

# A Topsy Turvy World



<b>Theme:</b>	The last shall be first - Proper 20 (25) 17th Sunday after Pentecost Yr B
<b>Object:</b>	None needed
<b>Scripture:</b>	Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, "If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all." Mark 9:35 (NIV)

Have you ever heard someone say, "We live in a 'Topsy Turvy' world?" Do you know what that means? It means that everything is the opposite of what people think it should be. Everything is backward or upside down. It means that things are confused and disorganized because everything is happening in the wrong order. Here is a poem that I learned in school that might help you to understand it a little bit better.

If Things Grew Down  
by Robert D. Hoeft

If things grew down instead of up,  
A dog would grow into a pup.  
A cat would grow into a kitten,  
Your sweater would grow into a mitten.  
A cow would grow into a calf,  
A whole would grow into a half.  
Big would grow into something small,  
And small would grow into nothing at all!

It would really be confusing if we lived in a world like that, wouldn't it? That must have been how the disciples felt one day when Jesus was trying to teach them a lesson about who was the greatest in the Kingdom of God.

Jesus and his disciples were walking along the road when Jesus heard them arguing among themselves. When they arrived at the house where they were going, Jesus asked them, "What were you arguing about on the road?" The disciples didn't answer because they were embarrassed. You see, they had been arguing about which of them was the greatest. But they didn't have to say anything, because Jesus already knew.

"So you want first place, do you?" Jesus said. "Then you must take the last place. If you want to be the greatest, then you must be a servant to all." Then Jesus called a small child over to him and put his arms around him. "If anyone welcomes a little child like this, he welcomes me, and anyone who welcomes me welcomes my Father who sent me."

The disciples must have thought, "What a Topsy Turvy world! If you want to be first, you have to go to the end of the line! If you want to be the greatest, you must become a servant! If you want to be important, you have to become like a little child!"

The teachings of Jesus are very different from the way most people think today. We live in a world where people want to be first. They want power and influence. They think that adults are more important than children, but in God's Kingdom, the children are just as important as anyone. Aren't you glad they are?

Dear Father, we thank you for your love for children. Help us to remember as we grow older, that to be great in your sight, we must come to you as a child. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

**FIRST AND LAST BIBLE BOOKS GAME:** Divide the children into groups of any size. The teacher will give two books of the Bible and choose a group to answer which book comes **FIRST** and which book comes **LAST** in the Bible. Continue to play the game so each group will have a chance at answer (Examples: Matthew and Revelation; John and Jude, Genesis and Psalms.)

**BACKWARD WORDS:** The teacher will hand out papers with words from our Bible less that are spelled backwards with some of the letters missing. The children can try to figure out what letters are missing and then shout out the word when they think they have the correct word figured out!

**BACKWARD RELAY:** Divide the children into teams. This relay will be easy as far as directions but everything will be run **BACKWARDS**. For example, the children can run to the line **BACKWARDS** and grab a hat and put it on **BACKWARDS** and run back to the team. The next player will run to the line

and put on a t-shirt BACKWARDS, etc. There can be one item for each child to grab and put on backwards for the relay. Ask children what was backwards in our lesson today.

**"IF THINGS GREW DOWN" POEM:** Give children a typed copy or the poem from today's lesson. Have them glue the poem to a larger piece of paper and draw pictures of things that are upside down around the poem. Write the following paraphrase of today's Bible Verse at the bottom of the page below the poem. "THE FIRST MUST BE LAST AND THE SERVANT OF ALL!" MARK 9:35

**1st PLACE RIBBON:** Give the children a piece of construction paper in the shape of a ribbon. Let the children decorate their 1st Place Ribbon with heart stickers, and markers. Write MY HEART (draw a heart instead of the word) belongs to JESUS!

## To Be Like Jesus

Traditional

$\text{♩} = 80$

To be like Je- sus, to be like Je- sus! My de- sire to be like Him! All through life's

5

jour- ney from earth to glo - ry, My de - sire to be like Him.

The image shows a musical score for the song 'To Be Like Jesus'. It is written in 4/4 time with a tempo of 80 beats per minute. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The score consists of two systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff. The lyrics are written below the treble staff. The first system ends with a double bar line, and the second system begins with a measure number '5'.

## Who Is the Greatest?



**Theme:** True greatness comes in serving others - Proper 20 (25) B

**Object:** Book: "The Rainbow Fish" (You should be able to find this book in your local bookstore or library.)

**Scripture:** Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, "If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all." He took a little child and had him stand among them. Taking him in his arms, he said to them, "Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me." Mark 9:35-37 (NIV)

Have any of you ever read "The Rainbow Fish?" This book is about the most beautiful fish in the ocean. His

scales were every shade of blue, green, and purple with sparkling silver scales mixed in. He was very beautiful, but he was also very selfish and self-centered. He was so beautiful that he thought he was too good to play with the other fish in the ocean.

One day a little blue fish asked Rainbow Fish for one of his beautiful, shimmering scales -- but he refused. Because of his selfishness, he was very unpopular with the other fish. He was not only the most beautiful fish in the ocean, he was also the loneliest fish in the ocean.

