

LESSON 12: JESUS IS SELFLESS

Leader Guide for Grades 1 & 2

Classroom: Adventure

 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

Kids share about a topic related to the lesson.

Supplies

- Bible



CORE BIBLE DISCOVERY

Kids make supplies and practice being selfless.

Supplies

- Bible
- paper
- yellow construction paper
- scissors
- markers
- transparent tape



LIFE APPLICATION WRAP-UP

Kids pray for each other.

Supplies

- paper
- markers



OBJECT LESSON

Kids blow on strips of paper.

Supplies

- Bible
- paper (1 half-sheet per child)
- tissue paper
- child-safe scissors (1 per child)
- rulers
- markers



HIGH-ENERGY GAME

Kids 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

Kids play a giving version of Hot Potato.

Supplies

- small toys (1 per child)

- upbeat music
- music player



CRAFT

Kids 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.



DEEPER BIBLE

Kids wait for leaders to share balloons.

Supplies

- Bible
- inflated balloons (1 per leader)

Easy Prep

- Give each adult and teen helper a balloon, and ask helpers to play with the balloons in front of kids during the activity. Encourage them to really exaggerate how much fun they’re having. If kids try to play with the balloons, instruct helpers to quickly and greedily grab them back. Ask one helper to bring the Bible to you when you say, “I don’t know what to do.” That helper will say, “The Bible has something to say about that.”

**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 kids give a high-one (high-five with just one finger) to three friends.
- Make announcements.
- Introduce new kids.
- Celebrate birthdays by having kids say, "Long live [name of birthday child]!"
- 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. 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 small groups, have kids 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 a few kids share with the whole group what they talked about in their small groups.

Summarize

Open a Bible, and say: **Sharing our favorite things can be hard, 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
- paper
- yellow construction paper
- scissors
- markers
- transparent tape

Give Context

Say: **Today's Bible story is part of a letter. A lot of books in the back of the Bible are letters to churches. A guy named Paul wrote a whole bunch of those letters.**

Our story today comes from a letter written to the church in a city called Philippi. Think about what advice *you'd* write in a letter to our church.

After kids have a moment to think about that, let them share their advice.

Say: **The people of the church in Philippi loved Jesus and loved Paul, but they had some problems. They fought with each other and were really competitive. They all wanted to be the best. Let's see what Paul's advice was for them.**

Make Supplies

Set out paper, scissors, markers, and tape.

Say: **We'll read Paul's letter, but first we need to know what life was like for Jesus in heaven. He had so much! He's God, so he is equal with God. And God is the king of *everything*! Let's make crowns to remind us of how important Jesus is.** Have kids cut strips of paper that fit around their heads and quickly decorate them like crowns. Kids can help each other tape the crowns together on their heads.

Say: **Jesus also had *divine privileges*. That means he had all of God's power! We'll make lightning bolts to show that.** Have kids draw lightning bolts on pieces of paper, write "all-powerful" on the lightning bolts, and tape them to their shirts.

Say: **In heaven, Jesus also probably didn't *look* like a human. He must've looked so much more glorious! We'll make glorious masks to help us imagine that.**

Have kids each cut six strips of yellow construction paper. They can tape three on each side of their faces to show glory shining.

Say: **And Jesus lived in a place where no one ever dies. Let's make a leaf to remind us of life. Write your birthday on your leaf to remind you of when *you* started your life.**

Have kids make paper leaves and tape those over their hearts. (It's okay if they're under the lightning bolts.)

Give It Up

Say: **Our Bible passage says Jesus is selfless. Here's how we know that.**

Read Philippians 2:5-6.

Say: **We're not God, so that's not something we have to give up. But sometimes we might have popularity that makes us feel like we're better than other people. Think about a time you felt better than someone else.** Pause for reflection, and then say: **Jesus had divine privileges, but he gave them all up.**

Have kids remove their crowns and toss them in a pile as they say, "Jesus is selfless, so we're selfless."

Ask: **• What might you do to be selfless when others see you as important?**

Give your own example, then let a few kids share.

