

Explore It

FOR LEADERS



I'VE GOT WHAT IT TAKES TO SERVE!

Matthew 18:1-6; 19:13-15

Please see the Introduction document and the COGS programme for leader's notes and further information/ideas.

Each child will need:

- Pens and paper
- A matchbox (specify the size)
- An ink pad (optional)

Start It

Ask the children to go round their house and fill their matchbox with as many things as they can. See who can get the most items in a small matchbox! See who can find the smallest item of all. Allow time for discussion as the children show you what they have collected.

Ask the children to look around the 'room'.

Ask: Who is the most important person there? Why?

Who is the most important person in their school? Why?

How about in church? Why?

- **Say:** We think that powerful people are important, that the person in charge is more important than the person who is being told what to do. Often we think the smallest is the least important. But actually that is not the case with God.
- **Say:** In the Bible, Jesus talks about children and uses them as an example to others. Our Bible verses for this session are some examples of this. Jesus thinks children are very important, and can teach adults a thing or two! Jesus wanted the adults around him to know how important it is to be like a child. He talks about childlike faith and being humble. This would have been a shock to the people around him as they didn't think children were very useful or important.

Sing It

Sing - and dance, to praise God with song.

'With God's Power Working In Us'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ra6ZRSfsHPg>

Tell It

Read Matthew 18:1-5 and 19:13-15 and show the children a picture of Jesus with a group of children.

Alternatively, or as well as, you could show the group this video clip:

Jesus and the Little Children

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PlvYKxOs8p0>

Share a picture of Jesus with a group of children again:

(<https://www.deviantart.com/joetta78/art/jesus-and-children-322283563> or choose your own via an internet image search) and leave the picture visible as you ask any of the following 'I wonder' questions:

- I wonder what these children are called. (Perhaps you could ask your group members to give the children in the picture some names, and annotate them on the picture.)
- I wonder how these children felt meeting Jesus.
- I wonder how it feels to have Jesus give you a big hug.
- I wonder how you feel, knowing that Jesus thinks children are special and important.
- I wonder how you feel, knowing that Jesus thinks YOU are special and important too.
- I wonder what you would like to do for Jesus, to show him how much you love him too!

Take some time to recap the previous sessions. It would be good if you could use any pictures that you have used previously.

As you show each picture, ask or remind the children about each story that we read and what we learned.

1. Jesus as a child: We are a child of God and we can grow up spiritually as well as physically.
2. David: God has a job for us each to do, even though we may be only little.
3. The servant girl: We can all make a difference to someone else, by being kind and speaking out.
4. Timothy: We can all teach about our faith in Jesus, and God will ensure that we have everything we need to do this.

For an older group you could ask:

- Which one of the Bible stories did you most enjoy and why?
- What is the most inspiring thing that you have learnt from the stories?
- Which one of the young people that we have learned about would you most like to be like and why?

● **Say:** It's clear to see! Children are really special to God.

● **Say:** Even though we may not feel important enough, old enough, clever enough, God calls us all to serve him and be part of his big story.

● **Say:** The young people that we have read about in the Bible this month are all very different, and God has made us all different too. He has given us each gifts and unique abilities to use, and that is what makes us special, and the world such a great place. The fact that we are the only ones with this combination of talents and gifts also means that our work in sharing them with others is very important, because no one else will do it like we can.

Action It

Ask the children if they can remember the memory verses from the last session and the actions: 1 Timothy 4:12 and/or 2 Timothy 1:7. Say them aloud together now.

Have the children draw around their hand on a piece of paper. If they have an ink pad, they can put some fingerprints on the hand. On each finger ask them to write an ability or talent or personal quality that they have. Compare and see that the drawings - and even their fingerprints - are different!

Discussion questions:

- Why do you suppose God chose to make everyone different?
- Why does God give us gifts and abilities and personal qualities?
- What gifts and talents and qualities did the young people have that we have read about this month?

- If we are the only ones with our specific combination of gifts and talents, how important is it that we learn what our gifts are?
- Why is it important to use the gifts and abilities we have?
- How would you like to use your gifts and abilities to serve God?
- How would you like to use your gifts and abilities to serve others?

(adapted from http://storage.cloversites.com/shorelinechurchofchrist/documents/DT_Gifts_Isn_1.pdf)

Pray It

Ask the children to hold up their hand drawings and say the following prayer for them.

Dear Jesus, thank you for making each of us one of a kind, different from everyone else. It is so awesome that when you made each of us, you made us with a special plan and then equipped us with unique talents and abilities for that plan. Help us as we discover these abilities, and then help us be faithful to develop these abilities and not to hide or waste them. Help us to develop them and use them for you and to serve you and others. Amen.

Explore It

Remember to share the Explore It (For Me) and Explore It (Together) ideas for children and families.