

Secret Service

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

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: Setting the Tone for the Experience (9:00, 10:15, 11:30)

9:00 & 11:30

Ring on a String

- A plastic toy ring, a key ring, or a binder ring
- Ball or skein of yarn
- Scissors

10:15

Early Arriver

- No supplies needed

Bible: Communicating God’s Truth in Engaging Ways (9:15, 10:30, 11:45)

- Bible Presentation in Large Group

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

9:00 & 11:30

Copy Clap

- Bible marked at Mark 9:35
- Construction paper; one piece for each kid

10:15

Left Hand, Right Hand

- White paper plates; one for each kid
- Markers or crayons

Prayer (9:50, 11:05, 12:20)

- Bible marked at Matthew 6

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

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Social: Providing Time for Fun Interaction (Small Groups, 15 minutes)

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

Before kids arrive, take a few moments to pray for them. Pray that God will give you meaningful examples to share with the kids of how you can serve others in secret. Ask God to give the kids a heart to serve others, not for applause, but to show them Your love. Help them to know that by doing so, they are loving and serving You. Help them understand that this is the best reward.

9:00 & 11:30

Ring on a String

What You Need: Plastic toy ring, key ring, or binder ring, yarn, scissors

What You Do:

- Gather your group in a circle and pass the yarn around the circle. Each kid should unwind it, pass it on, and then hold on to their own section with both hands.
- When the yarn comes back around to you, cut the end, slip the ring onto the yarn, and then tie the ends of the yarn together to make one big yarn circle.
- Choose one player to step inside the circle and close their eyes for a count of ten. During this time, the kids in the circle slide the ring along the string. They can move it backward or forward around the circle.
- After the count of ten, kids keep trying to move the ring along the string, and the player in the middle tries to guess whose hand the ring is under.
- When the player guesses correctly, that person must switch places and become the new guesser.
- Play as many rounds as time allows.

TO ADAPT FOR OLDER KIDS: If this is not challenging enough for older kids, they can play where the kids face outward and move the ring around the string behind their backs.

What You Say:

“This game was all about moving that ring in secret. **[Transition] Let’s go hear how we’re going to use top-secret skills to serve others.**”

Lead your group to the Large Group area.

10:15**Early Arriver Idea****What You Need:** No supplies needed**What You Do:**

- Greet kids.
- Ask kids to talk about times when they've had people applaud for them: at the end of a school performance, after the happy birthday song.
- Ask:
 - When do we applaud others?
 - Why do we do it?
 - How does it feel to have people applaud you for something you've done?
- Play a game of "Statues."
 - One player is a museum guard. Her job is to move all around your small group area and catch anyone moving.
 - The rest of the kids are statues. When the guard isn't looking at them, their task is to get other kids to laugh or move when the guard is looking at them.
 - If the guard catches someone moving, they have to sit down wherever they are.

After a few minutes, choose a new guard. Play as many rounds as time allows.

Lead your group to the Large Group area.

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Bible: Communicating God’s Truth in Engaging Ways (Large Group, 25 minutes)

GETTING READY

1. Opener/Closer

What You Need:

- Host

2. Bible Truth

What You Need:

- Historyteller
- Host
- Bible
- Two gift cards
- Box of a dozen doughnuts
- One more doughnut on a napkin
- Dark clothes and a beanie for the Host

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, 25 minutes)

Engage kids’ hearts through a dynamic and interactive Bible Truth, worship, and prayer experience in a Large Group setting.

CG: Theme Loop Video

Host enters, dressed as a waiter/and carrying a tray with some diner food on it.

CG: Countdown Video

CG: Theme Video

Opener

HOST: “Well, hello, everyone! It’s a great day to be here in the [your environment’s name] Diner. I’m your server, [your name], and I’m so glad you’re here today.

Set the tray down.

“This month we’re talking about service!

CG: Life App Video

“Service is lending a hand to help someone else.

CG: Theme TransBack Video

“We’ve talked about lots of ways to serve others, and hopefully you’ve already been able to see what a difference it can make when we do. Right now, though, I would love for us to sing some praise and worship to God together. So, up on your feet!”

Worship

CG: “Live Differently”

CG: “This Little Light”

CG: “We Are One”

Host exits. Historyteller enters.

SETTING UP THE BIBLE TRUTH

HISTORYTELLER: “Hi, everyone! Today I want to tell you something really important that Jesus said about service.”

Host enters.

