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What You'll Find In This Sample

- >>A Sample of a Small Group Lesson Plan
- >>A Sample of the Student Book
- >>A short version of the *Project Serve* Overviews

Of course each of these components, and dozens more, are available to your teachers through their Online Lesson Manager. But this PDF will simply give you an idea of the main content of Project Serve.

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PROJECT
SERVESPREADING THE GOSPEL
BY LENDING A HAND

| WHAT IS A SERVANT? |

HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE**GOAL:** The goal of this lesson is twofold:

1. *This small group lesson is designed to help you and your students go deeper into what it means to be a servant. As they learned in the large group talk, this goes beyond performing the occasional act of service or trying to be a good person. Being transformed into a servant starts with following the greatest servant: Jesus. He lowered himself in humility to live among us as a suffering servant. Following him means becoming like him in this way.*
2. *It is also designed to make it easy for you to facilitate and teach students about the life of a servant and putting that identity into action. That is why the Small Group Leader Guide is packed with easy-to-use instructions, timeframes, and questions that promote thinking and draw out real responses.*

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

- A copy of the Facilitator's Guide for you and any other facilitators.
- A *Project Serve Student Book* for each participant.
- Be sure to check out the Live It Out section ahead of time to prepare: a camera for each group of students (they can use their phones).

TEACHER PREP VIDEO:

Don't forget to take a minute and watch the teacher prep video found in your DNow Studies account under Small Group Lessons > Lesson 1. It's a short video that will take you through some of the need-to-knows before you dive into this lesson with students.



The Small Group Leader Guide contains everything in the Student Book, plus some additional material. This table outlines the parts of each lesson and provides an approximate timeframe that you can adapt to meet the needs of your group.

Lesson Outline	<i>Included in Facilitator's Guide</i>	<i>Included in Student Book</i>	<i>Approximate Timeframe</i>
Large Talk Review with Opening Questions		Yes	3–5 minutes
A Second Look A Case Study—followed by discussion questions.	Yes	Yes	10–15 minutes
A Little Deeper Dig into Bible passages that were not in the Large Group Talk. See what else Scripture says about this.	Yes	Yes + discussion questions	15–20 minutes
Live it out An experiential activity to help students reinforce and internalize the lesson—followed by discussion questions.	Yes		10–15 minutes
Apply it A practical application for students to do this week.	Yes	Yes	2–3 minutes
Student Devotional A short devotional for students to do on their own.		Yes	



THE FIRST MEETING

Since this is the first meeting together for this event, take the time to lay the foundations for the whole DNow event.

- If your students don't know each other, cover introductions and consider an icebreaker (see leadertreks.com/freebies for several icebreaker and team building activities).
- Be sure to cover the schedule and ground rules for the event, especially if you are staying at a host home.
- Tell students why you are here. Chances are, you are sacrificing some time and comfort to be a small group teacher and, chances are, it's worth it! Let students know why you care so much about them and why you want to invest in them to help them grow. Tell students why you think they're great and why it's worth it for you to be a small group leader this weekend!

LARGE GROUP TALK REVIEW

Take a minute to review what students just learned in the Large Group talk. Have them pull out their notes, and ask them to share what their answers were for the two questions found on **page 4** of the student guide. Consider having students share their answers with a partner, and then ask for two or three volunteers who might want to share with the whole group.

A SECOND LOOK



Read this story together as a group and answer the following questions, found on **page 5** in the Student Book.

CASE STUDY 1

Jordan considered herself a servant. After all, she had a long history of involvement in various service projects. When her high school choir held its yearly fundraiser, she went door-to-door selling wrapping paper for weeks, getting enough points to earn the inflatable chair that now sits in her room. She never passed up an opportunity to buy Girl Scout cookies (nothing better than helping out a good cause and getting some Thin Mints out of the deal). And when winter arrived, she was sure to empty the loose change from her pockets into the red buckets whenever she passed them. The bell ringers always thanked her, and she felt generous.

