

LESSON 12: JESUS IS SELFLESS

Leader Guide for Ages 3-6

Classroom: Monkeys

 Philippians 2:1-11

11/08/2020

Teachers Dig In

Dig In to the Bible

- Read: Philippians 2:1-11
- In This Passage: In a letter to the church in Philippi, Paul advises the people to have a selfless attitude like Jesus. That means thinking of others as better than ourselves and looking out for the interests of others. Jesus was selfless when he came from heaven to earth and died for us.
- Bible Point: Jesus is selfless...
- Application: ...so we're selfless.
- Summary Verse: "A final word: Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power" (Ephesians 6:10).

Dig Deeper

- You'll Be Teaching: *Jesus is selfless*. It's natural for people to be self-centered. That's especially true for kids! However, Jesus showed us a better way. He gave up his divine privileges and the glory of heaven so he could come to earth and die for us. That's the ultimate selfless act! Encourage kids to appreciate the selfless gift Jesus gave them and to reflect his selfless heart in how they live.
- Think About: What's the most selfless thing another person has ever done for you? How does that help you see Jesus' heart?

Dig In to Prayer

- Ask God to give you a selfless heart and elevate your kids above yourself.

Quick Tip

- Showing genuine humility is one of four radical ways to change the culture of your church...and it can impact the way you talk to kids. "Would you want to be invited to someone's home only to have the host tell you that everything you think and do is wrong? We all have flaws and misdirected beliefs. We're all sinners. But most of us don't respond well when we're impugned rather than loved. Instead, recognize that we're all in this together. You're on a journey full of flaws and mistakes, just as much as the kids are, so be honest with them and approach them with love more than criticism." (Read the book this quote came from, *Why Nobody Wants to Go to Church Anymore*. You can order it [here](#).)

This Lesson at a Glance



OPENING

Preschoolers share about a topic related to the lesson.

Supplies

- Bible



CORE BIBLE DISCOVERY

Preschoolers practice being selfless as they learn what made Jesus selfless.

Supplies

- Bible
- classroom toys
- chair

Easy Prep

- Create 3 stations in your room. Place a chair in the first station. In the second, place classroom toys that all the kids can selflessly share and play with together. (You may just designate your toy area to be the second station, if you have one area already designated for free play.) In the third station, create a short obstacle course using common classroom objects that kids will have to walk around, step over, or go under.



LIFE APPLICATION WRAP-UP

Preschoolers choose a way to be selfless and then pray about it.

Supplies

- chair*
- toy*
- obstacle course item*

Easy Prep

- Place each object in a different area of your room.



OBJECT LESSON

Preschoolers lower and raise a helium balloon.

Supplies

- helium-inflated balloons with strings attached (1 for every 10 kids)
- masking or painter's tape
- heart stickers (optional)

Easy Prep

- Securely tape the end of the helium balloons' strings to the floor or a low table top.



HIGH-ENERGY GAME

Preschoolers try to give away all their beanbags.

Supplies

- beanbags (at least 1 per child)
- painter's tape
- upbeat music
- music player

Easy Prep

- Use painter's tape on the floor to divide the room in half. Put an equal number of beanbags on each side of the tape.



LOW-ENERGY GAME

Preschoolers play a giving version of Hot Potato.

Supplies

- small toys (1 per child)
- upbeat music
- music player



CRAFT

Preschoolers make cards to give away.

Supplies

- brightly colored card stock (1 sheet for every 2 kids)
- “Jesus Is Selfless Labels” handout (1 label per child) (download [here](#))
- Avery 5960 address labels (1 page for every 30 kids)
- washable markers
- clear tape
- lollipops (1 per child)
- fun stickers

Easy Prep

- Make a sample craft to show kids, but wait to add the lollipop.
- Cut card stock in half to create 8½x5½ cards.
- Use scissors or a craft knife to cut a 1-inch slit in the middle of each card.

**Marked supplies can be reused from Core Bible Discovery*

Let's keep kids safe! You can help by using supplies as instructed for only ages 3+, purchasing child-safe items, and being aware of allergy concerns.



Supplies

- Bible

Welcome

- Thank kids for coming.
- Just for fun, have preschoolers high-five three of their friends.
- Make announcements.
- Introduce new kids.
- Celebrate birthdays by having preschoolers shout this birthday cheer: "Two, four, six, eight; it's birthday time, let's celebrate! Gooooo, [name of birthday kids]!"
- Collect the offering.

