

**Missions Lesson**  
**Missions Project: Birthday in a Bag**

May, Week 4

By Cheryl Hatfield

Objectives: Children will learn about the spiritual discipline of serving and will do a hands-on project to apply that learning.

Materials: Solid colored gift bags (medium to large sizes) that you can write on, stickers, stamps, colored/white cardstock, markers, birthday party items (cake mix, canned icing, candles, party hats, balloons, birthday banner, birthday paper plates, napkins, etc.), Bibles in kid friendly translation such as NIV.

Preparation: Depending on the size of your children's group, have each child bring a birthday party item for the bag. Another option would be to have the children's group partner with an adult/youth group within the church to complete the activity. Having different age groups collaborate facilitates ministry across generations. If enough people participate and bring plenty of items, it may be possible to assemble more than one birthday bag.

Contact any organization within your community (local shelters or Family Resource Centers) that may know of a needy child with an upcoming birthday. Make arrangements to give the birthday bag to the child. Depending on the child's circumstances, those who assembled the gift may help present the bag to the child. Be sensitive to keeping the child's identity and information confidential.

Procedure:

1. Begin the lesson by reading the key scripture verse of Mark 10:45. For older elementary, encourage a volunteer to read this verse to the group.
2. Say, "What does serving others mean?" Guide the children in their responses if needed. Explain the key verse, emphasizing that Jesus did not come for others to serve Him, but to serve

- and help others. Our motivation for serving must come from a love for God and others, and our desire to be more like Jesus.
3. Say, "Today we are going to make a birthday bag for a child that may not be able to have a party. This is one way we can serve and help someone else. This is a way that we can be like Jesus."
  4. Guide children to decorate and print scripture verses on each bag (suggestions: Psalm 106:1, John 3:16, Matthew 22:37). They could also make birthday cards from cardstock to include in each bag.
  5. Lead children to fill the bags with the birthday party items, card(s), and a Bible. After assembling the bag(s), pray for those who made and donated the items and for the children who will be receiving the bags. Thank God for being able to serve Him and others.



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