



8

Service

We make a difference when we serve others.

POWER TEXT

"We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith" (Romans 12:6).

KEY REFERENCES

- Matthew 25:14-30
- *Christ's Object Lessons*, chap. 25, pp. 325-365
- *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 8, pp. 183-186
- student story on page 92 of this guide.

OUR BELIEFS

- No. 17, Spiritual Gifts and Ministries
- No. 21, Stewardship
- No. 11, Growing in Christ

OBJECTIVES**The students will:**

- **Know** that the Lord gives us talents to be used in serving others.
- **Feel** joy to be able to serve with the talents God has given them.
- **Respond** by using God's gifts in service.

Talents: Use Them or Lose Them



We serve God
when we use
our talents to
help others.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Jesus tells a parable about a man entrusting three servants with talents, each according to his ability. One hides his talent, the other two put their talents to work and double what they were given. The master returns and asks for an accounting. He praises the two servants who wisely used what they were given; he chastises the servant who hid his.

This is a lesson about service.

Jesus' parable of the talents is a clear call for us to use His gifts in service to Him. We miss a blessing in service when we fail to use our God-given talents. This lesson explores many of the ways in which we can use our gifts to become effective stewards.

Teacher Enrichment

"The talents, however few, are to be put to use. The question that most concerns us is not, How much have I received? but, What am I doing with that which I have? The development of all our powers is the first duty we owe to God and to our fellow men. No one who is not growing daily in capability and usefulness is fulfilling the purpose of life. In making a profession of faith in Christ we pledge ourselves to become all that it is possible for us to be as workers for the Master, and we should cultivate every faculty to the highest degree of perfection, that we may do the greatest amount of good of which we are capable.

"The Lord has a great work to be done, and He will bequeath the most in the future life to those who do the most faithful, willing service in the present life. The Lord chooses His own agents, and each day under different circumstances He gives them a trial in His plan of operation. In each true-hearted endeavor to work out His plan, He chooses His agents not because they are perfect but because, through a connection with Him, they may gain perfection.

"God will accept only those who are determined to aim high. He places every human agent under obligation to do his best" (*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 329, 330).

What am I doing with the talents I have been given? What areas could I develop more completely?

Welcome

Welcome students at the door and direct them to their seats. Ask them how their week has been. Encourage learners to study their Sabbath School lesson regularly, and use several minutes to debrief students on the previous week's lesson.

Ask: **What was the most interesting part of the Bible story? What activity did you find most helpful? Which activity was the most fun?** Invite students to share their experiences and/or the handiworks they created for Sabbath School during the week.

(The leader should be familiar with the previous lesson to be able to direct the discussion.) This is also a good time to have students recite the power text.

Have students begin the readiness activity of your choice. >>

Program notes

LESSON SECTION	MINUTES	ACTIVITIES	MATERIALS NEEDED
Welcome	Ongoing	Greet students at door. Ask about their week.	
1	10-15	A. <i>Hidden Talents</i>	Bibles, slips of paper
		B. <i>Blessed to Be a Blessing</i>	Bibles
		C. <i>Talent Scout</i>	Bibles, talent lists, pencils
* Prayer and Praise	15-20	See page 87. Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.	songbooks, world map, pushpins, offering plate/basket
2	15-20	Introducing the Bible Story	Bibles, weights
		Experiencing the Story	Bibles, copies of skit pp. 138, 139
		Exploring the Bible	Bibles, paper, pencils, white/chalkboard, markers/chalk
3	10-15	<i>Name That Talent</i>	paper, pencils
4	10-15	<i>Using Our Talents</i>	
* Closing		A. Prayer and Closing Comments	
		B. Reminder to Parents	
		C. Coming Up Next Week	

LESSON 8

1

READINESS ACTIVITIES

Select the activity or activities that are most appropriate for your situation.

A

Hidden Talents

Beforehand, write one talent (i.e., good listener, musician, speaker, helper, artist, writer, comforter, teacher, encourager, athlete) on each slip of paper, enough for each student. Fold them in half and hide them in the room. When the students enter, ask them to each find one "hidden talent."

Debriefing


Ask: **What talents did you find? Do you possess that talent?**

Say: **Sometimes your special abilities may seem hidden, or you are unsure of what it is God gave you. He gave everyone at least one special ability to use in His service. If you're unsure of what yours is, pray that He will help you see it clearly.** Allow students who know the power text to say it either individually or in group:

"We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith" (Romans 12:6).

