

Alley SG - February 17-18, 2018

Bible Truth: All the Small Things (Least of These) • Matthew 25:35-40

Bottom Line: Be kind to people who are overlooked.

Key Question: Have you ever received unexpected kindness?

Memory Verse: "Do to others as you want them to do to you." *Luke 6:31, NIV*

1. Get Your Head in the Game

What You Need: Hula hoop (one per group), multiple randomized items for inside the hula hoop (per group), plastic tablecloth (one per group), *Optional:* smartphone timer

What You Do:

- **Place** the items for the game inside the hula hoop. Cover it up with the plastic tablecloth so students can't see what's there.
- Tell them that when you remove the covering, they will have 10 seconds to look closely at the items before you cover them back up.
 - They should do their best to not overlook any of the objects or where they are placed.
- After the students have **viewed** the items, ask them to turn completely around so they can't see the hula hoop.
- **Choose** one person to remove or reposition one of the objects in the hoop then **let** the other students turn around and try to find the change within 10 seconds.
- **Repeat** several times removing or repositioning one or more objects or possibly none at all.

Wrap Up and Say:

"You guys have sharp eyes! You did a great job NOT overlooking anything and figuring out what was missing. That skill will come in handy today as we hear what Jesus said about people who often get overlooked."

2. Take a Snapshot

What You Need: Three placemats (per group), paper, pens

What You Do:

- **Set out** the placemats and designate them as 1, 2, and 3.
- **Place** paper, pens, and markers near each placemat.
- **Let** students choose one of the following placemats to stand by.
 - Stand by **Placemat 1** if you'd like to write a definition of the word "overlooked."
 - Stand by **Placemat 2** if you'd like to make a list of the types of people who are often overlooked. (*No names*)
 - Stand by **Placemat 3** if you'd like to write or draw about a time when you or someone you know felt overlooked. (*No names*)

NOTE: *It's okay if all the placemats aren't chosen. Later, as students share, look for opportunities to include questions about any of the topics from the placemats no one chose.*

- When everyone has chosen their placemat, **ask** them to step out and sit with their group as they work.
- After a few minutes, **let** the teams share their ideas.

3. Bible Story Extension

What You Need: Bible, small water bottles (one per kid)

What You Do:

- **Ask** the students to sit in a circle, then give each person a small water bottle.
- **Read** Matthew 25:35-40 to the students.
- **Tell** students to take a sip of water whenever you say the word “I.”
- **Read** the passage again, but this time ask your group to take a sip of water when they hear the word “you.”
- **Point out** that when we unselfishly help someone, we’re serving God.
- **Reread** verses 35-36 pausing after each “I” sentence to give the students an opportunity to interject an example of a way they have shown or have been shown kindness as described in that part of the verse.
 - In other words, when have they had opportunity to serve God by serving someone’s need for food, clothing, friendship, etc.?
 - Was there ever a time when they or their family were in need and others helped meet that need?
- **Take the discussion deeper.** Ask:
 - From the needs mentioned in these verses, which one do you think is the hardest for you to help meet?
 - What kind of people are hardest for you to help?
 - Why do you think God wants us to show kindness to those who are overlooked?
 - What gets in the way or makes it hard for you to include others?
 - What can you do to become more aware of others’ needs?

4. Discussion Questions

- When have you felt welcomed by someone? What did that person do that made you feel included? What unexpected kindness did they show you?
- What does it feel like to be left out? If we know how much it hurts to be overlooked, why don’t we try harder to include others?
- Does God ever overlook anyone? Explain.
- What has God done to welcome us? What does He continue to do?
- What would need to change for you to see those around you who have needs that are being overlooked?
- What should you do if the person you want to help doesn’t want your help?

5. Verses to Take with You

What You Need: Bibles, Blank Paper, and Pens

What You Do:

- **Give** each student a Bible or **let** him/her use a device on which they can find an online Bible source.
- **Ask** them to look up Hebrews 6:10 then take turns reading it out loud from their Bibles. If possible, compare different translations.
- **Invite** them to put the verse into first-person tense as if God is speaking the words directly to them. (*I am fair. I will not forget what you have done. I will remember the love you have shown*

Me. You showed it when you helped My people. And you show it when you keep on helping them.)

- **Initiate** thought-provoking questions that will help your students get to the heart of the verse and compare it with where their hearts are toward others in need.
 - What do you learn about God from this verse?
 - Name three benefits of living out this verse and being known as someone who includes others.
 - Why do we need to be reminded to show kindness to those who are overlooked?
 - What keeps us from including others?

NOTE: Remember that a change of heart in any of your students is done by the work of the Holy Spirit. Creative teaching, engaging questions, and relationship-building activities may help to open the door of a kid's heart, but only God's Spirit can do the work of helping him/her see a need to change. Pray for God's leading before, during, and after Small Group. God has the power to use you to speak truth into the hearts of your preteen students.

- **Assign** one sentence of Hebrews 6:10 to each of the students then give them a piece of blank paper and a pen.
- **Ask** them to draw something in a way that illustrates their part of the verse.
- **Close** by letting students share their drawings and the meaning behind them.

6. Make it Personal with Prayer

What You Need: Play-Doh (one baggy per group)

What You Do:

- **Say something like:** "We all know how great it feels to be included. We also know what it's like to be overlooked. Rewind this past week. Did you ever feel overlooked like one of the hungry, cold, or lonely people that Jesus was talking about in today's lesson? Maybe you felt like everyone around you had someone to talk to except for you. It feels so great at times like that when someone steps out and makes a connection with you! Let's pray that God will help you to be the kind of kid who isn't afraid to be friends with those who get overlooked. When you do, you'll leave a mark of kindness on that person."
- **Sit** in a circle and hand a smooth ball of Play-Doh to one of the students.
- **Invite** him/her to pray a short prayer – silently or out loud – asking for God's help to see those who are overlooked and to be able to leave a mark of kindness on that person's life in some way this week.
- As each student takes a turn praying, **let** him/her press their fingerprint into the dough, leaving a distinct mark.

PRAY: *Dear Jesus, You left Your imprint on the lives of everyone You met. You're still leaving Your mark on the world today by using us to meet the needs of those who are often overlooked. We know that every time we serve someone else, we're serving You. Help us to serve You well. Help us to serve You unselfishly. Help us to serve You the way You serve us. In Your name we pray, Amen."*

Pass out God Time Sheets as kids leave...