

Life of Christ

A Mom Asks a Favor

Matthew 20:20-28

Younger Verse

He came to serve others.

Matthew 20:28

Older Verse

The Son of Man did not come for other people to serve Him. He came to serve others . . . [and] give his life to save many people. Matthew 20:28

Lesson Goals

Recognize that Jesus' disciples still wanted to be great in His kingdom
Learn that we should not worry about being great or important
Understand that God wants us to be a servant

Welcome Time

Have you ever asked someone a question and didn't get the answer you expected? Two of Jesus' disciples had their mother ask Jesus a question. They weren't ready for the answer!

Bible Story

*Please note: This portion of the lesson is given to help in teaching the lesson. Please read through the story and read it in the Bible before teaching it. Do **NOT** read from this piece of paper. Instead, make a note sheet and place it next to the story in the Bible.*

A few weeks ago, we learned that Jesus' disciples asked Him who would be the greatest in His kingdom. Do you remember what Jesus told them? Jesus said that a person needs to have faith like that of a child. He said that His disciples needed to change their attitudes and be humble. A humble person does not worry about being the greatest or the best.

But Jesus' disciples had not completely changed their attitudes yet. They still wanted to know about who would be beside Jesus in heaven.

James and John's mom came to talk to Jesus. She knelt down before Jesus and asked Him to do a favor for her and her two boys.

Jesus asked her what she wanted.

She asked Him to promise her that James would sit on one side of Jesus' throne in heaven and that John would sit on the other side. She knew that if Jesus was the king in heaven, whoever was sitting next to Him would have a very high place in the kingdom. She knew that they would be very powerful and very popular.

Jesus looked at her and the brothers and told them that they didn't know what they were asking. He said that a position like that would come about by much pain and suffering. The brothers told Jesus that they were willing to suffer to sit next to Jesus in heaven.

Jesus explained that they had no idea what it would be like to suffer pain or even die for believing in Him. He also told them that *God* would decide who sat next to Him.

While this discussion was going on, the other disciples heard what happened and were angry with James and John. They could not believe that they had asked Jesus such a question!

Jesus called all His friends together to teach them an important lesson. He told them that if a person wanted to be great, that person must be willing to be a servant. They must be willing to let someone else be first.

After that, Jesus told His friends that He did not come for people to serve Him. He told them that He came to serve others and to give His life for all people.

What is the difference between being great and being a servant? Jesus wants us to think about others before we think about ourselves. He does not want us to boast or brag. Instead, He wants us to care for others and accept them. **Jesus showed us how to be a servant by His example.** Remember that He was in Heaven with God before He came to earth as a baby. Instead of being proud, He became a servant and helped others. Even more, Jesus substituted Himself on the cross to die for all our sins. We should care for others in the same way.

Review Questions

1. What did James and John's mother ask Jesus? (If her sons could sit next to Jesus in heaven)
2. How did Jesus answer her? (He said that she didn't know what she was asking; that they would have to suffer to sit by Jesus)
3. How did the other disciples react when they heard about this question? (They were angry)
4. How did Jesus say a person became great? (by serving others)
5. Why did Jesus say He came to earth? (to serve others and give His life to save people)

Prayer Time

Thank God that Jesus came to earth and showed us the way to Heaven. Pray that we will want to serve others and think about their needs first.

Life Application

In Philippians chapter 2, it says to "be humble and give more honor to others than to yourselves." Then it shows the example of Jesus: He gave up being in heaven to come to earth and become a servant, even dying for us!

Would you be willing to give up being comfortable to help someone else? Maybe someone you know could use a friendly visit or a kind word. Maybe an older person needs help carrying something. God gives us lots of opportunities to serve. Let's be willing to give of ourselves. God will be pleased, and we will be blessed!

Planning for Next Lesson
Jesus Heals Two Blind Men
Matthew 20:29-34

**Preschool Lesson
for
A Mom Asks a Favor**

One day, James and John's mother came to see Jesus. She loved her boys and wanted to ask Jesus a very special question.

The mom asked Jesus, "Can my sons sit in chairs on both sides of you in heaven?"

She wanted James and John to sit in important spots in heaven.

Jesus told His friends that it was not important to be at the front and get attention. He told them that the best place to be is in the back, helping others. He told them that they must help others and do for them first.

After that, Jesus told His friends that He did not come for people to serve Him. He told them that He came to serve others and to give His life for all people.

What is the difference between being great and being a servant? Jesus wants us to think about others before we think about ourselves. He does not want us to boast or brag. Instead, He wants us to care for others and accept them.

Jesus showed us how to be a servant by His example. Remember that He was in Heaven with God before He came to earth as a baby. Instead of being proud, He became a servant and helped others. Even more, Jesus substituted Himself on the cross to die for all our sins. We should care for others in the same way.

Jesus wants us to help others, too. How can you help someone this week?

Hands-on Activities for A Mom Asks a Favor

Have kids make coupons for their parents. They can say things like, “One free breakfast in bed,” or “One washing of dishes with no arguing”. They can be creative and think of ways to serve their parents and others.

Act out the story. Be sure the mother is very dramatic in asking (begging, pleading) for her sons to sit by Jesus.

Make a puppet of the mother out of a Styrofoam cup. Glue fabric on it for an outfit. Have fun reenacting the story.

When you pass out snacks, let each person serve another person their snack. Another idea is to let the boys serve the girls and visa versa.

Ask the kids to think about cartoon characters or superheroes that are humble and not proud. Share how they help others and do not brag about their super strength, etc. Talk about how a person’s voice is different when they are humble versus proud. Share how God wants us to be humble and help others.