

Getting Ready for the Story

SHEEP AND GOATS

This week's story is Matthew 25:31-46.

The theme is Service.

WHAT ARE SOME DOORS INTO THIS STORY?

After you read the Bible text for this week's story, try one or more of these ways to enter the story further and prepare yourself to share it with kids.

Kids Serving Others

Jesus told his disciples, "When you serve other people, you serve me." Everyone loves to serve—especially kids! Take advantage of that generosity by using some time this week to plan a service project for your class. Begin by asking yourself what's doable. Then make plans and enlist parents to help you with the project in class. It's a good chance to get families serving together.

Serve Your Class

Teach your kids about this week's story in a very tangible way by serving them. Have fun baking brownies or preparing a special fruit snack for your class. (As always, remember to consider possible food allergies before you serve any treats.) Jesus said, "When you feed someone who is hungry, you serve me." While the kids in our classes may or may not be literally hungry, everyone is hungry for a little extra TLC (Teacher Loving Care).

Cleaning Out at Home

Use this week's story as an impetus to check your pantry and closets and discover what you can share. Consider how our Christian faith actually commands us to love our neighbors and share. It's great to clean out our homes because the purge can simplify our lives. But it's also good to note that this is an act of faith for Christians, called for and modeled by Jesus. When we share, Jesus' children are served. When others share with us, we are served.

WHY DOES THIS STORY OR THEME MATTER TO KIDS?

Read about these ways to view the story and today's theme through a kid lens to help inspire you as you prepare for Sunday school.

Jesus Knows Us (PreK–Grade 2)

Matthew reminds us that Jesus is aware of our actions. Jesus knows when we share our blankets, visit the sick, and feed the hungry. Young kids can believe this because they take the gospel quite literally. It's important to remember that the kids you work with will believe what you say about God and faith. They are at a very innocent stage. So our call as leaders and teachers is to share the truths that Jesus shared—like the importance of service!

Power of Community (Grades 3–6)

The idea of carrying out acts of service all by ourselves can be overwhelming. But that's the great thing about the church—we are God's people doing service together. Older kids will appreciate that our bravery and accomplishments get multiplied when we share in service together. Not to mention, shared service projects are a lot more fun! When kids get to do something together, such as pack food bank boxes or plant a church garden, they get to be active and have fun with one another.

Tangible Signs (All Kids)

So much about faith talk is mysterious and invisible. But today's lesson offers clear pictures of what it looks like to follow Jesus. Others can see our faith in Jesus Christ—both those who are served and those who observe. Take advantage of this story as a way to show kids concrete ways to put abstract concepts to work and make a difference.

PRAYER

Make your prayer this week a prayer of action. Surrender to God's love by volunteering to serve somewhere in your community or church. Use the experience to extend your conversation with God and to inspire kids about taking the plunge to help others.

REMEMBER TO PREP

Read through your leader guide, check your supplies, and make sure you have enough leaflets for the kids in your class.