

# Secret Service

**Bible:** Secret Service (Give in Secret) • *Matthew 6:1-4*

**Key Question:** What would happen if you never got credit for serving?

**Bottom Line:** Serve others without looking for applause.

**Memory Verse:** "Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, 'Anyone who wants to be first must be the very last, and the servant of all.'" *Mark 9:35, (NIV)*

**Life App:** Service—Lending a hand to help someone else

**Basic Truth:** I should treat others the way I want to be treated.

**Social: Providing Time for Fun Interaction (9:00, 10:15, 11:30)**

**9:00 & 11:30**

**Get Your Head in the Game**

- No supplies needed

**10:15**

**Just for Fun**

- No supplies needed

**Bible: Communicating God's Truth in Engaging Ways (9:10, 10:25, 11:40)**

- Bible Presentation in Large Group

**Groups: Creating a Safe Place to Connect (9:40, 10:55, 12:10)**

**9:00 & 11:30**

**Verses to Take with You**

- Crayons in a variety of colors
- Bible

**10:15**

**Bible Story Extension**

- Bible
- One coin for each person
- Blindfold

**Prayer: Making it Personal (9:55, 11:10, 12:25)**

- Markers
- "Service with a Smile" Activity Page, cut the cards apart; two to five for each student

**Dismiss (10:00, 11:15, 12:30)**

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## Social: Providing Time for Fun Interaction (Small Groups, 10 minutes)

Welcome kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up. Get ready to experience today’s Bible Truth.

*Take some time to pray for your students before they arrive today. Pray that they would begin to see serving and volunteering (putting others first) as valuable on its own without the need to get value from their peers and others. Ask God to give them hearts and vision to serve others regardless of the earthly rewards they may receive.*

**9:00 & 11:30**

**Get Your Head in the Game**

**What You Need:** No supplies needed

**What You Do:**

- **Ask** everyone to form a circle, kneel, and place both of their hands on the floor in front of them (or sit around a table).
- **Tell** each person to cross his or her left hand over the right hand of the person next sitting to the left of him or her.
- **Explain** that you will designate a direction (left or right) then you’ll slap the floor with one of your hands. The hand closest to your slapping hand must then slap his or her hand, then the next closest, and so on.
- **Rules** are as follows:
  - A single slap keeps the slaps going in the correct direction.
  - A double slap sends the slap in the opposite direction.
  - If someone slaps the floor out of turn, he/she must remove that hand. All other hands stay where they are.
  - When both of someone’s hands are out, that person is out of the game.
- **Play** with increasing speed until there are only two people left.

**What You Say:**

“You should give yourselves a round of applause for that game. No, wait. That’s probably not a good idea. Hold the applause until after Large Group then you’ll understand why.”

Lead your group to the Large Group area.

**10:15**

**Just for Fun**

**What You Need:** No supplies needed

**What You Do:**

- **Begin** by explaining the following motions:
  - Tornado—spin around and make the sound of howling wind.
  - Flood—hold nose and pretend to be going under water and say, “Glug, Glug, Glug!”
  - Blizzard—pretend to shovel snow and say, “Brrrrr!”
- **Ask** everyone to find a partner then stand back to back.
- **Explain** that they are going to try to match motions with their partners without speaking or knowing ahead of time which action their partners will choose. Tell them you will count to three then say, “Go!” Both partners should then turn and face each other and *immediately* make one of the motions.
- **Try** it again with the same partner or have everyone switch partners and see if a match can be created with someone new.
- **Announce** a winner based on the first person to get five matches.

**What You Say:**

“You should give yourselves a round of applause for that game. No, wait. That’s probably not a good idea. Hold the applause until after Large Group then you’ll understand why.”

