

SPIRITUAL GIFTS: THE PURPOSE

1 Corinthians 12:7; Romans 12:4-5; Acts 4:32-37

Parents Dig In

Dig In to the Bible

Read: 1 Corinthians 12:7; Romans 12:4-5; Acts 4:32-37

In This Passage: Because we all have spiritual gifts, we can serve each other! The Holy Spirit gives us gifts so we can work together to serve God and his church. In Acts, we see this happen as those in the church share what they have. A man named Barnabas sells his field to give more to the church.

Bible Point: The Holy Spirit gives us gifts to serve God.

Summary Verse: “There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit is the source of them all. There are different kinds of service, but we serve the same Lord” (1 Corinthians 12:4-5).

Dig Deeper

You'll Be Teaching: The Holy Spirit gives us gifts to serve God. Kids love to get involved in serving, but sometimes it's hard for them to know what they can do. Throughout this lesson, kids will have the opportunity to serve God and the church. Empower them to keep on serving!

Think About: How have you seen God work as you've served him by teaching kids?

Dig In to Prayer

Ask God to use the kids in your class in mighty ways as the Holy Spirit empowers them with gifts.

Quick Tip

You'll notice that Dig In often suggests you share your own stories before inviting kids to share. This is important for three main reasons: It sets the tone for vulnerability, causing kids to be more willing to open up; it makes you a “real” person to your kids so they can see God is working in your life; and, if nothing else, it gives kids time to think about how they could respond. Be sure you're ready to share examples of how God has used you to serve him

OPENING

Welcome

Introduce the Lesson

Say: **Today we're going to learn about how we can use spiritual gifts. Spiritual gifts are special skills God gives everyone who loves Jesus, through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit gives us gifts to serve God, so let's use them that way! Since serving food is one way to serve, let's use forks to remind us to use our gifts to serve.**

Share

Tell kids a chore you'd be willing to do for someone else.

Ask kids to share what chores they'd do for someone else.

Summarize

Open a Bible to 1 Corinthians 12 and say: **Doing chores for others is one way to serve. Let's find out how the Holy Spirit gives us gifts to serve God. We'll see in the Bible how the church served God and each other! The Bible isn't like other books; it's special. The Bible is one way God talks to us. God is here right now, ready to talk to you. Let's talk with him now.**

Pray, asking the Holy Spirit to help kids serve with their gifts.

T ALK-ABOUT VIDEO

The Family That Serves

Say: Today we're learning that the Holy Spirit gives us gifts to serve God. That means there's a big purpose to the gifts the Holy Spirit gives us! Let's watch a family that uses their gifts to serve God. Pay attention to what gifts you see in each family member.

Watch "The Family That Serves." [here](#)

- Ask:
- What gifts did you see in the different family members?
 - How were those gifts useful as they served?
 - What gifts have you seen in your own family members?
 - How could you all use your gifts together to serve God?

Say: Cooper is good at making new friends! He makes people feel welcome and loved. The dad is a good leader who could lead the service. Emery has compassion and helped a man who didn't smell good feel loved. They all have the gift of generosity, giving their time and resources to help people in need. And when they put all their gifts together, they served God in a really cool way! The Holy Spirit gives us gifts to serve God.

MUSIC VIDEO

"Ready to Serve" watch or download [here](#)

"To God Be the Glory" watch or download [here](#)

"Living by the Spirit" watch or download [here](#)

CORE BIBLE DISCOVERY

Spiritual Gifts: The Purpose (1 Corinthians 12:7; Romans 12:4-5; Acts 4:32-37)

Supplies

Bible
paper clip
spiritual gifts signs from last week

Describe the Purpose

Say: We've been learning about spiritual gifts—God-given abilities every Christian has. Today we're going to learn the purpose of spiritual gifts. Let's start by seeing how well we can guess ordinary items based on what they're used for. Hold up a paper clip and say: For example, if I were trying to get you to guess this item by describing its purpose, I might say, "If you have a report and you need to hold all the pages together, you could attach this to the corner. Or you could make a chain of several of them." I could not say the words paper or clip, since they're part of the answer!

