

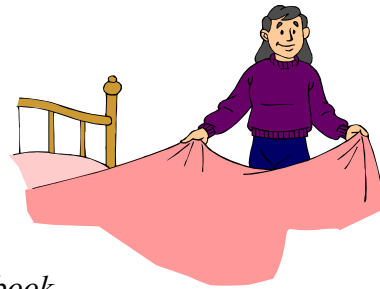
Service and Happiness

PURPOSE

To help family members understand that happiness can be found in serving others

MATERIALS

- Story, “*The Parable of the Spoons*” (below)
- Story, [Waste-of-Time Primary Service Project](#)
- Spoons taped to the end of yardsticks or long sticks
- Pudding or some similar kind of dessert



SONG SUGGESTIONS

- “When We’re Helping” page 198 in *Children’s Songbook*
- “Give Said the Little Stream” page 236 in *Children’s Songbook*

LESSON IDEAS

1. Ask your family to raise their hands if they like to be happy. Explain that everyone likes to be happy.
 - a. Ask, “What things help us to be happy?” (Keeping the commandments, prayer, scripture study, etc.)
2. Read one of the stories below and ask what made the people in the story happy.
 - a. Story, “The Parable of the Spoons” (older children)
 - b. Story, [Waste-of-Time Primary Service Project](#) (younger children)
3. Read Matthew 10:39 with your family. Help them understand that those who serve God and others will find true happiness.
4. Share the following quotes:
 - a. Elder Dallin H. Oaks: “If given in the right way and for the right reasons . . . service will reward us beyond anything we have given” (*Ensign*, May 2002, 33).
 - b. President Ezra Taft Benson: “Forget yourself and find someone who needs your service, and you will discover the secret to a happy, fulfilled life” (*Ensign*, May 1979, 34).
5. Testify that service truly does bring happiness!

ACTIVITY IDEAS

- Challenge each family member to do something special for each member of the family (or a friend/neighbor) this week. Encourage them to see how it makes them feel.

- Involve your family in the [Secret Service](#).
- Dessert/Activity
 - a. Give everyone a dish of pudding (or similar dessert) and a spoon taped to the end of a long stick.
 - b. Invite family members to try and feed themselves. (Explain that they have to hold on to the *end* of the stick.)
 - c. Now allow family members to feed the dessert to each other. (It can be a bit messy, but it's great fun).

STORY

The Parable of the Spoons

Author Unknown

A man once asked a heavenly messenger to teach him why some people are happy and other people are unhappy. The angel took the man to a large building that had two doors.

"Open the first door and you will see unhappiness," said the angel.

The man opened the first door and saw many people sitting around a large round table. In the middle of the table was a steaming pot of stew that looked and smelled delicious! Each person around the table had a long stick attached to his hand. At the end of the stick was a spoon. The man watched as the people would dip their spoons into the pot and then weep because the stick was so long they could not get the spoon into their mouths. Everyone looked very hungry and very unhappy.

"Now open the second door," said the angel, "and you will see happiness."

As the man opened the second door he was very surprised to discover that the second room looked almost the same as the first. People sat around a large round table with a pot of delicious smelling stew in the center. These people also held long sticks with spoons attached, but these people looked happy and well-fed.

"I don't understand," said the man.

"Watch carefully," said the angel.

As the man watched he noticed the people in the second room dipping their spoons into the pot and then using the long-handle to feed the stew to the person sitting across the table from them.

"Do you now understand why some people are unhappy while others are happy?" asked the angel.

"Happy people forget themselves and serve others," said the man.

"Yes," smiled the angel, "and in serving others they too are fed."

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