

252 Basics®

Group and Family Experiences for K-5th Grades

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Statement of Faith

ABOUT GOD

God is the one and only true God, yet He exists in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. God is the Creator, so everything belongs to Him and is under His control. God is holy, so He is righteous, majestic, and loving. God is all knowing and purposeful, so He's at work to bring about His will. No person, thing, or idea compares to God.

ABOUT THE SCRIPTURES

God reveals Himself to us through the Bible, and it is 100% accurate, reliable, and authoritative.

ABOUT PEOPLE

People are made in God's image and for His pleasure. But everybody falls short of God's intention, or ideal, for people. In other words, everyone has sinned. As a result, we are all separated from Him, even though He wants an intimate relationship with each of us.

ABOUT SALVATION

That's why Jesus—God's Son—came and lived on this earth, died, and rose again. God offers His free gift of salvation to all who believe in Jesus and accept Him as Savior—the only way to be forgiven and reconciled to God. Anyone who accepts this gift is adopted as a son or daughter into God's family and will live with Him forever in heaven.

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Secret Service

Virtue: Service—lending a hand to help someone else.

Memory Verse: “Work with enthusiasm, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people.” Ephesians 6:7, NLT

Bible Story: Secret Service (Jesus teaches about giving to the needy) • Matthew 6:1-4

Bottom Line: What in the world are you doing that only God knows?

Plug In: Focus the Energy (Small Groups, 10-15 minutes)

K–5th Grade

PREVIEW

Note! This version of the curriculum is designed especially for churches with fewer leaders and kids. You may want to use it if you have just one or two leaders and if you combine all your kids in both large and small group time.

Plug In is designed to introduce children to the day’s topic in a setting that gives them individualized attention from a leader and plenty of interaction with their peers. If you have enough leaders, divide kids into small groups of up to 10 children. Ideally, assign the same leader to the same group of kids for the entire year.

FOR LEADERS ONLY

Today we wrap up our month-long look at (1) service, which is lending a hand to help someone else, by focusing on “secret service.” (2) Of course we know from Scripture many things that Jesus did to serve others, but we also know there were occasions in which He told the recipient to keep quiet about it. Which didn’t always work, since we can read about those events in the Bible, but the point is *motive*. Our motives count. Why we help and serve others matters. (3) Jesus wants us to serve others for good and right reasons. He doesn’t want us to serve in order to be seen. In fact, He said if we do serve in order to be seen and praised by people, that’s all the reward we’ll get! (4) Instead, He wants us to serve others as if we were serving God, which will mean occasionally not letting the left hand know what the right hand is doing. Then our reward will come from Him. And God will get the credit.

GET READY

For each small group, do the following:

- **Early Arriver:** Provide an interesting offering container.
- **Double Pass:** You will need 20 small items that would be easy for kids to pass to each other, such as Ping-Pong® balls, erasers, pieces of individually wrapped candy, etc. You will also need two containers that the items will fit in.
- Gather the leaders together to pray before the kids arrive. Pray that each child would listen and learn the Bible truths presented during today’s session. If any kids arrive before or during the prayer, invite them to participate with the leaders.

- *Tip: As you greet parents dropping off their kids, give them a Fridge Door card so they'll know ahead of time what today's topic is.*

Early Arriver Idea

Ask kids to tell you about things they've been given. Have they been given toys, clothes, invitations, rides, or food? How did it feel to be given something? Invite the kids to put their offerings in the offering container.

Double Pass

SUPPLIES: small items, two containers

Make sure the small items are all in one container. Guide kids to sit in a line, shoulder-to-shoulder. Put both containers at the right end of the line (from the kids' perspective—the containers should be by the first kid's right hand). The first kid will pick an item out of the full container with his right hand, pass it to the right hand of the kid next to him, who passes it to the right hand of the kid next to him, and so on down the line. The first kid continues to pick items with his right hand and pass them down the line. When each item gets to the other end of the line, that kid moves the item to his left hand and passes it back down the line, from left hand to left hand, until the kid by the containers puts it into the empty container. This will undoubtedly get confusing, but it will also be fun, as kids are passing items one direction with their right hands and the other direction with their left hands.

WRAP UP

LEADER: "That was crazy! What do you think that was all about? *[Transition]* **Let's go to large group, where I want you to listen carefully for something about right hands and left hands.**"

Lead your group to the large group area.

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Power Up: (Large Group, 25-30 minutes)

Opening Announcements (Worship Team – 2 minutes)

Worship Time (10 – 12 minutes)

Video Lesson – Secret Service (10 minutes)

Prayer (2 minutes) - Worship Leader

“Let’s pray ... Father God, thank You for doing so much for us. Help us to serve You by serving others in secret. We want to serve others to show them Your love. Help us all to be right-handed secret do-gooders. Amen.”