Say: **Let's see what else Paul said about Jesus.**

Read the first line of Philippians 2:7.

Say: **We definitely don't have divine privileges or power. But there are times we're in charge or we have control. For example, if you get to the TV before your brother and he wants to watch**

something else, you can choose to give him his way. Or maybe you have a toy or privilege that your siblings or friends don't have. Think of a way you feel in control. Pause for reflection, and then have kids crumple up their lightning bolts and throw them in the pile as they say, "Jesus is selfless, so we're selfless."

Ask: • **What other choices do you have control over?**

• **What might you do to be selfless when you have those privileges?**

Say: Jesus is selfless, so we're selfless. He gave up his godly power to put us first. And he also did this.

Read the rest of Philippians 2:7. Have kids remove their glorious masks and toss them in the pile as they say, "Jesus is selfless, so we're selfless."

Say: **Jesus gave up his glorious presence in heaven to be a human on earth. He went from a place better than we can imagine to a poor place on earth—a barn! That showed humility, which is one way to be selfless. Humility means lowering yourself to make others more important.**

Say: Jesus is selfless, so he became human. And then...

Read Philippians 2:8. Have kids remove their leaves and tear them up, throwing the pieces in the pile as they say, "Jesus is selfless, so we're selfless."

Say: **You don't have to literally give up your life for others like Jesus did. But you can show selflessness by giving up your own interests for others.**

Ask: • **Give one example of a way to give up your own interests.**

Give your own example, then let kids share their responses.

Say: Jesus is selfless, so we're selfless. He set an amazing example for us of how to be selfless. When we truly appreciate what Jesus did for us, it's easy to pass that on and be selfless, too. Let me read another part of our passage.

Read Philippians 2:3-4.

Ask: • **Remember, the church in Philippi fought a lot and competed to be the best. When you think of what Paul wrote to them about Jesus' example and the verses I just read, why was this an important message?** Say: The Philippians weren't the only ones who fought and tried to be the best. That's a big part of our culture, too! But Jesus is selfless, so we're selfless. Jesus can help us reflect his heart by putting others first.

Bow

Say: **After Jesus gave up everything, he received something awesome.**

Read Philippians 2:9-11.

Say: Jesus is selfless, even though he deserved the highest honor. Eventually he got that honor! We can show how important Jesus is by bowing before him. Let's get on our knees. Pause for kids to do so, and do the same. Pause for a moment of reverence and prayer.

Say: Jesus is selfless, so we're selfless. We can honor him by being selfless and putting others first.



Supplies

- paper
- markers

Write and Pray

- Give each child a piece of paper and a marker.
- Have kids use big letters to write one or two words that describe something they need prayer for. For example, “aunt – cancer” or “math test.” Have adult and teen helpers write for kids who need help.
- Have kids sit in a circle and hold their signs in front of them.

Say: **Jesus is selfless, so we’re selfless.** We’re going to practice looking at other people and seeing their needs. It will be easy, since they’re holding signs with their needs! Invite each child to share his or her need.

Say: **Pick someone to pray silently for, but don’t say who you pick. Just pray for that person. When you finish, look around and pray for someone else!** Allow about two minutes for silent prayer.

Wrap Up

Pray: **Jesus, thank you for showing us how to be selfless by putting us first! Help us be selfless this week. In your name, amen.**

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



OBJECT LESSON

He Will Raise You Up

[10 min]

Supplies

- Bible
- paper (1 half-sheet per child)
- tissue paper
- child-safe scissors (1 per child)
- rulers
- markers

Blow on a Paper Strip

Say: **Jesus is selfless.** When we're selfless, it's like we lower ourselves. Let's see what happens when we lower a piece of paper.

- Give each child a half-sheet of paper and scissors.
- Have each child cut a strip of paper that's approximately 2x6 inches.
- Have kids hold one end of the paper just under their mouth and blow down and across the paper, as if trying to lower it to their chin.



