



BIG IDEA

We can worship God by living for Him.

THE BIBLE

The Parable of the Pharisee and Tax Collector Luke 18:19-14 (Romans 12:1; Matthew 5:16; Philippians 2:3-4)

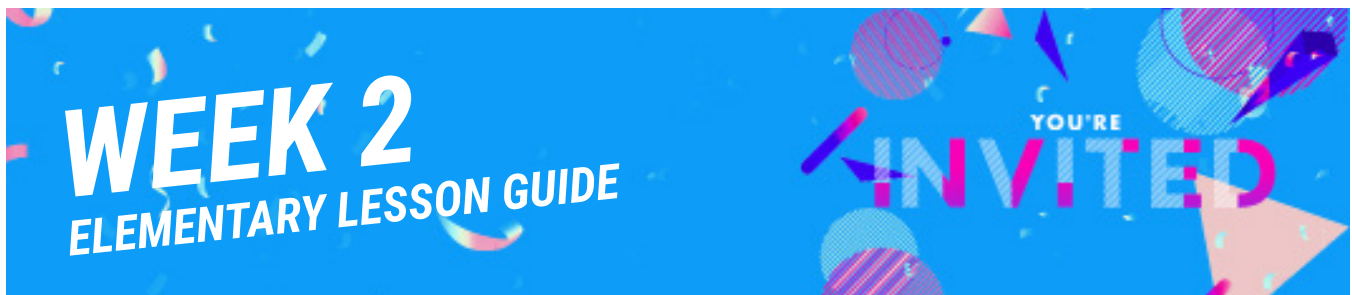
THIS WEEK AT A GLANCE

LARGE GROUP TIME

- **ACTIVITY** | Make a Party Hat
- **ACTIVITY** | Cupcake Race
- **QUESTION** | Have you ever been to a surprise party?
- **BIG IDEA** | We can worship God by living for Him.
- **OBJECT LESSON** | Cardboard Cake
- **STORY** | Share about a time when you were afraid.
- **BIBLE STORY** | Luke 18:9-14
- **ACTIVITY** | Party Streamer Take-Out
- **OBJECT LESSON** | Bragging Balloon
- **SCRIPTURE** | Romans 12:1
- **OBJECT LESSON** | A Gift for God
- **ACTIVITY** | Party Menu
- **PRAYER** | Living for God
- **MUSIC** | Worship
- **SCRIPTURE** | Matthew 5:16
- **MEMORY VERSES** | John 1:1; Ephesians 4:29

SMALL GROUP TIME

- **DISCUSSION**
 - What did the Pharisee do when he prayed?
 - What did the tax collector do?
 - Which one did Jesus say was doing the right thing?
 - What does it mean to live in humility?
 - Is it easy or hard to think of others before yourself?
 - Do you find yourself comparing yourself to others?
 - What does it mean to live for God?
- **SCRIPTURE** | **Philippians 2:3-4**
 - What does this verse say about how we should treat others?
 - How can you look to the interests of others, instead of yourself?
- **ACTIVITY** | **Pass the Present**
- **MEMORY VERSES** | **John 1:1; Ephesians 4:29**



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We can worship God by living for Him.

THE BIBLE

The Parable of the Pharisee and Tax Collector:
Luke 18:9-14 (Romans 12:1; Matthew 5:16; Philippians 2:3-4)

LARGE GROUP TIME

WHAT? *What are we talking about today?*

ACTIVITY | Make a Party Hat

- This month, we're talking about a party that Jesus invites us to! We're learning what it means to worship God because worshiping God is a party we're all invited to. Who's ready to party?! To get in the mood, let's make our own party hats.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Print the party hat printable or use plain store-bought party hats. Let the kids bend the paper hats into a cone shape and tape or staple them together. They can use a hole punch to punch two holes at the bottom across from each other, then tie rickrack trim or elastic trim to the holes. They can use stickers and markers to decorate their hats.*
- **What is one reason you can celebrate today?**

ACTIVITY | Cupcake Race

- If you were here last week, we know we had a party. Today, we're going to keep the party going as we continue learning how to worship and celebrate God.
- I don't know about you, but when it comes to parties, a lot of people would say that the food is their favorite part. The cake, the candy that comes in the goody bags, and let's not forget the cupcakes. We're going to play a game about cupcakes!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Cover a section of the floor with a tarp. Set up a start line and a finish line, then spread out cupcakes all across the open space. The kids will wear a blindfold and try to walk from*

one side to the other without stepping on a cupcake “landmine.” Call up two kids to play the game, and two kids to be the guides. The two kids who are playing the game will take off their shoes and put on the blindfolds and stand at the starting line. Their partners will stand at the finish line and guide them by telling them where to step or not to step. If someone steps on a cupcake, they have to start over. The first person to the finish line is the winner (you can give the winning team small cupcakes as a prize).

- **What is the coolest or most fun party you’ve ever been to? What made it so fun?**

QUESTION | Have you ever been to a surprise party?