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## Bible: Communicating God's Truth in Engaging Ways (Large Group, 30 minutes)

### GETTING READY

#### 1. Opener/Closer

##### What You Need:

- Host
- Six brown paper bags
- Eight volunteers
- Four blindfolds
- Table
- Food combos suggestions for each bag
  - Pop-tarts and Vienna sausages
  - Raisin bread and raw onion
  - String cheese and sour pickle candy
  - Dr. Pepper and kombucha
  - Canned tuna and pickled halibut
  - Cookies/cream chocolate bar and goat cheese

#### 2. Bible Truth

##### What You Need:

- Communicator
- Bible
- Bag of groceries
- Cell phone
- Preselected Small Group Leader with an untied shoe

#### 3. Worship

##### What You Need:

- "Live Differently"
- "This Little Light"
- "We Are One"

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## **Bible: Communicating God’s Truth in Engaging Ways (Large Group, 30 minutes)**

CG: Theme Loop Video

CG: Countdown Video

CG: Theme Video

*Host enters.*

### **Welcome**

*Host has lots of energy as he or she welcomes everyone to The Base. Host is relatable and inviting. Host discusses recent/upcoming events: World Junior Curling Championships, Super Bowl LIII, NBA All-Star Game, Daytona 500, Black History Month, Ice Cream for Breakfast Day, National Frozen Yogurt Day, movie opening (Lego Movie 2, X-Men: Dark Phoenix), a viral video on YouTube, etc. This would also be a good time to promote your community food drive in partnership with Compassion International. Host tells them how excited he or she is that they’re there and briefly runs through what they can expect. This is especially helpful for first-time guests to make them feel like they know what’s happening.*

*Host transitions to Worship.*

### **WORSHIP**

CG: “Live Differently”

CG: “This Little Light”

CG: “We Are One”

*Host transitions to the opening game.*

### **Opener**

**HOST:** “Generally speaking, I think we can all agree that when it comes to food, no one like surprises. No one wants to order French toast and find it loaded with habanero peppers. I, for one, would be pretty unhappy if I bit into my burger and found it loaded with mushrooms. I mean, come on, that’s a FUNGUS!”

“However, that . . . is only in ‘real life’ and does not apply to us in this room. Culinary surprises are never disappointing in the Base. That’s why I thought we’d mix things up a little bit with a game I like to call THE BROWN BAG SPECIAL.”

**CG: The Brown Bag Special Title Slide**

“To play this game, I need several volunteers who have a really, really (REALLY!) good friend in the audience. And when I say ‘really,’ I really mean a really, really good friend whom you really, really trust! Anybody got a really, really good friend sitting nearby? Raise your hand if that is you AND you don’t mind helping me out for this game.”

*Host selects four volunteers for the game. Those four volunteers bring their really, really good friends with them to the stage, giving you eight volunteers. Be sure to make sure there are no food allergies or intolerances before the game is played. Optional: preselect all four teams and explain how the game will work. Adjust the above script accordingly.*

“I hope your taste buds are properly warmed up, friends, because today you’ll be participating in a taste-testing game! In each of these bags, there are TWO food items: one delicious, the other . . . well, not so much. I will blindfold the first volunteer I selected. Next, his or her really, really good friend whom they *really, REALLY* trust will pick one of the brown bags on the table without seeing what’s inside. Then the volunteers will look inside and pick one of the two foods for their blindfolded friends to taste. That’s right, your trusted friends will have the option to select a really delicious food for you to try or choose to feed you a less delicious food option. But I’m sure you have nothing to worry about . . . because you really, *really* trust these friends, right?”

“Whatever food they choose, the volunteers hand it to their blindfolded friends. The blindfolded volunteers will taste the food and guess what it is. Does everyone understand the rules? (*Pause for response.*) Then let us commence the tasting!”

**SFX: High-energy game music**

*Brown bag special craziness starts. Volunteers will go one at a time so the audience can see the drama play out with each pair of friends. Options for food matchups could include: Pop-Tarts and Vienna Sausages; raisin bread and a raw onion; String cheese and Sour Pickle Candy; Dr. Pepper and Kombucha; Canned Tuna and Pickled Halibut; Cookies/Cream Chocolate Bar and Goat Cheese.*

“WAHOO! That was awesome. Some of you folks have awesome friends, and others of you need to find new friends. Regardless, all of you have stomachs of steel and deserve a rousing round of applause. Let’s give it up for all of our volunteers! And while you’re at it, let’s welcome [Communicator’s Name]

*Host exits as Communicator enters.*

**COMMUNICATOR'S SCRIPT****INTRODUCTION**

*Communicator enters carrying a big bag of groceries. They are a little distracted and uncharacteristically full of themselves.*

**COMMUNICATOR:** “Oh hey! Didn’t see you all there. I was just on my way to the local food pantry with all of these groceries that I’m planning to donate to families in need. *(Falsely modest)* Oh, you know how I do, I just like to get out there in my community and spread the love a little bit. And speaking of spreading the love . . .”