Then one day, Jordan was driving with her family to Sunday morning worship at her church, and they were running late. As they pulled up to an intersection, she noticed a man standing on the corner, holding a cardboard sign that said, "Anything helps!" As he approached her car window, she quickly looked down at her phone, trying to appear busy. By the time she glanced back up, he had shuffled past to the next car. Later, after church was over, a group of her friends started picking up abandoned bulletins, handouts, and coffee cups. One asked if she'd give them a hand. She said she would—right after she used the restroom. When she finally got back, the work was done. *No worries*, she thought. *There's always next week.*

**Discuss:**

Leader's Note: Be sure to say a positive or encouraging comment after students share, for example, "Thanks for saying that," "Good insight," "I think we've all felt that way," or "I've never thought of it like that." If you let silence take over after a student shares, it can change the tempo of the discussion and prevent students from sharing any more. Stay upbeat, nod at them, and smile. It can change the whole atmosphere of each small group time.

- Do you think Jordan is correct to call herself a "servant"? Why or why not?
- Would you consider yourself a "servant"? Why or why not?
- What do you think Jesus would have done if the man at the intersection had approached him?
- What kind of serving is easy for you? What kind of serving is hard?

**A LITTLE DEEPER**

In this section, you'll take a look at several Bible passages, and students will answer questions. The Background Notes below will give you a little more insight into the confusing parts of these passages. As students share, remember to listen deeply. Don't be afraid to ask second-level questions.

Say something like:

Remember, serving like Jesus requires humble, sacrificial action. It's not about trying to be the greatest, getting recognition, or earning a reward. It's about taking on the character of Christ in our lives, living like Jesus would, placing others' needs above our own, and getting down and dirty to serve others.

Read each Bible passage and answer the questions found in the Student Book on page 7:

John 13:12–14: When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet."

Background Note: Walking was the primary mode of transportation in Jesus' day—and not on asphalt-paved roads. People walked for miles and miles over dirt and mud and stones. Instead of hiking boots, they wore sandals, exposing their feet to the grime. So, as you can imagine, their feet were disgusting. That's why it was a common courtesy for hosts to have his guests' feet washed—by a slave. When Jesus and his followers celebrated the Passover, right before Jesus' death, he flipped those expectations into a powerful object lesson. Jesus, the host, did the work of a lowly servant by washing his disciples' feet.

Discussion questions found on page 7 of the Student Book.

Galatians 5:13–14: You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself."



Background Note: Paul knew what it was like to be without freedom. Some scholars estimate that Paul spent five to six years of his life under arrest. First, he and his friend Silas were imprisoned by Jewish authorities during his second missionary journey (Acts 16:23). When God freed them, they used their miraculous escape to minister to their jailer. Later, Paul spent two years under house arrest in Rome (Acts 28:16). How did he use this time in captivity? To write the “prison epistles”: Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon. These were letters meant to serve and encourage other believers. Whenever he was locked away, Paul devoted himself to serving others. He knew that there was a worse prison than the physical jail cells he found himself in—life without Christ. Even in prison, he was free in Christ, and he didn’t want to squander that freedom by ignoring Christ’s call to serve others.

Discussion questions found on page 7 of the Student Book.

Isaiah 58:10: And if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday.

Background Note: It’s all too easy to replace service with ritual. We want a checklist of all the right and wrong things to do—that way, we can turn our brains off and complete the list without getting invested. Yet over and over, God tells his people that worship isn’t about following a dry set of rituals and ceremonies. Earlier in Isaiah, God says, “These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship of me is based on merely rules they have been taught” (Is. 29:13). So what does true worship of God look like? “Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress” (James 1:27). Worship of God starts with sacrificially serving others.

Discussion questions found on page 7 of the Student Book.



LIVE IT OUT

Service Scavenger Hunt

What You’ll Need: a camera for each group of students (they can use their phones).

Split your group into smaller teams of four or five. Be sure every team has at least one camera or camera phone. Send them out around the block, around the church, or even through all the rooms inside the church on a service scavenger hunt. Students must take a picture of anything that could become a service opportunity (a dirty bathroom that could be cleaned, a yard full of leaves that could be raked, an old jungle gym that could be updated with money from a fundraiser, etc.). Challenge students to get creative with their ideas. The first team to return with pictures of 20 different service opportunities wins. They must be able to explain to you in detail how they would serve based on their pictures. Once every team is finished, ask teams to pick their favorite service opportunity. A representative from each team can then share the picture and service idea with the whole group.