HOST: “Hey, [Historyteller’s name]! You’re just getting started, right? Well, I was just thinking that I’m really getting the hang of this serving thing. We’ve been talking about service all month, and I just wanted to show everyone how good I am at it.

(To audience) “I’ve got a gift card to give to [Small Group Leader]—just because! Isn’t that awesome?”

Host gives the gift card to the Leader.

“And I brought some doughnuts to give to our team in the tech booth. They work so hard, and I’m sure they’re hungry.

Host gives the box of doughnuts to the tech team.

(Sighing contentedly) “Wow. I’m just really good at serving. I mean, I’m really better than I even THOUGHT I was, and I already thought I was pretty great at it. Do you think I should get a round of applause?”

SFX: *Applause*

“Yes! I thought so, too! *(To tech team)* Thanks for noticing, friends. Maybe I should get a serving trophy, too.”

HISTORYTELLER: “Ummmmm, [Host’s name], that was really nice of you. I mean, you DID come up with some great ways to serve. But at the same time, the WAY you serve is important, too. That’s kind of what Jesus was talking about in the verses I want to share today.”

HOST: “Oh. Okay!”

HISTORYTELLER: “This comes from the book of Matthew *(hold up Bible)*, from a message that Jesus shared with His followers while He was sitting on a mountainside. [Host’s name], could you read what Jesus said?”

HOST: “Of course!”

Host opens the Bible to Matthew 6:1-4 (NirV) and reads.

“Be careful not to do good deeds in front of other people. Don’t do those deeds to be seen by others. . . . When you give to needy people, don’t let your left hand know what your right hand is doing. . . . Your Father will reward you, because he sees what you do secretly.”

HISTORYTELLER: “You see, we should serve others to SERVE them—not to get applause. Our goal shouldn’t be trying to get other people to see how great we are. Our goal should be to lend a hand and help!”

HOST: “Ohhhhhhhh. Wow. Yeah, I think I understand. I’m going to have to go give this some thought.”

Host exits, resolved to figure this out.

WE LOVE TO BE LOVED

HISTORYTELLER: “All of us love to get applause, right? All of us love to get high-fives. All of us like it when other people notice that we did something good. It’s very normal to feel that way.

“I mean, it feels really GOOD to be recognized. It feels good to get a reward when you get something right. It feels good to know that other people think you’re a kind person.

“But that’s not the reason we serve. When we choose to serve, we’re not doing it to be noticed. We serve because we want to lend a hand to help someone else. We want to show God’s love to people by the way we treat them. We **[Basic Truth] treat others the way we want to be treated** so that we can make things BETTER for them, not to get attention or applause for ourselves.

“That’s what Jesus was talking about in those verses. We shouldn’t do good things just to be seen by others. We should serve the people around us because it’s a great way to show them God’s love.”

SERVING IN SECRET

HISTORYTELLER: “Have you ever done something to help someone without getting any credit? Let’s say you noticed that the living room was really messy, so you cleaned it up without being asked. Now, how would you feel when your mom or dad came in and discovered that the room had been cleaned up? I bet you would be SO excited to see how happy they were—even if they never found out you were the one who did it!

“How about this one? Say you’re walking through the grocery store with your parents and you notice some trash on the floor. What if you picked it up and threw it away, without even saying anything about it? Wouldn’t it feel so good to know that you had done something to help—even if no one ever saw you do it?”

OUR SECRET MISSION

HISTORYTELLER: “We’ve all been given a ‘secret mission’ from God. He’s given us the secret mission of serving others without looking for applause. We might never get the credit, and that’s okay! But no matter what, we can choose to do something to help the people around us.

“Speaking of secret missions, what if we invited [Host’s name] back out to try serving again? Do you think he could be a little sneakier about it this time? Let’s see.

(Speaking loudly) “Oh, [Host’s name], would you like to try serving again? *(Beat.)* I said, [Host’s name], would you like to try serving again?”

SFX: *“Mission: Impossible Theme” by Michael Giacchino*

Host enters, wearing dark clothes and a beanie. He sneaks around and delivers a gift card to another Leader. Then he gives a doughnut to Historyteller and sneaks back offstage.

WRAPPING UP THE BIBLE TRUTH

HISTORYTELLER: “Wow. That was quite a difference! I think he’s got it; don’t you?”

“Here’s the thing about serving. God sees what we do, even if others don’t. Even if it feels like no one notices the good things you do, or the good choices you make, God ALWAYS does. You can always feel good inside knowing that you’re doing something to help someone else. And you can be sure that God will always be proud of you when you do.