*Communicator pulls out phone, aims up for a selfie with groceries in hand.*

“There we go. Let me just fire this off to Instagram really quick . . . caption . . . *(typing)* ‘spreading . . . the . . . love . . . hashtag service . . . hashtag food bank . . . hashtag ain’t I the sweetest . . .’ and . . . post. Oh, you know, while I’m here I should document the work I’m doing at the church; my followers will definitely want to know about that!”

*Communicator turns to take a selfie with the audience. Communicator encourages audience to smile.*

“Wow, great smiles everyone! Well, except for a couple . . . you know who you are. Let’s post that one too . . . *(typing)* ‘working in [*name of environment*] always brightens my day . . . hashtag good person . . . hashtag props to me . . . hashtag service life’ . . . and . . . post.”

*Communicator looks out into the audience for planted SGL with untied shoes.*

“Oh, hey! Looks like your shoe is untied! Let me take care of that for you . . .”

*Communicator leaves the stage to tie shoe and has phone handy for another selfie.*

“There ya go! Now hold still for just a second so I can snap a selfie with your shoe . . . *(take selfie)* Wow, you could be a shoe model! Hold on a sec . . . *(typing)* ‘just tied . . . shoe for . . . less-fortunate . . . small group leader . . . hashtag s/he needs help . . . hashtag old stinky shoes . . . hashtag serving the community . . .’ and . . . posted.”

*Communicator returns to stage. False modesty is dropped, and Communicator is back to normal self.*

**TENSION**

**COMMUNICATOR:** “Okay, clearly I’m being ridiculous. No one on my Instagram or Facebook accounts needs to know that I just helped someone tie [his or her] shoe. But the unfortunate truth is that we live in a culture where we LOVE to get credit for the good things we do.”

“When we do something good, we tend to want people to know about it. But why? Maybe we want to feel appreciated, or maybe we just want props for the effort. But what happens if we don’t tell people? Is it still service even if no one knows about it? If you make an anonymous donation and no one ever knows that it was you . . . is it still worth it? If you anonymously clean up a mess in the hall without anyone seeing your effort, will you miss the kudos? Really think about it. If you didn’t get credit for your service, would you still serve?”

“Today we will be looking at some verses that will completely flip our natural desire to get credit for serving others . . . on its head. Let’s get to it.”

**TRUTH**

**COMMUNICATOR:** “Today we head to the book of Matthew where Jesus was talking to a large crowd on a mountainside near Capernaum. Historians believe Jesus spoke to the group over the course of several days where He covered subjects like anger, prayer, worry, and, of course, giving in secret. In chapter 6, (*Open Bible and read Matthew 6:1-2a*) we can read how Jesus said, *“Be careful not to do good deeds in front of other people. Don’t do those deeds to be seen by others. If you do, your Father in heaven will not reward you. When you give to needy people, do not announce it by having trumpets blown.”*”

“Now, we realize Instagram is not the same as announcing it by blowing trumpets, but it is not all that different either. Jesus continued, (*Open Bible and read Matthew 6:2*) *“Do not be like those who only pretend to be holy. They announce what they do in the synagogues and on the streets. They want to be honored by other people. What I’m about to tell you is true. They have received their complete reward.”*”

“In other words, Jesus is explaining some people serve only to look good, and that will be the extent of their reward.”

“Let’s put some action to these words. I’m going to show you guys a few social media images of people giving in a very public way. Then we will give you time to brainstorm with your small groups on ways to achieve the same spirit of service without making it an opportunity to show off. But first, check out this picture.”

**CG: Social Media Image 1**

“Looks like we’ve got a guy loaning some cash to a friend in a tight spot. The caption says, ‘Bro needed me to spot him, who am I to say no?’ Maybe some of you have been there. Tummy starts grumbling after school, and you don’t have any cash for a snack at the snack bar. What are you to do? Well, this guy went to a friend, and it worked—definitely a nice thing to do! However, when the person loaning the money posts about it on social media . . . the good will maybe be a little less nice. So let’s take a few moments to think about how we could change this into a less public, more private experience. Everyone gather with your small groups to think of one, CREATIVE way you could secretly pass the money to your friend in need.”



