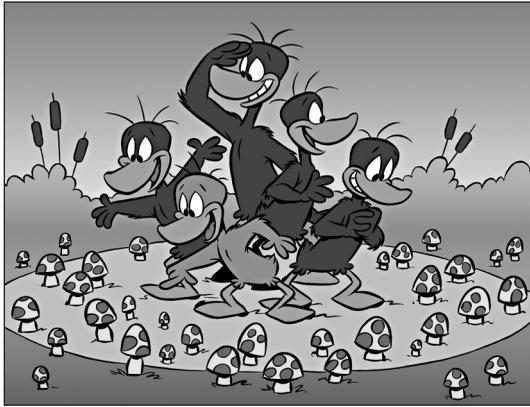
Kids, look at those tiny spores. Would you have ever believed that something so small (and so gross) could ever be part of God’s plans? But it’s true! Those spores were created by God to serve a very special purpose—to help multiply the mushroom population! Now if God can use a spore to take care of ducks, don’t you think He could use you to take care of people? After all, you are much more important than some tiny spore! God has a plan to help others, and that plan includes you.

Illustration 1-7



► That night, while all the ducks slept—dreaming of crunchy bug salads and mushroom/minnow soup—God let His plan work! Those tiny, tiny spores sprouted and began to grow! First one, then two, then four, then 10...soon there were hundreds of mushrooms all around. The spores grew into tiny mushrooms, and the tiny mushrooms grew into bigger mushrooms, and the bigger mushrooms kept growing and growing and growing! It was a miracle...a miracle that was actually part of God’s great plan all along.

Illustration 1-8



► The next morning, Flapper and his friends woke up and yawned and stretched and opened their eyes—and to their surprise and delight there were mushrooms everywhere! Big ones, tall ones, fat ones—enough mushrooms for every duck to eat his fill and not be hungry anymore! And you know what? None of this would have happened if Flapper had been selfish and eaten the mushroom himself.

Boys and girls, **God wants you to live for him.** That may mean giving up something to help others. It might mean standing up for a kid being bullied by your friends. Or it could be choosing to change something you're doing that isn't pleasing to God. Living for God—putting Him first in our lives—is the best way to live!

Closing Prayer

It's nice to hear a lesson from the Bible where a child is involved. It helps us know that just because we're kids, that doesn't mean we can't do things for God. Quite the opposite! The boy in today's Bible lesson probably didn't think he was about to make history when he picked up his packed lunch and headed off to listen to Jesus...but he did! God can do incredible things through you, too! And he will when you live out Today's Power Point **God wants me to live for Him.** By showing love and care in everything you do (1 Corinthians 16:14) you can be used mightily by God, too.

Dear Jesus,

Please help us to be willing to give up our things. They are just things, after all! What Jesus can do with our stuff is far greater than what we will ever do with it. Help us not to be so attached...and to just let go sometimes. Help us to also give of ourselves. Bring someone into our lives this week who needs us to care. And when You do, help us to show them our care!

In Jesus Name. Amen.

Small Group Lesson

Using the *God Encounters Small Group Lessons* (see page 10 in this *Leader's Manual*), divide your children into one of three elementary-age groups: ages 6-7, ages 8-10, ages 11-12. These groups allow deeper exploration of the Power Point and life application.

Instruct small-group leaders to hand out this week's Take-Home Challenge.

Bible Story Skit

Characters:

Leader

Cook

Boy with lunch

Cook: (*Enters out of breath and frantic.*) Oh! This is terrible! I have a huge problem, I mean HUGE!

Leader: (*Looking very concerned.*) What is it?

Cook: I have this crowd of people to cook for and I just burned the spaghetti sauce and spilled the pasta! I have no food!

Leader: (*Scratches head.*) Well...this could be a problem. Do we have any food in the building?

Cook: No! I checked everywhere. Besides, the people are hungry now. Even if I had new food to cook, it would take me hours to prepare more food!

Leader: (*Turns to the kids.*) What about the kids? Maybe they have some food.

Cook: Now you are being silly. Why would anyone here have any food? I think you're wasting your time.

Leader: (*Notices boy offstage.*) There's a boy holding a lunch sack!

Boy: (*Boy walks over and holds up the brown bag.*) I have some food!

Cook: (*Takes the bag and looks inside.*) We have one apple and a cheese sandwich. But that's not enough to feed everyone!

Leader: (*Looks at boy with a big smile on his face.*) I'm so proud of you, son. Thank you for caring about others. Let's pray over what we do have. (*All three bow heads.*) Father, thank you for this food. Amen.

Cook: Now what do we do?

Leader: We listen to a Bible story about a time thousands of people were also without food. Let's learn what happened.