Leader's Note: After the debriefing questions and if time allows, ask your teams to identify one of the service opportunities they could actually do right now. Working as a whole group or in the smaller groups of four to five (depending on the service opportunity), go and do it!

Debrief:

- Was it difficult to find 20 service ideas to photograph? Did you have to get creative for some of them?
- Which of your service ideas would you be most likely to do? Which would you be least likely to do? Why?
- Do you find yourself attracted more to large-scale service projects that take a lot of investment but have a huge impact, or simple ones that you can do regularly?
- What would it take to push yourself out of your comfort zone to serve in the ways you're less drawn to?



APPLY IT

Write down one way you can grow as a servant. Think about something you can even do within the next 24 hours!

Be specific:

What are you going to do?

When are you going to do it?

Is there someone who can keep you accountable?

Leader's Note: Whenever students make applications, challenge them to be specific. It's one thing to say, "I'm going to trust God more." The truth is, our students won't really know if they did this, or if they grew in trust over the week. It's another thing to say, "Every morning this week before I eat breakfast, I'm going to tell God that today is his and that I trust him, and I'm going to ask him to give me the strength to replace worries with trust." Challenge your students to answer the questions under the "Be Specific" section. You can even have them pair up, share their applications, and ask for accountability from their partner.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Schedule: Be sure to let students know what's happening next in the schedule and what they need to do or bring with them.

Student Devotional: The Student Book contains a short devotional for students to do on their own. Make sure to point this out to students and let them know if and when this fits into the schedule of the weekend. The devotional that corresponds with this lesson is found on **page 35**.



Project Serve:

SPREADING THE GOSPEL BY LENDING A HAND

THIS BOOK BELONGS TO:

Leaderbooks

LeaderTrekks®

Making Disciples...Developing Leaders

Project Serve: Spreading The Gospel By Lending A Hand

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Welcome to Project Serve

At some point in your life, you've probably had a chance to serve others by volunteering somewhere. Maybe you went on a mission trip or participated in an all-day service project with your youth group. If you're like most people, you think service is a good thing, something everyone should do more often. But it's so much more than that. Service can be a lifestyle.

As we follow Christ and become more like him, we start seeing the world the way he does. We start responding to things as he would. We discover that service is more than a checklist to complete or a means to an end. It's a Christ-follower's automatic response to the pain and injustice and brokenness of the world around them. It's an all-the-time thing, as important a part of your identity as your personality, your memories, and even your name.

As you can see, serving is a big deal. It takes a lot of heart, sweat, and commitment. So over these next four sessions, we're going to study how we can follow Christ by serving others.

Here are some things you need to know as you go through this study:

1. God wants to connect with you.

In fact, he's looking forward to it. But are you ready to connect with him? As you go in and out of the sessions and devotional times, make sure you are willing to listen to him and learn from him. He promises that he will come near to you if you come near to him (James 4:8). Try it!

2. What you put into this study is what you'll get out of it.

There are people all around you who have spent a lot of time praying for you and getting ready to invest in you. You'll probably meet some new people, hear some new speakers, and get a chance to spend some quality time with God and with friends. Take advantage of it! Ask hard questions. Commit to being authentic and honest. God wants to use this time and these people in your life.

3. Remember that God has been there, done that.

He gets how hard it is to serve in certain situations. He understands how difficult it is to serve some people. After all, he lived the life of a human to serve us, even though we turned against him. So as you go through this study, don't forget that he knows how you feel!

SESSION ONE

INTRO What is a Servant?

Definition: **servant** | ser·vant | (sur-vuh nt)
noun

1 a person who performs duties for others, especially a person employed in a house to clean or cook **2** a person employed by a government **3** a helpful follower or supporter **4** a person who is devoted to or guided by something

Synonyms: supporter, assistant, attendant, slave, helper, dependent, domestic, drudge, hireling, menial, follower, minion, retainer, serf, server

What images or people come to mind when you hear the word *servant*?