*Communicator allows small groups time to discuss the scenario. Encourage groups to come up ideas other than give the friend money when nobody is looking or just not posting about it online. Once groups finish, call on several groups to share their ideas.*

“Great thoughts, everybody. You’re exactly right! You could drop off the cash in their yard using your drone. You could slip an envelope of money anonymously in their locker. There are tons of ways you could distribute money to your pal without letting the world know about it. How about another image?”

### **CG: Social Media Image 2**

“Alright! We have someone cuddling up with a cat. I’m not sure that animal looks totally cool with the affection. The caption says, ‘Animal shelter serving today! Furry friends are friends, too!’ There is absolutely nothing wrong hanging out with animals at the animal shelter. However, is there a way to do serve the animals of our town without trying to get some props online? Talk this over with your small groups. What could be done at the animal shelter where you aren’t in the limelight?”

*Communicator allows small groups time to discuss the scenario. Encourage groups to come up ideas other than not posting about it online. Once groups finish, call on several groups to share their ideas.*

“You are all right! You could drop off chew toys and kitty litter before the shelter opens. Instead of serving in the front, you could quietly help in the back by cleaning out the crates and leave your phone with your mom. Very good. How about we look at one more image?”

### **CG: Social Media Image 3**

“Look at all those Christmas presents. Even though it’s only been two months, anybody else missing Christmas right now? *(Pause for response.)* Me too! The caption says, ‘#TBT remembering my HUGE donation to Toddlerland back at Christmas this year. They were so STOKED when I walked in!!’ I love their willingness to help young kids. Could they have been a little more discrete about their donation? How could this person have served these kids without making [himself or herself] out to be the star of the show? Take a couple minutes to talk it over with your groups.”

*Communicator allows small groups time to discuss the scenario. Encourage groups to come up with creative, out-of-the-box ideas. Once groups finish, call on several groups to share their ideas.*

“Yes! Great thoughts. Dressing up in an elf costume as a disguise would be an awesome solution. Quietly passing the gifts to the teachers so their leaders can get the love from their kids would be great! There are so many great ways we can serve the community in secret; thank you all for your excellent ideas!”

**APPLICATION**

**COMMUNICATOR:** “Serving others is an awesome way to help someone out. When we serve others in secret, it prevents our mindset from being all about us. Being ‘all about us’ is the danger when we tell our friends about how generous we are or when we post all of our good deeds online. We can start to believe we are ALL THAT and get a little self-absorbed.”

“This is exactly what Jesus was talking about when He spoke to the crowd on the mountainside. Let’s look at what Jesus said one more time. He said, *(Open Bible and read Matthew 6:1-2) “Be careful not to do good deeds in front of other people. Don’t do those deeds to be seen by others. If you do, your Father in heaven will not reward you. When you give to needy people, do not announce it by having trumpets blown. Do not be like those who only pretend to be holy. They announce what they do in the synagogues and on the streets. They want to be honored by other people. What I’m about to tell you is true. They have received their complete reward, (Nlrv).”*”

“If you make the service all about you, that little praise you get will be your ONLY reward. Jesus is being pretty clear. You should give in secret and serve WITHOUT taking the credit.”

“You’re probably thinking, ‘If I am serving in secret, what do I get out of it?’ Great thought. Jesus continued and said *(Open Bible and read Matthew 6:3-4), “When you give to needy people, don’t let your left hand know what your right hand is doing. Then your giving will be done secretly. Your father will reward you, because he sees what you do secretly, (Nlrv).”* Not only will you get to see firsthand how you’ve helped someone else, but also Jesus says your reward will come from God! It doesn’t matter if others notice because God will notice. We’re not always sure what God’s reward will look like, but God’s reward will be so much better than what we could receive from others.”

**LANDING**

**COMMUNICATOR:** “But what would it look like or what would it feel like to not receive the props? As we wrap up in here, we want you to think about it. Try to answer this question in your head.”

**CG: Key Question Slide**

**“What would happen if you never got credit for serving?”** No pats on the back. No high fives. No warm thanks. What would happen? Think about it. You’ll have a chance to chat with your Small Group about that in moment. Before you head to group, let’s pray and ask God to help us remember that we don’t need any credit for serving others. People just need help, and we can do that whether anyone finds out it us or not.”