Experiment With Paper

Ask: • **What did you notice? What happened when you tried to lower the paper?**

Say: **Blowing down onto the paper actually lifted it up! The speed of our air makes the pressure on the top of the paper go away. But there's still air pressure underneath the paper, so it lifts up! This is called *Bernoulli's principle*, and it's how airplane wings help airplanes fly. Let's experiment with this principle some more!**

- Make tissue paper available to kids.
- Have kids cut strips of regular paper or tissue paper with different lengths and widths and see which one lifts the highest.
- Let kids experiment for several minutes.

Talk About It

Ask: • **How does this experiment remind you of Jesus selflessly humbling himself and coming to earth to die for us?**

Say: **Philippians 2 says that Jesus humbled himself when he came to earth as a human. Verse 9 says, "Therefore, God elevated him to the place of highest honor and gave him the name above all**

other names.” **Jesus is selfless, so we’re selfless.** When we’re friends with Jesus, we follow his example and we lower ourselves, too, trusting that God will lift us up. Have kids choose one of their paper strips to draw on.

Ask: • **Tell about a time being selfless lifted you up and made you feel good. But first, draw your answer on one of your paper strips.** Share an example from your own life to begin. Perhaps you gave money to help someone in need, or you offered to let your friend borrow something of yours and it made you happy that he or she enjoyed it. Give kids about two minutes to draw, and then ask for some to share their answers.

Say: **Jesus is selfless. We can be selfless, too, and trust that God will lift us up!** Invite all the kids to blow on the strips that they drew on one last time.



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 kids 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.

- Have 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.**



Supplies

- Bible
- inflated balloons (1 per leader)

Easy Prep

- Give each adult and teen helper a balloon, and ask helpers to play with the balloons in front of kids during the activity. Encourage them to really exaggerate how much fun they're having. If kids try to play with the balloons, instruct helpers to quickly and greedily grab them back. Ask one helper to bring the Bible to you when you say, "I don't know what to do." That helper will say, "The Bible has something to say about that."

Wait to Play

Divide kids into groups evenly among adult and teen helpers, and have each group sit down in an open area of the room. Begin playing with a balloon, and cue the other adult and teen helpers to do the same.

Say: **Wow, playing with balloons is so much fun! This is great. I'm so glad I brought these balloons today. I'm really good at this!** Pause playing to look around at the kids.

Say: **You kids look like you want to play with a balloon, too. Hmm.** Begin playing again, and say: **I feel kinda bad that we leaders are the only ones who have balloons. Maybe we should share. But if I share my balloon, then I won't get to hit it as many times. I don't know what to do.**

Cue the designated helper to come up to you with the Bible. Have the leader say, "The Bible has something to say about that."

Read aloud Philippians 2:5-8.

Say: **You're right. Jesus was a king in heaven. I bet that was pretty great. But he came here to earth where things weren't always so great. He even let some mean people put him on a cross because he loved us and wanted us to live in heaven forever *with* him. Jesus is selfless, and he gave up so much for us. I think we can be selfless, too, and give up some of our time with our balloons.**

Turn to your helpers and ask: **What do you think, should we share our balloons?**

Have helpers heartily agree and then invite kids to play with the balloons and try to keep them up in the air. As kids play, encourage them to share the balloons with their friends. Cheer them on as they keep the balloons in the air, and remind them to keep their friends safe as they play.

Talk About It

Say: **That was great! Playing with balloons is fun. I wish I would've put you first and let you play before I did.**

Ask: • **How did you feel about not being allowed to play at first?** Kids may share that they were angry or jealous or that it wasn't fair.

Say: **It was hard for me to put you first, but it was even more fun to play with my balloon when we all played together.**

Share an example of a time someone shared something special with *you*. It might have been a friend letting you borrow a favorite sweater or a book he or she loved. Be sure to share how that made you feel.

Ask: • **Tell about a time someone shared something special with you.** Kids might say a sibling or a friend shared a special toy or a yummy treat. Encourage them to share how they felt.

Say: **You did a great job being selfless and sharing the balloons. Seeing you have fun made playing with the balloon even more fun for me. Jesus shows us how to be selfless, so we can be selfless and share our best with others. That brings us joy.**