

3. Jesus Washes Feet (John 13:1-17)

“If I, your Lord and teacher, have washed your feet, you too must wash each other’s feet.” (John 13:14)



PLAN

Session Outline

1. Gather

Greeting
Puzzlers
Be a Servant
Transition to Explore

2. Explore

Sacred Conversations
Hear and See the Bible Story
Interact with the Bible Story
Say the Bible Verse
Transition to Respond

3. Respond

Why Foot Washing?
Scented Hand Soap
Loving God,
Loving Neighbor
Transition to Bless

4. Bless

Inviting
Praising
Blessing
At Home with God

Supplies

Basic Supplies: Offering basket | Pencils | Markers | Scissors | Tape | Paper towels

Gather: TV/DVD player | Person who serves the church

Explore: TV/DVD player

Respond: Pump bottles or foam soap bottles | Unscented liquid castile soap | Measuring cups | Gentle essential oil scent | Water | Hand soap | Sink with running water | Tablecloth | LED candle | Washbasin

Bless: Tablecloth | LED candle | Washbasin | TV/DVD player

Before You Teach

As our Bible story begins, Jesus and his disciples are sharing an evening meal together. (Though the other Gospels say it’s the Passover meal, this is not so in John’s Gospel.) At this time, Judas’s course of betrayal was already in motion, and Jesus knew he would not be with the disciples long. So he performed an act of service for them—foot washing—something servants usually did when a person came in from walking on dusty roads in sandals. He said it was an example of how they should serve others when he was gone.

When it was Simon Peter’s turn to have his feet washed, Peter resisted, saying that Jesus would never wash his feet. Jesus explained that refusing the washing would prove that Peter was not one of Jesus’ own. Peter responds by enthusiastically agreeing to the washing and even offering up his head and hands, but Jesus said that most of the disciples were clean and need only wash their feet. Custom of the time held that those who had bathed needed only to have their feet washed upon entering a home. This is also possibly a suggestion that the disciples are clean because of baptism. Jesus does, however, suggest that one among the disciples is not clean. This is a reference to Judas’s deceit.

For this session, we will focus on following Jesus’ example by serving others. We will explore ways to serve our church and the larger community. We’ll also practice serving one another through a hand-washing activity, with the option of foot washing if you feel your class will be comfortable with it.

3. Jesus Washes Feet (John 13:1-17)

“If I, your Lord and teacher, have washed your feet, you too must wash each other’s feet.” (John 13:14)



GATHER

Greeting

Before class: Display either attendance chart (Class Kit—pp. 16–17 or 15 & 18) at eye level.

- Play “A Whole New Level of Love” (Adventure DVD), as you welcome each child.
- Show the children where to place their offerings on the worship table.
- Have the children mark the “Attendance Chart” by signing their first names on week #3.

SAY: Today, we are learning about a time when Jesus took on the role of a servant.

A—Puzzlers (Activity Sheets)

Before class: Tear out the Session 3 Activity Sheets for each child.

- Give each child a copy of “Whose Feet?” (Activity Sheets—p. 7). Let them complete the puzzle.
- Allow them to work on the “In the Story” activity (Activity Sheets—p. 8).

SAY: Our Bible story for today reminds us to serve others as Jesus did.

OR

B—Be a Servant (Service)

Before class: Identify a person who provides a service to the church such as the custodian, the person who folds bulletins, or another person who does a serving task and arrange to help them do their task.

SAY: Jesus performed a servant’s task in today’s Bible story. Let’s help someone who serves our church as a way to remind us to be like Jesus.

- Arrange to do a child-friendly task that helps the person that you’ve identified in providing a service to your church community.
- Introduce the person you will be helping to the class, and explain what you will be doing.
- Complete the assigned task. Afterward, have a class discussion about what it was like to serve.

ASK: How did it feel to serve? How do you think your service helped (insert the name of the person you helped)? How do you think your service helped our church community?

Transition to Explore

- Encourage children to bring a chair or to sit on the floor in a carpeted area.
- Invite children to form a circle on the floor.

TIP: Transitions are a helpful way for children to move easily from one activity to the next.

3. Jesus Washes Feet (John 13:1-17)

“If I, your Lord and teacher, have washed your feet, you too must wash each other’s feet.” (John 13:14)



EXPLORE

Sacred Conversations

- Encourage children to join and sit in the circle.
- Demonstrate a listening position for the children.
- Ask wondering questions.

ASK: I wonder:

- How do you feel when you have washed?
 - What are some things that you do for guests when they enter your house?
-

Hear and See the Bible Story

- Read the Bible story together (*CEB Deep Blue Kids Bible*—John 13:1-17).
- Watch the Adventure DVD Session 3.

SAY: Today, we’re exploring a story about a time when Jesus served the disciples.

