

BIBLE TIMELINE ASSEMBLIES

42. Jesus The Servant King

Bible Base: John 13: 1-17

Key Christian Belief: Jesus came to serve, not to be served.

Aim: To show that Jesus wants us to serve others as He did.

You will need:

- a royal robe
- a crown
- an apron
- a cook's hat
- a pair of smelly socks
- a card with the word 'UGH!' written on it.

Introduction

Invite a child to the front. Dress him / her in a robe and a crown and invite everyone else to guess what he / she is dressed up as - a king / queen.

Let's imagine that the Queen or a member of the royal family is coming to your school. The school is spotlessly clean. You have been told to come to school clean and tidy - looking your best. A shiny black car pulls up outside the school. A man in a smart uniform gets out of the front seat and opens the back door. Out steps her majesty the Queen. The headmaster and one or two others in their best suits welcome her to the school, shake her hand and bow or curtsy.

The Queen then visits your class. Everyone stands nicely by their desks as she comes in. If she asks you a question you answer 'Yes, Ma'am or 'No Ma'am' very politely.

Then she comes to your dining hall for lunch. There is a table with some nice flowers on it for her to sit at. Someone brings her lunch to her (she doesn't have to queue) and it is the best school lunch you have ever tasted that day.

Afterwards she comes to the school hall where the choir sings for her or the orchestra plays some music. At the end the head boy or girl presents her with a bouquet of flowers and makes a short speech thanking her for her visit. Then off she goes to visit some other important people...

Today's story is about something that happened when King Jesus came to visit us on earth. We read in the Bible that when He came to be with us it wasn't at all like we imagined it would be if the Queen or a member of the royal family came to your school. Some very surprising things happened and I want to tell you about one of these today.

Produce the word 'UGH' written on a card. Ask if anyone knows what the word is. To help them, produce a pair of socks you've been wearing for three weeks and ask if anyone wants a smell. They will probably say 'ugh'. Tell them that when you hold up the word you want them to say it like that.

Story

When King Jesus lived on earth there were no cars, trains or buses. Most of the time if you wanted to get anywhere you had to walk. The country Jesus lived in was hot for most of the year - so just as when you have been out walking or playing football in the heat - their feet were often sweaty, sticky and smelly. (Ugh)

The roads they walked on weren't tar-covered roads with nice footpaths - they were covered in sand and dust. Jesus and his friends wore open sandals so as well as getting sticky, sweaty and smelly their feet often got dusty and dirty too. (Ugh)

Sometimes people traveled by donkey or camel - so when you were out walking you had to be careful not to put your foot in something that a donkey or camel might leave behind - if you know what I mean...(Ugh)

One day Jesus and his friends had been out walking and they came to a house where they had arranged to have tea. Normally there would have been a servant at the door to welcome everyone and to wash their smelly feet. (Ugh)

But this time there was no servant. Jesus and his friends went up to the room where they were going to have tea. There was a table with a meal all ready for them. In one corner of the room there was a small table with a jug of water, a basin and a towel on it. Jesus and his friends noticed it as they sat down.

Andrew turned to Peter and said, 'Your feet don't half pong!' (Ugh)

Peter replied, 'You think mine are bad? You should smell yours!' (Ugh)

For a while there was silence. Jesus friends looked over at the jug of water, the basin and the towel. No one said anything but you could tell what they were all thinking. 'I hope no one thinks I'm going to wash anyone's smelly feet. No way!' (Ugh)

After a while - to everyone's surprise - Jesus got up, went over to the table in the corner, tied the towel round his waist and poured the water from the jug into the basin. Then he picked up the basin, carried it over, knelt down and washed every one of his friends' feet. His friends were amazed - this was King Jesus kneeling in front of them, washing their smelly feet, doing the job of a servant.

Imagine how amazed you would be if the Queen came to your school one day and as she came in she took off her royal robe and crown (take the robe and crown off your volunteer) and instead put these on (put on an apron and a chef's hat) and then went into the kitchen and started washing up the messy pots. You would be amazed - Queen Elizabeth, in your school, dressed like this, washing up the messy pots! That's how amazed Jesus friends were when He started washing their feet.

Exploring Christian Belief

Jesus wanted His friends to know some important things that day. One was that when He came from heaven to earth it wasn't to show off and make sure everyone knew He was the King - it was to help and to serve others in every way He could. He wanted them to know that He loved them and that because He loved them there wasn't anything He wouldn't do for them. The Bible says that just a few days later He was hanging on a cross giving His life for them and for us so that we could be God's friends forever.

He then told His friends that He had given them an example - that they should do for others what He had done for them. That doesn't mean that He wants us to wash everyone's feet but it does mean that He wants us to be ready to do the job of a servant - and to serve others as He did.

In Jesus day a servant was someone who had to look after everyone else in the house before they looked after themselves; to make sure everyone else had something to eat before they had something to eat themselves. A servant was someone who put others first and themselves last. That's the sort of person Jesus was - and the sort of people He wants us to be as well.

If you are giving out sweets let others have first pick, even if they pick your favourite. If there are lots of people trying to get into a room don't push your way up to the front - let others in first, maybe even hold the door open for them and you go in last. If there aren't enough seats for everyone make sure others have a seat and then if there any left you have one.

And if there is a messy job to be done - picking up the litter in the playground, washing up after art - don't be like Jesus friends, hoping no one asks you to do it - instead you be the first to volunteer.

When you take the place of a servant in ways like this you are following the example of Jesus - the best example you could ever follow - and Christians believe you can do this to show Him how glad you are of His love for you.

Reflection and Prayer

So - in your imagination, which clothes will you be wearing today? Will you be dressed like a king - insisting that everyone does what you want - or will you be dressed like a servant - putting others first and being ready to help them in any way you can?

Let's ask God to help us be more like Jesus and put others first!