

Each Person Is Important

OBJECTIVE: *To learn what the body of Christ is, and to recognize each person's importance in the body.*



WORSHIP

Sing praise and worship songs as well as songs about unity that are familiar and meaningful to your group. Here are some suggestions.

"Blest Be the Tie That Binds"

"Come Bless the Lord"

"Father Abraham"

"He's Got the Whole World in His Hands"

"I'm in the Lord's Army"

"Let Us Break Bread Together"

"Now Thank We All Our God"

"Praise the Lord Together"

"They'll Know We Are Christians
by Our Love"

"Zacchaeus"

STORY

Zacchaeus, Luke 19:1-10

- Zacchaeus wants to see Jesus, but he's too short to see over the crowd.
- Zacchaeus climbs a tree so he can see.
- Jesus stops at the tree and tells Zacchaeus to come down because he needs to go to Zacchaeus' house.

Tell this story outdoors under a tree, if possible. If it's safe, let a child climb the tree to act like Zacchaeus. If you must tell the story indoors, ask a strong adult to act like the tree and hold a small child in his arms or on his shoulders, so the child can represent Zacchaeus.

MEMORY VERSE

"In humility consider others better than yourselves" (Philippians 2:3).

Help the children remember this verse by crowning someone else while they say the verse. Make a crown by forming a strip of paper into a circle that will fit on top of people's heads. Tape or staple it in place. Give the crown to one person. While that person says the memory verse, he walks over to another person and puts the crown on that person's head to show that he is honoring that person. Then the person with the crown takes it off, says the verse and places the crown on someone else's head. That person is the next to say the verse and crown someone, and so on until everyone has had a chance to say the verse.

ACTIVITIES

Choose one or more of the following activities to support the story and to provide a springboard for discussion.

FACE SCULPTURES. Give each person a large sheet of aluminum foil. Gently help him mold it around his face and sculpt his features. If you do this activity with children only, line the face sculptures up and let the grown-ups guess who's who. Discuss how each part of our physical bodies does its work. Ask: "How is the church like a body? Who is the head? Is everyone important?"



JOINTS. Describe different types of joints, asking each person to find those kinds of joints on his body: no movement (joints in skull), little movement (backbone), hinges (like knee, elbow), ball and socket (like shoulder). Show a picture of a skeleton if you have one (check an encyclopedia). Point out the joints. Let everyone take turns suggesting and leading exercises or movements that show the working of joint types. Read Ephesians 1:22, 23; 4:16. Say: "Everyone is as important to the body of believers as joints are to our own physical bodies."

STATUE RACE. Mark a start and finish line. Choose one person to be the director. He stands on the finish line facing the others, who line up on the start line. When the director turns his back, the others run toward the finish line. But when the director turns around, everyone must "freeze" as though they were statues. Anyone the director sees moving must return to the start line. The one to reach the finish line first becomes the next director. After the race, sit and rest and discuss how each part of your physical body helped in running the race. Talk about how each person in the body of Christ is important.

FUNNY PEOPLE. Give everyone old magazines and catalogues. (Check to see that any inappropriate sections have been thrown out.) Let everyone cut out heads, arms, legs, and bodies and place them in separate stacks. Then each person chooses the arms and legs, heads and bodies from the different stacks and glues them onto paper to make a new figure. Discuss how each body part does its work both in our physical bodies and in the church. **Option:** cut out only facial features and glue them inside a circle to make a new face.

QUESTIONS

1. Why was Zacchaeus important to Jesus? Why are you important to Jesus?
2. What is the church? How is the church like a body?
3. What does your head do for your body? The Bible says Jesus is the head of the church, his people. What does Jesus do for his people?
4. Why is it important that each of us does our part? Is any one part more important than the others?
5. How did Jesus do what our memory verse talks about?

KIDS' COUNCIL

BRING IT HOME

- Do you ever feel small and insignificant like Zacchaeus? What does the story of Zacchaeus help you learn?
- Read Ephesians 4:16. What are ligaments? Name some of our physical body parts and tell how each does its work. Name some of the different jobs in Jesus' body, the church.
- Which part of Jesus' body of believers do you think you are, or would you like to be? Why?
- Is there someone you know who doesn't feel like an important part of Jesus' followers, his body? How can you let that person know that he's important?

SHARE AND PRAY

- Ask the children to share their concerns and pray for each other.
- Thank God that he cares for people who may not seem important, and that they can be part of his kingdom, his church, his group of believers.
- Ask God to show us how we are important to his people and what our special job is in his body.

ADULT STUDY QUESTIONS

- If Jesus was coming to your town tomorrow and you planned to go watch for him to come, who would be Zacchaeus? Whose house would Jesus visit? Would we complain that Jesus had gone to be a guest of a sinner?
- Which part of Jesus' body of believers are you? If you are not sure, tell which part you think you might be or would like to be. How do you know which part you are?
- Read the entire passage from which the memory verse was taken, Philippians 2:3, 4. Does this mean everyone? Do you find this easy or difficult to do? Can you think of a person you have a hard time considering better than yourself? Are you looking to the interests of others? How can we do this?

SNACK AND FELLOWSHIP

Breadstick Men. Make these ahead of time, or let children make them as an activity early in your group session so they'll be ready for snack time. Use canned, refrigerated breadstick dough. Give each child one or two sticks of dough. Sprinkle the dough with flour. Cut sticks into sections to make legs, body, arms, and head. Arrange these to make a person and pinch the sections together. Bake according to package directions. Talk about how all of us are important parts of Jesus' church just as all the parts of our body are important to us.