ASK: How can you serve like Jesus?

Interact with the Bible Story

- Assign parts and act out “Jesus Washes Feet” (Bible Story Sheets—Session 3).
-

Say the Bible Verse

Before class: Display the “Unit 1 Bible Verse” poster (Class Kit—pp. 5 & 28).

- Tell the children the Bible verse: “If I, your Lord and teacher, have washed your feet, you too must wash each other’s feet” (John 13:14).
 - Have the children repeat the verse after you.
 - Then have the children pair up and pantomime washing each other’s feet while saying the verse. (They may keep their shoes on.)
-

Transition to Respond

- Encourage children to put away their chairs and/or get back to their places.

3. Jesus Washes Feet (John 13:1-17)

“If I, your Lord and teacher, have washed your feet, you too must wash each other’s feet.” (John 13:14)



RESPOND

Why Foot Washing? (Discussion)

Before class: Gather a CEB Deep Blue Kids Bible.

- Read the “God’s Thoughts, My Thoughts” text box about washing feet on the page opposite John 13 aloud to the children. Have a class discussion of the questions at the bottom of the box.

OR

Scented Hand Soap (Craft)

Before class: Photocopy “Soap Label” (Leader Guide—p. 24) for each child. Gather markers, scissors, tape, measuring cups, water, one hand soap-sized pump bottle or foam soap bottle per child, and enough unscented liquid castile soap for each child to use 1/4 of a cup. Select a gentle essential oil scent such as lavender, lemon, or peppermint.

SAY: Though washing feet is not a custom in our community, washing our hands is something we do often. Let’s make some soap we can use as a reminder of the Bible story.

- Give each child an empty bottle, and have them add about 3/4 of a cup of water to the bottle. Then have each child add about 1/4 cup of the castile soap to the bottle. Help them add about 20 drops of your chosen essential oil for scent. Replace the bottle pump/lid. Shake well.
- Give each child a copy of “Soap Label” (Leader Guide—p. 24), and have them choose a label shape they like. Then let them write the scent followed by the words *Hand Soap* on the label. Let the children decorate the label, cut it out, and tape it to the soap bottle.

TIPS: *Check for allergies ahead of time.*

Loving God, Loving Neighbor

Before class: Hand soap from the “Scented Hand Soap” activity or gentle hand soap of your choosing, paper towels, a sink with running water.

SAY: Since some people may not be comfortable with washing feet, we are going to wash hands.

- Have the children form pairs. Have the pairs form a line at the sink. Have each pair take a turn washing and drying each other’s hands. Have them each say the Bible verse as they do this activity.

TIPS: *Check for allergies ahead of time. If there are children who have a desire not to be touched, honor that and just say the verse as the child washes his or her own hands. Optional: Use a washbasin and do a foot washing if you feel that the class is mature enough to handle touching one another’s feet.*

Transition to Bless

- Ring a bell to announce the transition.
- Create a worship center on a small table with a tablecloth, washbasin of water, and an LED candle.

3. Jesus Washes Feet (John 13:1-17)

“If I, your Lord and teacher, have washed your feet, you too must wash each other’s feet.” (John 13:14)



BLESS

Inviting

Before class: Display “Unit 1 Bible Verse Signs” poster (Class Kit—p. 29) on a wall or bulletin board.

SAY: Today, we learned about how Jesus taught the disciples to serve others by serving them. Let’s learn a verse to help us remember this story.

- Gather the children around the Bible Verse Signs poster. Have the children read the Bible verse.
 - Teach the children to sign the verse.
 - Have the children go around the room and share the verse in sign language with as many children as your time allows.
-

Praising

Before class: Gather a TV/DVD player and the Adventure DVD.

SAY: Our Bible story today was about a time when Jesus served his disciples by washing their feet. Let’s remember his gesture as we praise God with our feet through dancing.

- Play “Taking Love to a Whole New Level” on the Adventure DVD.
 - Let the children dance around the room to the music.
-

Blessing

- Have the children form a circle around the worship center by sitting on the ground.
- Light the candle.
- Pray the following prayer, followed by each child’s name. As you call each child’s name, have him or her move to a sitting position in which his or her legs are extended and his or her feet are “in the circle.”

PRAY: Dear God, thank you for sending Jesus to teach us how to serve. Go with (insert children’s names) as we serve the community. Amen.

At Home with God

SAY: What was one thing that you learned today about how Jesus served the Disciples? Can you share what you learned with your family?

- Send Bible Story Sheets—Session 3, and the Unit 1 Song Sheet home with each child.

3. Jesus Washes Feet (John 13:1-17)

If I, your Lord and teacher, have washed your feet, you too must wash each other's feet.
(John 13:14)



Soap Label