Whisper each of the following household items to different kids, allowing time after each one for kids to describe its use so others can guess.

Tweezers
tissue
pencil
key

- Ask:
- Why did knowing the purpose of an item help you guess what it was?
 - How would you describe the purpose of spiritual gifts? Why do we have them?

Say: God tells us the exact purpose of spiritual gifts! Let's see what it is.

Read 1 Corinthians 12:7.

Say: We have spiritual gifts so we can help each other, which is a way of serving God. The Holy Spirit gives us gifts to serve God and each other!

Read the Story

Say: Soon after Jesus went back to heaven, the church started to grow. People who believed in Jesus were meeting together, and they used spiritual gifts to help and serve each other. As I read each verse, go to the sign that names a spiritual gift you think is shown in that verse. (We've listed suggested spiritual gifts in case kids are stumped, but let kids go to whichever signs they think are appropriate and explain why.)

Read Acts 4:32. (Giving)

Read Acts 4:33. (Teaching)

Read Acts 4:34-35. (Giving)

Read Acts 4:36. (Encouraging)

Read Acts 4:37. (Giving)

Ask: **We saw a few different gifts that were being used. What difference did these gifts make in the church?**

• **What do you think our church would look like if everyone lived like this Bible story describes?**

What if our town lived like this? our whole world?

Say: In this Bible story, a lot of people used the spiritual gift of giving. We don't know specifics of how Barnabas encouraged people, but since he was given that nickname, he must've had the gift of encouragement! The Holy Spirit gives us gifts to serve God. If we all used those gifts to serve God and help each other, the world would be a better place to live!

Make It Personal

Ask: **What talents do you have that you could use to serve God and help people?**

Say: Go to a sign that shows a quality you have that you could use to serve God. For example, maybe you think you're really kind or a good leader. Allow time for kids to go to the signs.

Say: Wow! Look at all the gifted people we have here. The Holy Spirit gives us gifts to serve God. You each have at least one gift you can use to serve God. Look at the sign you're standing near.

Ask: **Tell one way you could use that gift to help someone else and serve God.**

Kids can share with others near them; then have a few kids share with everyone.

Say: Everyone who believes in Jesus has a spiritual gift. The Holy Spirit gives us gifts to serve God. Let's see how spiritual gifts could serve their purpose in different situations.

Read the following situations, and have kids go to a sign that names a spiritual gift they think would be helpful in each situation. Then have kids share with others who picked the same sign how someone with that gift could use it in that situation. Don't look for right answers here; there may be more than one gift that would be useful! After kids have discussed with others at their sign, ask for a report from the kids at each of the signs. It's okay if you don't have time to get through the whole list.

- The church is hosting homeless people for dinner.
- The church had some pipes break and needs major repairs.
- Someone from the church is in the hospital.
- Someone who doesn't speak English visits the church.
- No one has volunteered to lead the second-grade class.
- Someone visits the church and starts crying.
- The church wants to start a ministry to reach out to people who live in nursing homes.
- The church is growing bigger and bigger, and we need to add on to the building.
- A new family started coming to church, and they don't have enough money for food and clothes.
- Someone comes to the church looking for counseling because they're going through a hard time.

Say: Thank you for sharing your ideas! Obviously you know that the Holy Spirit gives us gifts to serve God—and you just shared a lot of ideas for how people could use their gifts to serve God! The coolest part is that when you believe in Jesus, it's guaranteed that you have a gift you can use to serve God. You can be part of a really great community like the church in our Bible story. You can use your gifts to serve God at church and at school, home, or anywhere else you go!

DEEPER BIBLE

Am I Really Serving God When I Serve?

Supplies

Bibles
supplies for service project
options (see list in activity)
Paper
pens
basket

Easy Prep

We've suggested several service project ideas below. Narrow the list down to 5 or 6 that will work in your church, and gather any supplies you may need.