Introduce the Lesson

Say: **Today we'll learn that Jesus is selfless, and we can be, too. That means Jesus doesn't think only of himself. Jesus helps others, and we can help others even if that means we have to give up something or share—even our favorite things. Let's start today by talking about sharing a favorite snack. What if there was only one left of that snack and you had to decide whether to share it with someone else or keep it for yourself?**

Share

- Share about a favorite snack that *you'd* have a hard time sharing.
- In leader-led small groups, have preschoolers share about favorite snacks *they'd* have a hard time sharing. Maybe they wouldn't want to share a piece of their favorite candy, a special drink, or the last cheesy cracker.
- After small groups have discussed, have adult or teen helpers share with the whole group what they talked about in their small groups.

Summarize

Open a Bible, and say: **Sharing can be hard sometimes, but it's a great thing to share. Jesus loves it when we share because Jesus is selfless and it makes him happy when we're selfless, too. Today we'll find out about some really hard things that Jesus gave up so that we can be friends with God. Jesus selflessly thought of what was best for us, and he did it even though it wasn't easy for him. Let's learn more about that now.**

Pray, thanking God for Jesus, who is selfless.



Supplies

- Bible
- classroom toys
- chair

Easy Prep

- Create 3 stations in your room. Place a chair in the first station. In the second, place classroom toys that all the kids can selflessly share and play with together. (You may just designate your toy area to be the second station, if you have one area already designated for free play.) In the third station, create a short obstacle course using common classroom objects that kids will have to walk around, step over, or go under.

Talk About It

Say: **Today we'll learn that Jesus is selfless. That means Jesus does things to help others. He's the best sharer and always wants the best for others, even if that means he has to give up the best for himself.**

Tell about a time *you* gave up something good so someone else could have it. Maybe you were with two friends at an amusement park and gave up your seat so they could ride a roller coaster together. Or maybe you gave up your coat so someone else could be warm.

Say: **When we give up something good so someone else can have it, that's being selfless. And because Jesus is selfless, we can be selfless. It's not always easy giving up something really good to someone else.**

Ask: • **What's something you would have a hard time giving up?** Help kids get started, if needed. They might say it'd be hard to let a friend hold their favorite blanket or play with their very favorite stuffed animal. Or it might be hard to give someone else a turn on a swing when they're having a lot of fun.

Say: **Being selfless isn't always easy, but when we see how happy it makes someone else, that helps us to be selfless.**

Show the Bible. Say: **Let's look in the Bible to find out what it says about Jesus being selfless. It says Jesus is King, but he gave up his royal home in heaven to come to earth to be with us.** Lead kids to pretend to take a crown off their heads.

Say: **Jesus also died on the cross because he loves us so much.** Lead kids to stretch their arms out the way Jesus' arms were stretched out on the cross. **Jesus did the most selfless thing by dying a painful death to help us be friends with God.**

Visit the Chair Station

Say: **Jesus is always selfless. It makes Jesus so happy to give up his royal home so he can show us love. In the Bible today, we're reading a special letter that one of Jesus' friends wrote about Jesus. Paul was God's friend, and he wanted to help others become friends with Jesus, too. Paul heard that some people were fighting and trying to be better than each other. Paul reminded them of how Jesus is selfless and they could be selfless, too. Let's visit some stations to see how Jesus was selfless, and we'll practice being selfless.**

Lead children to the Chair Station and have them all sit on the floor. Sit on the floor with them, and say: **Sometimes we may want to show others how awesome we are, but Jesus wasn't a showoff. He didn't worry about making others think he was the coolest. And Jesus wanted others to know how much he loved them. Instead of showing off, he encouraged others. Let's practice being selfless like Jesus by encouraging others now.**

Invite someone to sit in the chair. Lead kids in saying good things about that person, such as "Maya is a good friend," or "Cayde shares his trucks with me." Make sure every child gets a turn in the chair.

Say: **Good job encouraging others! When we're selfless, we don't have to show off or tell everything that's good about us; instead, we can make *others* feel good.**

Visit the Toy Station

Lead kids to the Toy Station. Say: **Another way Jesus is selfless is by not keeping everything for himself. Jesus shared his time with others even when he had somewhere else to go or something else to do. Jesus put others first. When we practice being selfless like Jesus, we can put others first and be great sharers with the things we have. Try your best to be selfless by sharing awesome toys with friends. Put others first like Jesus did by letting your friends play with your favorite toy first.**

Allow a few minutes for kids to play with the toys, reminding them to share with one another and put others first. Remind them that sharing the best toys is a way to be selfless.

Say: **Thanks for sharing with one another. When we put others first and we share the very best stuff, it's a way for us to be selfless like Jesus is selfless.**

Visit the Obstacles Station

Lead kids to the Obstacles Station. Say: **Jesus also showed he's selfless when he helped others. Jesus helped blind people see, he helped sad people be happy, and he helped lonely people become friends with God. Jesus thinks about what other people need and want first. Let's practice looking out for others the way Jesus does.**

Have kids walk in pairs through the obstacle course. Encourage them to warn their partners about any obstacles ahead and help each other go over, around, or under obstacles.

