

The Upside-Down Kingdom



"Anyone who wants to be important among you must be your servant...
Be like the Son of Man (Jesus).

He did not come to be served...he came to serve others.
He came to give his life as the price for setting many people free."

Matthew 20:26

SERVING GOD

Lesson 22: *The Servant King* (Condensed Version)

Saint Matthew's Anglican Church Children's Ministries

THE UPSIDE-DOWN KINGDOM (Scripture: John 13:1-17)

Year 2. Kingdom Life
Unit 8: Serving God

Objectives: To explain that: *The disciples thought God's kingdom was like any other kingdom where the most powerful people are the most important. *Jesus said his Kingdom is different. We often call it the upside-down Kingdom. In God's upside-down Kingdom those who serve are the greatest. Jesus showed the disciples what that meant when he washed their feet. *Jesus is the Servant King who came not to be served, but to serve others and to give his life to set us free from sin. *Jesus told the disciples to follow his example and to serve one another. When we serve others, we are also serving God.

"I Wonder" Questions: *What do you see in this picture? *I wonder why Jesus is washing his disciples' feet. *I wonder who the Servant King is. *I wonder what "the upside-down kingdom" means. Let's find out more in our lesson...

Lesson Props: Optional: Bowl of water and towel for illustration

Lesson Summary: *(Point to "Servant King" symbol)* This story is called "The Servant King". Let's find out why.

(Point to foot washing picture) After the last supper together with his disciples, Jesus got up and started washing their feet. The disciples were really shocked because washing feet was the job of a servant! In their country, it was hot, and people wore sandals all the time. Their feet would get very dirty from the dusty roads, so when people entered a home, the servants would wash their feet. *(Optional: point to bowl and towel)* But Jesus wasn't a servant, he was the Forever King and Lord of All! He was the most important person in the room! No other king or lord had ever washed people's dusty, dirty feet! So why did Jesus, who was God and Forever King, do the work of a servant? Let's read what Jesus said in our memory verse: *(Point to memory verse)* "Anyone who wants to be important among you must be your servant.... Be like the Son of Man (Jesus). He did not come to be served....he came to serve others. He came to give his life as the price for setting many people free." (Matthew 20:26 -28)

The disciples thought that God's Kingdom was like any other kingdom, where people with the greatest power are the most important. But Jesus said that **his** Kingdom is **different**. It is so different that we often call it **the upside-down Kingdom**. *(Point to words on poster)* In God's upside-down Kingdom those who serve others are the greatest. *(Point to servant king symbol)* Jesus is the Servant King who set an example for us to follow. Jesus wants us to be more like him and serve others. Jesus loved and served others in many ways. He healed the sick. He fed the hungry. He taught the people. But, his **greatest** act of love and service was to give his life on the cross *(point to cross)* to set us free from sin. Jesus wants us to love and serve one another too. Can you think of some ways that we can be like Jesus and serve others? *(Help people, do the jobs that nobody wants to do, etc. – more time will be spent on this topic in Lesson 24 – Serving God.)*

Those who serve others are the greatest in the upside-down Kingdom of God. *(Point to "serving God")* When we serve others, we are also serving God.

Suggested Questions: ***What does this story tell us about Jesus?** (He is the Servant King. He set an example for us to follow when he served the disciples by washing their feet.) ***Why do we call the Kingdom of God the upside-down Kingdom?** (Because Jesus taught that those who are the greatest and most important in the Kingdom of God are the not the most powerful people but the ones who love and serve others.) ***What did Jesus do to show the disciples that they must serve others?** (He who was their King and Lord washed their feet, even though that was the work of a servant.) ***Who did Jesus say would be the greatest in the Kingdom of God?** (Those who serve others.) ***What was the greatest act of service that Jesus did for us?** (He gave his life on the cross to set us free from sin.)

Bible Memory Verse: "Anyone who wants to be important among you must be your servant.... Be like the Son of Man (Jesus). He did not come to be served....he came to serve others. He came to give his life as the price for setting many people free." Matthew 20:26 -28 – NIRV