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Ask the kids if they have ever been to a surprise party, either as a guest or as the guest of honor.
- One thing that is interesting about surprise parties is that the one throwing them (hopefully) has no idea it is about to happen. They are the guest of honor, the most important person in the room.
- **When the party is for you, do you think it would be easy to think you’re more important than the other guests, or do you think you would be humble?**
- Being humble means you don’t think you’re more important or better than anyone else, even if you’re the guest of honor!
- Today we’re going to hear a Bible story about what being humble has to do with worshipping God.

THE BIG IDEA | We can worship God by living for Him.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Each week, do a big reveal (and make it fun) when you announce the Big Idea, like:
 - Ask the kids to give you a drum-roll by stomping their feet or patting their laps.
 - Shout the Big Idea, then point to the kids and have them shout it back. (Change it up by using funny voices, different volumes, or inflections.)
 - Have a character (either recurring or rotating) come out every week to reveal the Big Idea.
 - Write it on a piece of paper and hide it somewhere in the room. Have the kids go on a “hunt” for it. When it’s found, ask someone to come up and read it.
- This week’s Big Idea: **We can worship God by living for Him.**

SO WHAT? Why does it matter to God and to us?

OBJECT LESSON | Cardboard Cake

- Worshipping God is a party, but no party is complete without cake!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Use cardboard boxes and construction paper to make your own cardboard cake or buy a toy cake. Hold it up and act like you’re going to take a bite. Before you do, stop and offer the kids a bite, and see what they say.
- I’m so hungry, and this cake looks so beautiful and delicious. It has these pretty colors and sprinkles and frosting on it. Doesn’t it look like it would taste good? I can’t wait to take a bite.
- You wouldn’t want to take a bite of this cake. Although it looks beautiful on the outside, it’s fake on the inside. It may look good, but it certainly won’t taste good.
- Sometimes we can do things to make ourselves look good, but what really matters is what’s on the inside, in our hearts. Instead of trying to make ourselves look good and trying to impress

others, the story we're going to hear today reminds us to live with humility.

- **Today, we're going to talk about the importance of living for God, instead of living to impress others.**

BIBLE STORY | Luke 18:9-14

- **If you were throwing a party, do you think you'd want to impress people by throwing the most amazing party with the greatest decorations, games, and food?**
- Planning a party should be fun, but sometimes people can get so caught up in planning a party that they forget to really enjoy the people there.
- **What should our focus be on during a party? Should it be all about trying to impress others?**
- If worshiping God is a party we're invited to every day, let's listen to a Bible story to help us see what our hearts should be focused on every day.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Look up the story in your Bible and encourage kids to do the same. Read it!*
- This Bible story was a parable; a story Jesus used to teach people something. In this parable, there were two people: a Pharisee and a tax collector.
- **What do you know about Pharisees?** Pharisees were religious leaders who sometimes thought they were better than others, more important than others, and smarter than others. They tried to impress people by bragging about all the laws and rules they followed.
- **What did the Pharisee in the parable do?** When he prayed, he said he was thankful to be better than the other people, especially the evil tax collector. Tax collectors were known in those days as being sinners because they cheated people to get more money for themselves.
- **Do you think Jesus was impressed by the Pharisees?** No!
- **But what did the tax collector say when he prayed?** He asked God for mercy. He had humility. That means he didn't think he was better than anyone and he wasn't trying to impress anyone.
- **Which would you rather be like: the Pharisee who tries to impress others, or the tax collector, who lives with humility?**
- Instead of living for ourselves, or living to try and impress others, we can have humility by living for Jesus and for others. That's one way we worship God — by living for Him, instead of ourselves or others.

ACTIVITY | Party Streamer Take-Out

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Before the game, cut crepe paper streamers to different lengths and attach small prizes to the end of each strip using tape or clothes pins. Then tape or tie each strip to a metal wire or a doorway frame. If you're using a wire, get two strong people to hold it tight so the streamers hang down. Tell the kids to stand ten feet away from the streamers and throw balls or toilet paper rolls at the streamers to try and knock one down and get the prize.*
- **How would this game be different if you were doing it with your eyes closed?**
- **Was it hard for you to hit the streamers and knock down the prize?**
- If you wanted to knock down the streamers, you had to focus on them, right?
- When we worship God, it's kind of like that streamer. Worship happens when our focus is on God, instead of others or ourselves.

OBJECT LESSON | Bragging Balloon

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Hold up an un-inflated balloon. Each time you say something that is bragging, blow into the balloon. You can make it actually burst, or you can just tell the kids that it would burst if you kept blowing.
- Imagine that this balloon is a person who comes to church, but their focus is on the wrong things instead of on God.
- They think they are really special and important. They try to do things to make everyone think they are a good person. They make sure everyone sees them go to church every week. They make sure people know they give money to the church. They brag when they do something nice for others. They tell everyone how many Bible verses they have memorized so they can seem smarter than everyone else. They answer every question without giving others a chance. They try to win every game, and don't like to lose.
- **What would happen to this balloon if I kept blowing and blowing?** It would get so full that it would burst! When people try to brag and make themselves look good, they can get so full of themselves that they forget what is really important.
- You don't want to have a heart filled with selfishness, do you? We don't have to live for ourselves – we can choose to live for God instead.

