

Aim of lesson

To appreciate that being a disciple of Christ means loving others by serving them.

Bible background

John 13

Outline of lesson

Unpleasant jobs

Ask the class about the things they most dislike having to do; washing up, tidying their rooms, carrying shopping, weeding the garden, etc. They will probably be able to think of a long list. You may like to suggest other unpleasant jobs that some people have to do. Ask what sort of a world it would be if everybody refused to do all these jobs you have been talking about. Finally, ask them how they would like the job of washing someone else's dirty, smelly feet.

I have given you an example

Read John 13:1-17 together. Point out that Jesus acted as a servant to his disciples and that meant doing things for them which were not pleasant.

Turn to the workbooks. The first part is to help bring out the fact that, in the illustration, the man on the chair would normally be the lord and the one on his knees, the servant. However, Jesus is our Lord and yet serves on his knees. We cannot call him Lord and not serve, otherwise we are saying that we are higher than our Lord.

The next sections should encourage the class to think of practical ways in which they can serve as Jesus did. Help them to see that Jesus washed the feet of a man whom he knew would betray him to those who wanted to kill him, of one who would say he did not know him and of all those who would desert him when danger threatened. We should not restrict our service to those we like, or justify not helping by saying "but look what he did to me".

Breaking the code

The code is a simple alphabetical one, B=A, etc. Let them see if they can solve it, but give them the key if they are struggling. They should search through John 13 for the words to finish the verse. The answer is 'All men will know that you are my disciples'.

Digging deeper

Servant and king

This section reconciles the anomaly of Jesus being both a servant and a king. It uses the entry into Jerusalem, which is not otherwise covered in these lessons.

Relevance to our lives

Get the class to look back at the suggestions of how they could "wash someone's feet" at home, with their friends or in their street. Ask them to choose one of their ideas to put into practice during the week. Remember to include yourself and to ask them how they got on next week.

Prayer

Dear Lord Jesus, thank you that although you are the Son of God and have all power, yet you humbled yourself and became a servant to show us your love. Help us to be servants to each other.

Other suggestions for activities

- Get the class to write a letter from Peter telling a friend about the night Jesus washed his feet, explaining his reluctance to have his feet washed by Jesus. You may like to use 1 Peter 2:18-25.
- The class could make individual posters on the theme "Love is ..." using one of the words from 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 and illustrating it suitably.