

middle school



Lesson 9 / May 17, 2020

Serving in Small Ways

By Taylor Baird

for use as

STEP 1



Lesson 9

Focus:

No job is too small for
God's people.

Lesson 9

Bible Basis:

Acts 6:1-7

Lesson 9

Memory Verse:

From him the whole body, joined and held
together by every supporting ligament, grows
and builds itself up in love, as each part does
its work. —Ephesians 4:16

As students view a graphic of the internal workings of an analog watch and the countless people involved in the launch of Apollo 13, they will consider the important parts that individual believers play within the Church.

Materials:

Internet access

Have you ever seen the inside of a mechanical watch? You probably haven't given much thought to how they work. Show your students some of the immersive images in the link below before moving on, demonstrating the intricate complexity of all the unseen parts. Feel free to show them as many or as few as you want—the idea is that they get a picture of all the small pieces working together.

How a Mechanical Watch Works

<https://animagraffs.com/mechanical-watch/>

Inside a watch there are over 130 moving pieces, most of them smaller than a grain of rice! And if you remove even a single piece—one rice-sized scrap of metal—the entire watch stops working. *Every piece is essential.* It's mind-blowing how a bunch of tiny, seemingly useless objects can come together to create something amazing!

Consider how important every single job was in one of the most amazing feats in human history: sending people to the moon. There are 24 astronauts that have walked on the moon. But for every person that actually takes off in the space shuttle, there are *thousands* of scientists and engineers doing behind-the-scenes work. Let's watch this clip from the movie *Apollo 13* to get a glimpse into how many people are involved in a takeoff:

Share this video [3:09]:

Apollo 13 (1995) – Go for Launch Scene (3/11)|Movieclips

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMtWWls4oas>

In the same way that all the parts of a watch come together to make it operate, so every individual member of the launch team was necessary to get those astronauts into space. Every last little job was attended to by somebody!

➤ **Can you think of other examples where many small things come together to create something greater?** (This can be literally anything, from thousands of small building blocks coming together to build miniature cities to diverse sports teams coming together to accomplish great victories.)

➤ **Have you ever felt that your role in a team was insignificant?** (This might be a good place for the teacher to speak first, opening up about their own experiences. Keep in mind the focus of the lesson: No job is too small for God's people.)

➤ **Have you ever refused, or been tempted to refuse, a job or role on a team because you felt it wasn't important enough?**

Very often we shirk opportunities to serve or fill a need because we feel we will be undervalued in the role. We want to be the astronaut who becomes famous, not the computer operator who is equally vital but not as famous. Today we will be looking at how God's people respond to such situations...

(Continue on to Steps 2 and 3 in your teacher's guide; your Step 4 appears below.)

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Lesson 9 / May 17, 2020

Serving in Small Ways

for use as
STEP 4 

Lesson 9

Focus:

No job is too small for
God's people.

Lesson 9

Bible Basis:

Acts 6:1-7

Lesson 9

Memory Verse:

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together by every supporting ligament, grows
and builds itself up in love, as each part does
its work. —Ephesians 4:16

Materials:

None

Sometime prior to your time together, reach out to your church leadership to collaborate on a list of needs within the church. Shelter-in-place options might include a family posting a puppet show on a social media platform such as YouTube depicting a Bible story that could give the younger kids in the church an engaging way to encounter the message. The church could print up postcard greetings to all members, and middle schoolers could use the church directory to address them and/or add a message of encouragement. Making and sending cards of encouragement to elderly shut-ins might be an option. If their local safer-in-place rules allow, their family might want to go pick up litter and/or pull weeds on the church grounds.

We saw how the early church was quick to divide up the tasks of ministry and service between all the different people. The apostles knew that God had entrusted to them a specific job—preaching and praying—and the men like Stephen and the others gladly took on their (less glamorous!) role in distributing the food to the other believers. When everyone was eagerly serving where they were needed, the wonderful result was that the church actually grew and expanded!

God calls every one of His people to a unique role within His church. And not all of them are necessarily very glamorous. Remembering how God blessed the eagerness of Stephen in his new role, now it is your turn to discern God's will for where you can serve.

Share any needs your church has that your students can perform in their current situation. Walk them through each item, describing and commenting on why the role is important within the life of the church.

➤ **Do any of these jobs appeal to you? Or more importantly, are there any that *don't* appeal?** (Encourage the students to be honest. There may be some jobs that no one wants to fill—emphasize that this is a place the students can best serve. Really encourage a lively discussion about where they can best serve. Throw out ideas where a small group might serve, such as a family, or where individual students can fill needs.)

➤ **What would happen if nobody ever filled one or more of these needs?** (Accept all reasonable answers. Demonstrate how even seemingly small jobs can make or break a church—like picking up trash, etc.)

We are all called to serve. It may not always be in the ways we want or imagined, but every little job is important in God’s church. Remember the many moving parts hidden away inside a watch; remember the engineers, scientists, data entry employees, and janitors that got human beings to the moon! Little jobs matter everywhere especially in the church. God will bless you as you eagerly pursue Him and seek to serve His people. Challenge your students to pick at least one “small job” they will do for God’s people this week. Encourage the students to always be looking for ways to fill needs in the church, even after this lesson. Don’t let the momentum fade!

Close with prayer as a group or with individual students.

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