“We should serve to help people, not to be noticed. We serve others because we know God wants us to.

Open the Bible to Matthew 6:1 (NIRV) and read.

“Jesus said: *“Be careful not to do good deeds in front of other people. Don’t do those deeds to be seen by others.”*

“He’s right—we need to be careful. If we’re NOT careful, we might end up serving others just to be noticed or to be liked. Instead, we should serve in secret. We should be happy to lend a hand, even if we don’t get the credit.

“When we serve that way, we can feel good because we know deep inside that we’ve helped someone. Jesus also said that when we serve in secret, God will reward us—because even when no one else notices, He does!

CG: *Bottom Line Slide*

“Remember to **[Bottom Line] serve others without looking for applause.**

CG: *Blank Bottom Line Slide*

“This week, look for ways you can serve others in secret. Maybe you could help your mom by putting away the groceries while she’s in another room. Maybe you could take out the trash instead of just piling one more thing on top of the can. Maybe you could help your teacher clean up and organize the classroom supplies while she’s busy looking at everyone’s homework.

“Whatever you do, just know that God loves to see you serve others—even if you don’t get the applause.

Pray

HISTORYTELLER: “God, thank You for loving us and for knowing exactly what we need. Thank You for teaching us how to serve others and for helping us to remember that we don’t do it to be noticed.

Help us to find secret ways to serve the people around us. We love You, and we ask these things in Jesus' name, amen."

"If you have an offering with you today, raise your hand and we will bring the bucket over to you."

"You can head to Small Group now and talk about more ways that you can serve in secret!"

Dismiss children to their Small Groups.

CG: Small Group Slide

CG: Full Video (If needed)

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

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Groups: Creating a Safe Place to Connect (10 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

Copy Clap

What You Need: Bible marked at Mark 9:35, construction paper

What You Do:

- Set the construction paper on the floor in a line, one for each kid.
- Guide kids to line up on the papers.
- Invite a child to open the Bible to Mark 9 and read the verse aloud or say it from memory.
- Lead the group to say/clap the verse with you. Clap once at your knees for single syllable words; twice at your waist for two syllable words; and three times above your head for three syllable words.
- After every three-syllable word, the child at the back of the line runs to the first position while the other kids move back one space.
- Continue as time remains, but be sure to end while interest is still high.
- Add variety by guiding kids to move on two syllable words OR on two AND three syllable words.

What You Say:

“It’s easy for us to want to be noticed for the good things we do, but God wants us to think more about others than about ourselves; He wants us to **[Bottom Line] serve others without looking for applause**. That’s what Jesus meant when He said ‘the last will be first.’

[Make It Personal] (Tell kids about a time when you served someone in secret. Tell how it affected both you and the person you served.)

“When we focus more on serving others than on getting a reward, Jesus says that God will reward us, and that’s the best reward there is! So remember to **[Bottom Line] serve others without looking for applause.**”

10:15**Left Hand, Right Hand**

What You Need: Paper plates, markers or crayons

What You Do:

- Briefly unpack the phrase “don’t let your left hand know what your right hand is doing.” Use the conversation below as a guide.
- Give each child a paper plate, and set out the markers.
- Guide kids to trace both their left and right hands onto their plates multiple times, creating a colorful line tangle.
- Kids can take their creations home as reminders to **[Bottom Line] serve others without looking for applause.**

What You Say:

“When Jesus said: *“Be careful not to do good deeds in front of other people” (Matthew 6:1 NIV)*, He meant that we shouldn’t serve others just to be noticed or liked. Instead, He said: *“When you give to needy people, don’t let your left hand know what your right hand is doing” (Matthew 6:3 NIV)*. That means that you should give in secret, and **[Bottom Line] serve others without looking for applause** or praise.

“Take your paper plates home and let them remind you that God wants you to **[Bottom Line] serve others without looking for applause.**”

All Service Times**Pray and Dismiss (10 minutes)**

What You Need: Bible marked at Matthew 6

What You Do:

- Guide kids to gather around you and think quietly about how they can serve someone this week without that person knowing it was them. Give an idea or two.
- Invite a child to open the Bible where marked.
- Read Matthew 6:1-4 as a prayer over the kids.

What You Say:

“Lord, please help us find ways to do that this week. We love You. We pray this in Jesus’ name, amen.”

As adults arrive to pick up, encourage kids to tell their parents today’s Bottom Line: **[Bottom Line] Serve others without looking for applause.**