A large yellow speech bubble outline with a tail pointing to the left, containing a smaller speech bubble icon with two horizontal lines inside. The main body of the bubble is empty, intended for a handwritten or typed response.

“FOR EVEN THE SON OF MAN DID NOT COME TO BE SERVED, BUT TO SERVE, AND TO GIVE HIS LIFE AS A RANSOM FOR MANY.” MARK 10:45

What is a Servant?

Large Group Session 1



These two pages are designed so you can take note of anything that stands out to you and is worth remembering during the large group talk. This talk will set the stage for the rest of the session. Consider writing down main points, quotes, Bible verses, and any questions that pop into your head.



What does it take to be a true servant?

A large, empty yellow rectangular box with a thin border, intended for handwritten answers to the question above it.

What is one obstacle that prevents you from serving like Jesus?



What is a Servant?

Small Group Session 1



A Second Look Case Study 1:

Jordan considered herself a servant. After all, she had a long history of involvement in various service projects. When her high school choir held its yearly fundraiser, she went door-to-door selling wrapping paper for weeks, getting enough points to earn the inflatable chair that now sits in her room. She never passed up an opportunity to buy Girl Scout cookies (nothing better than helping out a good cause and getting some Thin Mints out of the deal). And when winter arrived, she was sure to empty the loose change from her pockets into the red buckets whenever she passed one. The bell ringers always thanked her, and she felt generous.

Then one day, Jordan was driving with her family to Sunday morning worship at her church, and they were running late. As they pulled up to an intersection, she noticed a man standing on the corner, holding a cardboard sign that said, "Anything helps!" As he approached her car window, she quickly looked down at her phone, trying to appear busy. By the time she glanced back up, he had shuffled past to the next car. Later, after church was over, a group of her friends started picking up abandoned bulletins, handouts, and coffee cups. One asked if she'd give them a hand. She said she would—right after she used the restroom. When she finally got back, the work was done. *No worries*, she thought. *There's always next week.*

Do you think Jordan is correct to call herself a “servant”?
Why or why not?

Would you consider yourself a “servant”?
Why or why not?

What do you think Jesus would have done if the
man at the intersection had approached him?

What kind of serving is easy for you? What kind of serving is
hard?

What is a Servant?

Small Group Session 1



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Take a look at each of these Bible passages and get ready to talk through the following questions with your group.

John 13:12-14: When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet."

Why was washing his disciples' feet such an incredible act of service?

According to this passage, what's the most important reason for us to serve other people?

Galatians 5:13-14. You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself."

What does service look like, according to Paul (the writer of Galatians)?

What do you think freedom has to do with serving others?

Isaiah 58:10: And if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday.

Who in your own culture is hungry? Who is oppressed?

What are some other needs that you see on a daily basis?



Apply It

Write down one way you can grow as a servant. Think about something you can do within the next 24 hours!

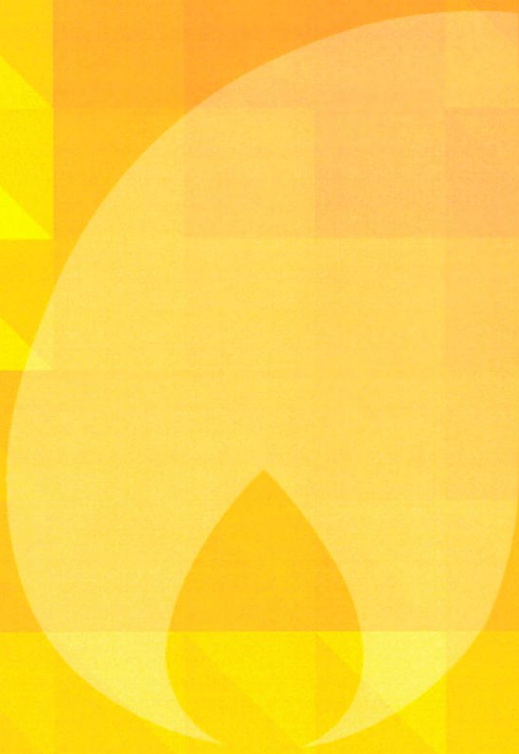
Be Specific

What are you going to do?

When are you going to do it?

