

# YUM OR NUMB?

*Selfishness isn't sweet. This object lesson can help you prove it.*

## MATERIALS

- At least three small treats for each family member (mini marshmallows work well)
- Ice cubes
- The Book of Mormon



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**Y**ou settle in for another episode of your favorite TV series, seriously considering whether professional couch potatoing could be your future career. Your dad throws open the back door and asks for your help with the yard work. Without expecting it or maybe even realizing it, an involuntary groan works its way out of your mouth.

If you've groaned like that (and who hasn't?), it may be because when we get too caught up in our own plans it's easy to forget how sweet service can be.

Try this fun object lesson that reminds your family about the sweetness of service.

## 1. TASTE THE SWEET

Ask your family to share their favorite service opportunities. What made those experiences so special?

Have each family member eat one of the treats. Ask them what it tastes like. Is it tasty? delectable? oh so scrumptious? This yumminess represents the sweetness of serving others.

Think of people you know who could use extra love or help. Consider making a list of their needs and then creating a family plan to see how to help them.

## 2. BUT I DON'T WANT TO!

Has there ever been a time when your family members *didn't* want to serve? Why not? Were they just busy? Did it sound boring or too hard?

At this point in the lesson, you might want to read 1 Nephi 17:15-18, where Laman and



Lemuel seem to have a hard time volunteering for service. Discuss how Laman and Lemuel's pride and hard hearts numbed them to the opportunity to serve their family and made them "past feeling" (1 Nephi 17:45).

### 3. CAN YOU TASTE IT?

Now it's time to use those ice cubes. Have your family members place an ice cube on their tongue. When they can hardly stand the coldness anymore, have them quickly replace the ice cubes with one of the treats. Ask them how the treat tastes now. (*Hint:* They probably won't be able to taste it because their tongues are too cold.)

### 4. SWEET OR NUMB?

Explain that it can be easy to think so much about our own needs and wants that we don't pay attention to the needs of others. Just as the ice cubes numbed our tongues, when our hearts are "numb," "cold," or "prideful," we can lose the ability to see or care about other people who need us.

In other words, when we focus on ourselves, we have a harder time recognizing the Lord's promptings to serve His children. For a time, it's like we've lost the ability to taste sweet things.

#### IT BEGINNETH TO BE DELICIOUS

Now for the good news. We can always relearn what we've forgotten. To illustrate this, get ready to hand out a final round of treats.

Once everyone's tongue has warmed up, eat the last treat. You should all be able to taste the delectable deliciousness with no problem.

Sometimes, learning to like service can take time—just like letting your tongue warm back up. So tell your family to not lose hope if they struggle. Just try one act of service at a time. Pretty soon it will begin to be "delicious" to you (see Alma 32:28).

So, the next time that couch starts to feel a bit too comfortable, take a moment to look around. Chances are you'll find a way to serve someone else—and that'll be a whole lot sweeter! **NE**

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