Set It Up

Say: **We're learning that the Holy Spirit gives us gifts to serve God. But we've also talked about serving other people. So which is it? Are we really serving God if we're serving other people? Let's dig in to that.**

Dig Deeper

Say: **As you listen to these verses, listen for how serving others could really be about serving God.**

Read 1 Peter 4:10-11.

Ask: • **How does serving others point to God?**

Say: **This verse talks about the attitude we can have when we serve—or when we do anything!**

Read Colossians 3:23.

Ask: • **What difference would it make when you serve if you really believed this verse?**

Say: **Jesus talked about this idea, too. Listen to what he said.**

Read Matthew 25:37-40.

Ask: • **What do you think Jesus meant when he said that giving someone food or showing a stranger hospitality was actually for him—for Jesus?**

Say: **The Holy Spirit gives us gifts to serve God, and when we serve others, that's one way of serving God! Let's put that into practice and serve God right now.**

Serve

Choose five or six options from the list below that kids can do at your church. Have kids vote on which ones they'd like to do. The top two choices will be the two you do, and kids can choose which one of those two to participate in. You can lead one service project while your adult or teen helper leads the other.

- Leave notes around the church to encourage people. (Supplies: paper, pens)
- Look around church grounds for trash and clean it up. (Supplies: trash bags)
- Pray for people in the church lobby. (No supplies)
- Pray for kids in the preschool class. (No supplies)
- Go read Bible books to children in the nursery. (Supplies: Bible picture books and communication with nursery staff)
- Leave a surprise thank-you banner in the staff offices. (Supplies: bulletin board paper, markers, tape)
- Prepare a snack for another class, then serve it. (Supplies: snack items)
- Write Bible verses on tissue boxes, and place the boxes around the lobby. (Supplies: tissue boxes, Bibles, markers)
- Look for sorting or folding jobs your church may need help with. (Supplies will vary)
- Clean bathroom mirrors. (Supplies: glass cleaner, paper towels)
- Prepare preschool crafts for next week. (Supplies will vary; coordinate with your preschool ministry)

Ask: • **Why did you choose the service project you did?**

• **What ideas did this experience give you for ways you can use your gifts to serve God?**

Have kids think of other practical ideas for how they can serve God throughout the week. Have each child write an idea on a sheet of paper, and collect the papers in a basket. Have each child pull out an idea from the basket, and challenge kids to serve God that way this week.

CRAFT

Something for You

Supplies

resealable plastic sandwich bags (1 per child)
gift-wrap scraps (or a variety of different wrapping paper)
transparent tape (several rolls)
gift bows (1 per child)
hand sanitizer or access to a sink
snacks
scissors (1 for every few kids)

Easy Prep

Make a sample craft to show kids



Make a Snack to Serve

Say: **We heard about some friends today who served each other with the gifts God had given them. By serving the people God loves, they also served God. The Holy Spirit gives us gifts to serve God and others, too! Let's each make a special gift we can use to serve a hungry friend.**

- Give each child a resealable plastic bag.
- Set out tape to share, and spread the wrapping paper in front of the kids.
- Encourage kids to cut wrapping paper shapes and tape them to the bags.
- Give each child a bow to add a finishing touch to the bag.
- Have kids clean their hands using hand sanitizer or a sink.
- Help kids put some of the classroom snack into their bags and zip them closed.

Talk About Serving

Share about a time you were really hungry and needed a snack.

Ask: • Tell me about someone you know who gets really hungry like I did. Kids may say a big brother gets hungry while playing baseball, a friend gets hungry when he comes over to play, or Mom gets hungry when she's running errands.

Say: **The next time we're around someone who's really hungry, we can share a special snack. We can use this gift to serve God by serving others!**

LIFE APPLICATION WRAP-UP

Pray for Servants

Bless Each Child

- Have kids brainstorm the names of people who serve at your church.
- This could include upfront people like pastors, worship leaders, and teachers; it could also include behind-the-scenes people, such as the people who do landscaping, clean the church, or set up chairs.
- Tell kids the names of the people who perform those tasks if you know their names. It's okay if you don't.
- When you have a good list, pray together for each person on it, thanking God for using their service.
- Thank kids for coming, and encourage them to come back next week.