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Catch On: Make the Connection (Small Groups, 25-30 minutes)

K–5th Grade

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Catch On is designed to help kids understand how the day’s topic applies to them. They’ll discuss real-life experiences, interact with a group of peers, and participate in a variety of activities that appeal to different learning styles. Life-application and memory-verse activities, as well as prayer, are always a part of this hands-on time. Gather children into the same small groups as for Plug In.

1. Memory Mural (*memory verse activity*)

SUPPLIES: Bibles, markers, tape, mural paper

Make an approximately 5- or 6-foot-square piece of paper by taping two 6-foot sheets of mural paper together. Lay this out on the floor of your space. Ask kids if anyone can say the memory verse without looking it up. If not, ask if anyone can remember the shortcut for looking it up. (*Half, half, and half*) Lead them in looking up the memory verse. Next, tell them they will be designing a mural to represent the memory verse. They can draw and use whatever colors and pictures they like, but they must incorporate the words of the memory verse as well as a picture of the world somewhere on the paper. If you have mostly younger kids, you may need to write the verse for them or let them copy the words. When they are finished, post the picture on the wall.

LEADER: “By now you probably all have this memory verse in your heads forever. (*Allow time for them to say it themselves.*) This verse goes so well with our lesson today. Our wholehearted service is for God, to please God, to be His hands and feet in this world, to show His love to people. **[Impress] What in the world are you doing that only God knows?** I bet you’ve got a lot more ideas you can go and do today than you had when you got here! **[Apply] Why we love and serve others matters.** If it’s just to get our moms off our backs or to make someone think we’re great, then it’s not service to God and He won’t be satisfied with that. But if we are doing things for others as if we’re doing it for Him, our reward will come from Him, and we will come to know what it’s like when God is pleased with us.”

2. Only God Knows (application activity / review the Bible lesson)**SUPPLIES:** clay or modeling dough

Review the Bible lesson with the kids. Ask such questions as:

- What did you learn about right hands and left hands? (*Not to let the right hand know what the left hand is doing*)
- What does that mean? (*To do good things for others in secret; to not tell people when you do something for God or others because that sounds like bragging; to do something only God knows about*)
- **[Apply]** Think silently about something you have done for someone in secret, OR think about something you could do in secret this week for someone.

Give each kid a lump of clay or modeling dough. Ask them to make something with their clay that shows that thing they have done (or will do) that only God knows about. For instance, perhaps someone picked up his sister's toys and didn't tell anyone about his good deed, in which case he could make a doll out of his clay. Remember, this is secret service: avoid asking kids to tell what they're sculpting!

LEADER: [Apply] “God sees what you do and knows why you do it, and He will reward you for it. He wants us to do good things for Him and for others, but not to always tell people about the good things we do. Shhhh! **[Impress]** What in the world are you doing that only God knows?”

3. Worship You When ... (pray)**SUPPLIES:** none

Ask kids to sit in a circle. Lead kids in a fill-in-the-blank prayer, with kids listing ways they COULD serve others and in turn worship God. Use the suggested conversation below, pausing at each blank to let kids go around the circle and fill in the blank. You may need to make suggestions or allow repeats if they have trouble coming up with something on the spot.

LEADER: [Apply] “Serving others is one way we worship God. When we serve others, we're really serving God. Let's pray to God right now and ask Him to remind us that serving others is really worshiping Him.

“Dear God, we worship You by _____. We worship You with prayer and singing and giving. This week, we want to worship You with serving. We will worship You when we serve others by _____. We love You, God! Amen.”

Optional 5th Grade Discussion Questions

If you lead fifth graders, consider asking these discussion questions:

- Doing service in secret means giving up honor from people. What do you get in return when you do this? *(You have God's pleasure, and your own as you know that what you're doing is good and right.)*
- What's wrong with getting praise from people? Why would it bother God? *(Of course God isn't threatened by our receiving compliments. But as His followers, we are always supposed to be pointing people toward Him. And God wants to be the most important person in your life. When you serve others, He wants you to do those things as His servant, in order to please Him, just as a servant would try to please his master.)*
- Does it always mean you'll have to do your service where no one can see it? Or is it possible that Jesus is talking more about motives than about actually doing things where no one sees? *(Of course there are some acts of service that will have to be done where people can see, but we should do them as if no one is watching but God.)*

WRAP UP

Be prepared to distribute this week's GodTime and Fridge Door cards.

Give kids the final information on the service project. How much did you collect? How will the items be used? Did you reach your goal? Who will be impacted because of kids' service? Affirm kids' service to others before sending them out to serve in their own homes and neighborhoods.

Give each child a GodTime card. Distribute Fridge Door cards to parents as they arrive