SCRIPTURE | Romans 12:1

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Open your Bible and look up the verse. Read Romans 12:1.
- This verse says we can worship God by giving ourselves as a living sacrifice.
- **What do you think it means to offer your body to God as a living sacrifice?** It means that we live for Him, instead of living for ourselves.
- Back in the Old Testament, before Jesus came to earth, people had to offer sacrifices of animals to come before God. Something had to die to take the punishment for the people's sin so that sinful people like us could come before a perfect God.
- But then Jesus came to earth and changed everything. He was perfect and never sinned, and then He died on the cross as the sacrifice for our sins, so we can come to God and have a relationship with Him.
- We don't need to bring our own animal to sacrifice to God in order to have a relationship with Him anymore. This verse says that the sacrifice God wants from us is to give Him our whole lives: our bodies, minds, hearts and our love.
- **We can worship God by giving Him the gift of living for Him.**

NOW WHAT? *What does God want us to do about it?*

OBJECT LESSON | A Gift for God

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Hold up a wrapped present and tell the kids about your favorite birthday present that you have received.
- When we go to birthday parties, we take presents to the guest of honor. It's one way we show them we love them and they are special to us.
- **Did you know that you can give a gift to God too?** You can't wrap it up in a box because the gift

is your whole life!

- That's what worship is — it's deciding to make our lives all about God instead of all about ourselves.
- **What gift can you give to God today to show Him that you are living for Him?**

ACTIVITY | Party Menu

- Cupcakes remind us of parties, but that's not all we eat at parties. **What are your favorite foods to eat at a party?**
- If you were having a party and you could plan any kind of theme or menu for it, what would you serve?
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give kids paper and tell them to write or draw an imaginary party menu. Let them share their menus with their groups.
- You all sound like you'd have some delicious food at your parties!
- Next time you go to a party, here's an easy way to practice living for God instead of yourself: try letting others go first instead of being the first in line for food and snacks. When you do that, you're choosing to put God and the other people He loves before yourself.

PRAYER | Living for God

- We can worship God through singing, praying, and through having a thankful heart. We can also worship God by serving Him and serving others.
- **What do you think it looks like to serve others with a humble heart?**
- Here are some things we can do to serve God and others:
 - Give thanks to God for everything we have.
 - Treating others with kindness and compassion.
 - Helping people who are in need.
 - Praying for people.
 - Letting others go first.
 - Speaking encouraging words to others.
 - Giving up something that is special to us, to help others (toys, money, our time)
- Let's each choose one of these things to pray about. Ask God to help you in that area of your life this week as you live for Him.

MUSIC | Worship

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Spend some time singing together. You can sing any songs you'd like, but for this lesson we like, "Whatever You Do (1 Corinthians 10:31)" by Seeds Family Worship and, "This is Living" by Hillsong Kids.

SCRIPTURE | Matthew 5:16

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Look up the verse and read it! Take out a glow stick and make the room as dark as you can to show kids how a glow stick lights up in the darkness.
- Matthew 5:16 says that when we let our light shine, other people will see how we're living for God and they will praise God.
- **Did you know that the way we live can let other people see and praise God?** What a cool thing to think about.

- When you do the right thing, or have a good attitude, or show compassion to others, or give thanks, you're living in a way that shines the light of God.
- The darkness represents the world and all the people who don't know God. When you let your light shine by living for God, you light up a dark world.

MEMORY VERSES | John 1:1; Ephesians 4:29

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give every kid memory verse magnets or stickers. Then work on the memory verse together. For ideas on how to do this well, check out the Memory Verse Guide in your Programming folder and give them to your small group leaders, if you'd like.

SMALL GROUP TIME

DISCUSSION

- **What did the Pharisee do when he prayed?** (He said he was thankful that he wasn't like the evil people.)
- **What did the tax collector do?** (He asked God for mercy.)
- **Which one did Jesus say was doing the right thing?** (The tax collector.)
- **What does it mean to live in humility?**
- **Is it easy or hard to think of others before yourself?**
- **Do you find yourself comparing yourself to others?**
- **What does it mean to live for God?**

SCRIPTURE | Philippians 2:3-4

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Look up the verse in your Bible and encourage kids to do the same. Read it!
- **What does this verse say about how we should treat others?**
- **How can you look to the interests of others, instead of yourself?**

ACTIVITY | Pass the Present

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give each group a small gift bag or box. Tell the kids to sit in a circle and pass the present around until the leader says "stop." Whoever is holding the present will share one way they can worship God this week.
- **What are some ways you can give God the gift of living for Him?**
- *When you worship and pray, don't think about yourself or about impressing others. Focus on praising God with all your heart.*

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