Say: **When we look out for others, it's a way to be selfless like Jesus is selfless. Paul's letter in the Bible told all about the ways that Jesus is selfless and how we can be selfless, too. Being selfless isn't always the first thing we want to do, but when we share and help and encourage and put others first, it can bring us a lot of joy and happiness, knowing we've done something good for others.**



Supplies

- chair*
- toy*
- obstacle course item*

Easy Prep

- Place each object in a different area of your room.

Choose

Lead kids to the chair you placed ahead of time, and say: **Today we learned what it means that Jesus is selfless.** Point to the chair. **We found out that Jesus isn't a showoff. He encourages others and helps them feel good. One way we can be selfless is by spending our time making others feel good instead of always sharing how great we are.**

Lead kids to the toy you placed ahead of time, and say: **Another way Jesus shows he's selfless is by putting others first and sharing.** Pick up the toy. **Jesus doesn't share only the stuff he doesn't want. Jesus loves sharing the very best things with others. We can be selfless like that, too, when we share our toys, snacks, and other things. And we can let others play with our favorite toys first.** Put down the toy.

Lead kids to the obstacle you placed ahead of time, and say: **Jesus is also selfless when he looks out for others.** Pick up the obstacle. **We helped our friends through an obstacle course earlier to help us practice being helpful. Jesus loves to help others even when it's hard. That's a way he's selfless, and it's a way we can be selfless, too. When someone needs help, we can be selfless by dropping what we're doing and helping out!**

Point to each of the three objects. Say: **These all show ways we can practice being selfless. And we can start being selfless this week. Which way do you want to practice being selfless first? Choose one of the three ways, and go sit by the thing that reminds you of a way Jesus is selfless.** Encourage every child to choose one way to practice being selfless this week—by encouraging others, sharing, or being helpful.

Pray

Have at least one adult or teen helper gather the children around each object. (If there are only two of you, work together to gather the third group.) Have a helper at each object lead kids in a brief prayer, asking Jesus to help the kids be selfless in the area they chose to practice.

Close everyone in prayer. Pray: **Jesus, thank you for showing us how to be selfless. You are the most selfless, and we're thankful for all you've done for us. Help us learn from you and be selfless, too. In your name, amen.**

Thank kids for coming to church, and invite them to come back next week.



OBJECT LESSON

Balloon Lift Off

[10 min]

Supplies

- helium-inflated balloons with strings attached (1 for every 10 kids)
- masking or painter's tape
- heart stickers (optional)

Easy Prep

- Securely tape the end of the helium balloons' strings to the floor or a low table top.

Tip

- Consider using heart stickers instead of tape. Be sure to test them ahead of time to make sure they're sticky enough to hold down a balloon.

Tape Down String

Say: **Jesus is selfless. He lowered himself and came from heaven to our world because he loves us so much. Let's use tape to lower this balloon.**

- Have an adult or teen leader give each child a piece of tape.
- Beginning at the end of the string, have kids take turns taping the string to the floor or table so the balloon eventually lies flat on the floor or table.

Remove the Tape

Say: **Jesus loves us so much. He died on the cross and came back to life again so we can go to heaven to be with him! Let's take the tape off so the balloon lifts into the air.**

- Have kids take turns removing their tape. Encourage adult or teen helpers to assist as needed. If you have a high ceiling, be sure to leave the last piece secure on the string so the balloon doesn't lift out of reach.
- Have kids clap their hands, cheer, and celebrate as the balloon lifts into the air.

Talk About It

Say: **Jesus is selfless. He loves us so much that he came down to our world.** Pull the balloon down. **Because of Jesus' selfless love, we can be lifted up with him and live with him in heaven forever!** Let go of the balloon.

As time allows, let kids think of ways to be selfless like Jesus, and as they take turns sharing they can lower the balloon. Then kids can let it go and remember that being selfless brings us joy!



HIGH-ENERGY GAME

Empty Your Space

[10 min]

Supplies

- beanbags (at least 1 per child)
- painter's tape
- upbeat music
- music player

Easy Prep

- Use painter's tape on the floor to divide the room in half. Put an equal number of beanbags on each side of the tape.

Tips

- If you used the Music Video block, consider repeating the songs from today's lesson during the game. You can find the downloadable album [here](#).
- If you prefer, soft balls can be used instead of beanbags.