He told Starfish about his problem and Starfish sent him to talk to a wise old octopus. The octopus told Rainbow Fish that if he wanted to be happy, he should give one of his beautiful scales to each of the other fish. Rainbow Fish just could not imagine giving away his beautiful scales.

Once again, the little blue fish asked for one of Rainbow Fish's scales. He hesitated for a moment, but finally pulled off one of his scales and gave it to the little blue fish. When the other fish saw the little blue fish with a shiny scale, Rainbow Fish was surrounded by fish asking for one of his shiny scales. Before he knew it, he had given away all of his shiny scales except for one. Suddenly he realized that although he was no longer the most beautiful fish in the ocean, he was happier than ever before.

This story reminds me of something that Jesus said to his disciples. One day He heard his disciples arguing about which of them would be the greatest in God's kingdom. Jesus said to them, "If you want to be first, you must be last and you must be the servant of all." He then put his arms around a little child and told his disciples, "If you welcome one of these, you welcome me; and whoever welcomes me, welcomes the one that sent me."

Sometimes we think the most important thing is to be the first, to be the most beautiful, to be the smartest, or to be the GREATEST! That isn't what Jesus said. He said that the most important thing was to think of others first and ourselves last. If we want to be great in God's sight, we should seek to be a servant rather than seeking to be served.

Dear Jesus, help us to remember that to be the greatest, we must be willing to be the least. Amen.

**FIRST AND LAST RELAY:** Children can divide into teams. Each team can run a relay together in a designated area. The last one on each team to reach the other side, will be the first ones to being the next running relay. Continue as time allows. The teacher could also tell the children what each relay is if a change from just running the relay is desired, such as hopping, skipping and such.

**SERVING EACH OTHER:** The children can divide into two teams and stand across from each other. The teacher can hand each player on one team an item that they will SERVE to the other team member standing across from them, or the "serving team" can run to a table and take ONE item to serve to someone on the other team. After everyone is served, then the other team will serve their opposing team.

**SERVING CLAY:** Each child can be given some modeling clay to form items that can be served, or forms of people, etc. Ideas would be to serve food items, or a rake or a lawn mower, bed to make, book to read to someone, etc.

**RAINBOW FISH:** Give children construction paper, markers/crayons and scissors to cut out fish. Encourage children to color their fish with many colors like a rainbow and encouraging words from today's lesson so children can remember to share and serve others. Children could also write words from our Bible verse today and place the fish in the correct order to recite the verse together.

**FISHY PRAYER:** Provide children with cut out fish such as a starfish, an octopus, blue fish, etc from today's story. Tell children to write words for a prayer and place the various types of fish around a poster board and let children form a prayer circle and each can say a sentence prayer to ask Jesus to help them to serve others and to think of others as greater than they are.

**RAINBOW PLATE:** Each child can be given a paper plate and many different colors to color all of the plate with colors of a rainbow. The children can then write J - O - Y in a vertical line, in bright red colors. Beside the J, the children can write JESUS, beside the O, they can write OTHERS and

beside the Y, they can write YOU. Children can share with each other how to serve JESUS, and OTHERS.

**WHO IS THE GREATEST:** Divide the class into two teams and let them do a chant as they face each other. One side can shout -- WHO IS THE GREATEST? The other team will shout their answer.. JESUS IS... continue to let the teams shout their chants back and forth. The teacher can give the teams other chants as well with questions from today's lesson with the opposite team chanting back the answer!

**RAINBOW FISH COFFEE FILTER CRAFT:** Make a Rainbow Fish from a coffee filter. [CLICK HERE](#)

## My God Is So Great

Traditional

♩ = 100

F Dm<sup>7</sup> Gm/Bb

My God is so great, so strong and so might - ty there's no - thing my God can - not

4 1. F 2. F Gm<sup>7</sup> F

do. (Clap, clap) do! (clap, clap) The moun-tains are His, the riv - ers are His, the

8 Gm/Bb F

stars are His hand - i - work too. My God is so great, so

11 Dm<sup>7</sup> Gm/Bb F

stong and so might - y! There's noth - ing my God can - not do! (For you!)

Detailed description: This is a musical score for the hymn 'My God Is So Great'. It is written in 6/8 time with a tempo of 100. The key signature has one flat (Bb). The score is divided into four systems, each with a piano accompaniment and a vocal line. The first system (measures 1-3) starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The piano part uses chords F, Dm7, and Gm/Bb. The vocal line begins with 'My God is so great, so strong and so might - ty there's no - thing my God can - not'. The second system (measures 4-7) includes first and second endings. The piano part uses chords F, F, Gm7, and F. The vocal line includes 'do. (Clap, clap) do! (clap, clap) The moun-tains are His, the riv - ers are His, the'. The third system (measures 8-10) uses chords Gm/Bb and F. The vocal line continues with 'stars are His hand - i - work too. My God is so great, so'. The fourth system (measures 11-13) uses chords Dm7, Gm/Bb, and F. The vocal line concludes with 'stong and so might - y! There's noth - ing my God can - not do! (For you!)'. The piano part consists of chords in the right hand and a simple bass line in the left hand.