*Communicator leads group in a prayer related to what they just heard then dismisses them to small group.*

*CG: Small Group Slide*

*CG: Full Video (If Needed)*

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**Life App:** Service—Lending a hand to help someone else

**Basic Truth:** I should treat others the way I want to be treated.

## Groups: Creating a Safe Place to Connect (Small Groups, 15 minutes)

Create a safe place to connect and learn how the Bible Truth applies to real life experiences, through interactive activities and discussion questions.

**9:00 & 11:30**

**Verses to Take with You**

**What You Need:** Bible, crayons

**What You Do:**

- **Sit** in a circle then **spread** the crayons across the floor within everyone’s reach.
- **Talk** about the way colors often express a mood or feeling. Dark colors generally represent a more serious mood than lighter colors.
- **Explain** that you will read a verse then you’ll ask them to choose a crayon color that represents how they feel about it. They can choose their colors based on an attitude they have, a memory of a situation that comes to mind, a person who did or didn’t live out the verse, or a way the verse challenges them in some way.
- **Allow** each person time to select a color after you read each verse, then **ask** them to share why they chose the colors they did.
- **Include** yourself in the activity by choosing a crayon and using it to open further discussion about the meaning of the verse and how to apply it.
- **Read aloud:**
  - Ephesians 6:7
  - Romans 12:3
  - Matthew 25:23
  - Colossians 3:23a
- **Use** the following questions as needed to open up discussion and help students understand how to live out the principles in each verse.
  - What type of situation would be a good time to remember this verse?
  - What do you find encouraging about this verse?
  - How can you overcome the challenges that make this verse hard to live out?
  - What are some benefits of living out this verse?

**10:15****Bible Story Extension****What You Need:** Coins, blindfold, Bible**What You Do:**

- **Sit** in a circle.
- **Give** each student a coin.
- **Choose** one person to sit in the middle of the circle and put on a blindfold.
- **Let** the students take turns silently placing their coins on the floor near the person in the center. If the blindfolded student thinks he hears someone and points in the right direction, that person is caught.
- **Switch** places and **repeat** several times.
- When finished, **talk** about the game while directing students back to the principles found in today's lesson: serve without looking for applause.
  - How did it feel to go unnoticed in the game?
  - When do you *like* to be noticed? Why?
  - Why do we get upset when no one notices something good we've done? Is that okay? Why or why not?
- **Invite** one or two students to read Matthew 6:1-4 aloud to review the lesson.
  - What can you do to watch out for your motives and attitude when serving others?
  - What does it mean to not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing?
  - Based on what Jesus said in these verses, is it wrong to serve when you just want credit for doing something nice? Explain.
  - If you are applauded and recognized for something you did, what is the best way to respond? What should your response be if your good work goes completely unnoticed?
- **Challenge** the students to think of ways they can serve others this week and do so as quietly and unnoticed as they were when they moved the coins earlier in the game.

**All Service Times****Pray and Dismiss (5 minutes)****What You Need:** "Service with a Smile" Activity Page, markers**What You Do:**

- **Give** each student some of the "Service with a Smile" cards and set out the markers.
- **Explain** that the cards are for them to take with them as a reminder of the things they learned this month.
- **Encourage** them to do an act of service for someone without being noticed then leave the card behind for that person to pass along with another act of kindness.
- **Invite** them to color the cards if they would like and share some ideas they have for ways they will use the cards this week.
- **Pray** over the "Service with a Smile" cards, asking God to use their service to encourage others and not for applause.

**What You Say:**

"Dear God, help us to serve You with all that we have—not so people will compliment or applaud us but because we just want to show our love to You and to others. You have shown us by Your example how to serve unselfishly. Open our eyes to the gifts You've given us and help us use them to meet the needs of others wherever we can. In Jesus' name, amen."

## SERVICE WITH A SMILE

"... serve one another humbly in love."  
Galatians 5:13b, NIV



Do something for someone, then leave this card  
for another person to find and pass along.



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### WHAT TO DO:

Print one on cardstock and cut apart. Provide two to five for every student.

Service with a Smile, NIV

February 2019, Week 4, Preteen Small Group  
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