Give It All Away

Say: **Today we learned that being *selfless* means thinking of others first. When we give to others, it is a way to think of them first. Let's play a game where we try to give everything away.**

- Divide preschoolers into two teams. Have each team spread out on opposite sides of the tape.
- When you start the music, encourage kids to try to get all their beanbags over to the other side so their side is empty. Remind kids they may not cross the tape line.
- Stop the music, and help kids count the beanbags on their side.
- Redistribute the beanbags evenly, and start the music again.
- Continue playing as time allows, stopping periodically to count and redistribute beanbags.

Talk About It

Say: **It was fun to try to give away all our beanbags. Sometimes it's fun to give things away.** Tell about something *you* really enjoyed giving away. It could be a special Christmas or birthday present you gave someone or something special you gave just to show someone that you cared.

Ask: • **What was the best thing *you* ever gave someone?** Kids may talk about a birthday present they got for a friend, a special craft they made for Mom for Mother's Day, or a Christmas present they were excited to give to Dad.

Say: **It's fun to give things away when we know it will make someone we love happy. That's a way we can be selfless.** Today we learned that Jesus is selfless, and he shows us how to be selfless, too.



LOW-ENERGY GAME

Toy Giveaway

[10 min]

Supplies

- small toys (1 per child)
- upbeat music
- music player

Tips

- If you used the Music Video block, consider repeating the songs from today's lesson during the game. You can find the downloadable album [here](#).
- For the first round, don't tell kids that the goal is to be the one without a toy.

Pass Toys Away

Say: **It's hard sometimes to be selfless. It takes practice to think of others first. Let's play a game to practice giving to others.**

- Allow each child to pick one toy from the toys available. Toys must be small enough to be held easily in kids' hands.

- Help kids sit down in a circle with the toys in their laps.
- Take the toy from one child to start the game. Explain that when you start the music, kids will pass their toys to the left. (Remind them which direction is left, if necessary.)
- Kids will keep the toys moving around the circle while the music plays.
- When you stop the music, there should be one child with no toy. Ask the child with no toy to stand up.

Encourage all the kids to cheer and say: "Great job being selfless!"

- Have the child sit back down. Start the music again, and let kids resume passing their toys.
- Continue playing as time allows, stopping the music periodically to cheer for the child with no toy.

Talk About It

Say: **In our game, you had to pass the toy you wanted to a neighbor. Sometimes we have something we're really excited about and we don't want to share it. But the Bible tells us to think about others more than we think about ourselves. When we do, we make our friends and families happy. Jesus was selfless, and he helps us be selfless, too.**



CRAFT

Thinking of Others Cards

[20 min]

Supplies

- brightly colored card stock (1 sheet for every 2 kids)
- “Jesus Is Selfless Labels” handout (1 label per child) (download [here](#))
- Avery 5960 address labels (1 page for every 30 kids)
- washable markers
- clear tape
- lollipops (1 per child)
- fun stickers

Easy Prep

- Make a sample craft to show kids, but wait to add the lollipop.
- Cut card stock in half to create 8½x5½ cards.
- Use scissors or a craft knife to cut a 1-inch slit in the middle of each card.



Talk About It

Say: **Today we learned that being selfless means thinking of others first. Jesus was selfless when he left heaven to come to earth. He died on the cross because he wanted us to be his friends forever. He was definitely thinking of us first. We can be selfless, too, because Jesus showed us how.** Tell about a time *you* were selfless. Maybe you helped someone learn a sport you were good at or gave away something you really wanted to keep.

Ask: • **What’s a way *you* can think of someone else first?** Kids may say letting someone else go first in line, letting a sibling pick the TV show, or letting a friend pick what game they will play.

Make Cards

Ask kids to each think of someone they want to make happy. Say: **Let’s each make a card to make those people happy.** Show kids the sample craft.

- Give each child a card to color. Explain that the slit in the middle is for something special they’ll add later.
- Encourage kids to draw pictures of things to make the recipient happy.
- Read the label aloud, and give one to each child to add to the card. Give kids stickers to add as well.
- Ask each child who he or she is making the card for, and write that person’s name on the card.

After kids finish their cards, show them the lollipops. Say: **Now we get to practice thinking of others instead of ourselves. Even if we really like lollipops, these lollipops aren't for us. They're to give away to make other people happy.**

Help each child put a lollipop through the slit in the card. Secure the lollipop by taping it to the back of the card.

Say: **Your friends and families will love getting these cards. And being selfless and making them happy will make your heart happy, too. Thank Jesus for teaching us to be selfless.**

The Heart of God, Lesson 12: Jesus Is Selfless. Design and base content copyright © Group Publishing, Inc. Licensed for use with 1-20 students. Permission to reproduce granted for local church use only.