Is there someone who can keep you accountable?

notes:



Project Serve: Spreading the Gospel by Lending a Hand **Lesson Overviews**

If your students are like most people, they probably think service is a good idea, something everyone should do more often. And they're right—service is important. They've probably had a chance to serve others by volunteering or by selling popcorn or wrapping paper to raise money for an organization. These are great things, and they should be proud of what they've done.

But serving doesn't necessarily make someone a servant.

Becoming a servant is so much more than that. It's something that happens as we follow Christ and become more like him. We start seeing the world the way he does. We start responding to things as he would. Service is a Christ-follower's automatic response to the pain and injustice in the world around us. It's an all-the-time thing, as important a part of your identity as your personality, your memories, and even your name.

Jesus was the greatest servant of all. As he sat around the table for the last time with his disciples, he washed their feet, challenging them to become servants by following in his footsteps. *Project Serve* is designed to help your students transform from people who serve on occasion into a committed servants like Christ.

Small Group Outlines

Small Group Session 1

- **Session Title:** *What is a Servant?*
- **Main Scripture Passages:** John 13:12–14; Galatians 5:13–14; Isaiah 58:10
- **Session Overview:** This lesson will give students a new way of thinking about serving others modeled after the life and teachings of Jesus. There are many motivations for service, but not all follow Jesus' example. In this lesson, students will get a clearer picture of what it means to serve like Jesus, to place others' needs before their own, and to give of themselves through sacrificial action. Serving others is a significant aspect of following Jesus; we can't be Christ-followers without also being servants. He doesn't merely call us to perform acts of service; he transforms us into servants. The good things we should do should flow out of our new identities in Christ.

Small Group Session 2

- **Session Title:** *Who Do You Serve?*
- **Main Scripture Passages:** Proverbs 31:8–9; 1 Corinthians 9:19; Luke 6:32–33, 35
- **Session Overview:** This lesson will give students a clearer picture of the type of people Jesus calls us to serve. The short answer is obvious: anyone! But when we start to realize just who "anyone" includes, we may not be so eager. We cannot

limit ourselves to serving only those we like. Jesus invites us to serve people with desperate needs who most in society look past—the least. We’re called to serve those who don’t know Jesus yet, but desperately need him—the lost. And we’re even called to lovingly care for the people who put us down and wish to do us harm—our enemies. Serving these people means more than just being nice. Service requires our sacrificial love. Students will begin thinking about who they need to serve and how to get started on that journey.

Small Group Session 3

- **Session Title:** *When Do You Serve?*
- **Main Scripture Passages:** Luke 14:1–6; Luke 5:17–19, 24–25
- **Session Overview:** The goal of this lesson is to expand the notion of serving beyond convenience, duty, and comfort. Jesus invites us to lend others a hand at all times. Often, unplanned opportunities of service are the moments when we can have the greatest impact. Jesus modeled this by choosing to serve on the Sabbath, by healing people (working) on the holy day of rest. Although Jesus still found times to rest and be alone with the Father, he was always vigilant and compassionate towards others who needed help, no matter the inconvenience to him.

Small Group Session 4

- **Session Title:** *How Do You Serve?*
- **Main Scripture Passages:** James 5:16; 1 Peter 4:10; Matthew 20:26–28
- **Session Overview:** This lesson’s goal is to expand students’ ideas about service from simple daily tasks or acts of kindness into a lifestyle. When we become followers of Christ, we begin to take on his characteristics. Jesus didn’t enter the world as a conquering military leader. He came as a suffering servant. So, if we’re becoming more and more like him, we should find ourselves becoming servants as well. What does that look like? Service takes many forms and this lesson talks about serving in three ways: praying, caring for others’ relational and emotional needs, and sharing the good news of Jesus.

Large Group Outlines

Large Group Session 1: Luke 22:24–27
Large Group Session 2: Romans 12:14–16
Large Group Session 3: Luke 13:10–17
Large Group Session 4: Colossians 3:17–24

Student Book Devotional Outlines

Devotion 1: Luke 10:25–37
Devotion 2: Romans 12:1–16
Devotion 3: Luke 23:26–43
Devotion 4: Matthew 6:1–8