Have the entire class repeat the power text together. Allow visitors and students who don't know it yet to read along. Affirm them for their effort. However, do not single out students by forcing everyone to say it, nor reprimand those who don't know it. Sabbath School is a place where students need to feel comfortable and accepted as they grow in God's grace.

Say: **Let's remember that**

 ***We serve God when we use our talents to help others.***

YOU NEED:

- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ slips of paper

B

Blessed to Be a Blessing

Divide the students into teams of three or four. Have each team select a person who'll be their gift. On "go," teams must share in their groups the qualities of that person and how he/she is or could be God's gift to someone. After one minute they will move on to another student and repeat the process of affirming that person for his/her God-given gifts, encouraging the young person to use those talents to serve God and others. The activity will continue until everyone in the group has been affirmed for ways he/she could be a blessing in making a difference in someone's life.

Debriefing


Ask: **What do you think the meaning of this game was? How are you a "gift"?**

Say: **Every person can dedicate their lives to be used as a "gift" to others. God asks us to serve Him by helping others and using our abilities to their fullest.**

If you have not done Readiness Activity A, review now with the students the power text as outlined in the previous activity.

"We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith" (Romans 12:6).

Say: **We are learning that**

 ***We serve God when we use our talents to help others.***

YOU NEED:

- ☐ Bibles

(Adapted from *Group's Best Junior High Meetings* [Loveland, Colo.: Thom Schultz Publications, Inc., 1989], vol. 2, p. 24. Used by permission.)

Prayer and Praise



Talent Scout

Beforehand, make a list of talents (i.e., sings, plays an instrument, encourages others, knits/sews, builds, good with fixing things, makes others laugh, reads well) to give to each student. Adjust the list to include hobbies that are relevant to your students. Say: **Go around to each other and have someone sign their name next to ONE talent they feel they possess. You must have a different name for each talent. Ask each person who signs your list if they have a talent that is not on the list. Note what it is.** Set a time limit, or go until the first person completes their list.

YOU NEED:

- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ talent lists
- ☐ pencils

Debriefing

Ask: **Who had** [name talent from the list]? Go through all the talents. **What other talents did you discover? We are all a unique mix of talents. What happens if you do not use your talents?** (You lose them.)

Say: **This is obvious if you have a musical talent and do not practice. The same applies to other talents.**

If you have not done Readiness Activity A, review now with the students the power text as outlined in activity A.

"We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith" (Romans 12:6).

 ***We serve God when we use our talents to help others.***

Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). If they have given you permission, share one or two special items from the student's Bible study during the week. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.

Suggested Songs

"Give Me Oil in My Lamp" (*He Is Our Song*, no. 139)

"We Are an Offering" (*He Is Our Song*, no. 136)

"Take These Hands" (*He Is Our Song*, no. 127)

Mission

Use *Adventist Mission for Youth and Adults* (go to www.juniorpowerpoints.org and click on MISSION) or another mission report available to you. For the mission story, have a map of the world where the students can identify the location of the mission story and compare it to where they are. You could use pushpins to mark where the mission story takes place.

Offering

Say: **God gives us many gifts. Our offerings are an opportunity to respond to God and thank Him for everything that He has given us.**

YOU NEED:

- ☐ offering plate/basket

Prayer

Say: **Let's stand in a circle to pray. I will begin by saying a talent that I am thankful for** (such as "encouragement"), **then everyone responds by saying, "Thank You, God, for all our talents."** Then the next person says a talent. **It does not have to be one of your own. Again the group responds, "Thank You, God, for all our talents."** Repeat this around the circle. Close with a prayer for the students' joys and sorrows, for the birthday and other special event celebrants, as well as for the visitors.

*Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.

2


BIBLE LESSON

YOU NEED:

Introducing the Bible Story

Bring different light weights to Sabbath School. Invite the students to lift them and guess how heavy they are. Say: **In Bible times, people had talents of money. In New Testament times a talent weighed between 58 and 80 pounds (26-36 kilograms) or x times heavier than the load you were trying to lift. Jesus told a story about a master who gave his servants talents. The talents can represent any gift or opportunity that God gives us to serve Him. Let's look again at our power text, Romans 12:6.**

"We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith" (Romans 12:6).

 **We serve God when we use our talents to help others.**

Accommodations for students with special needs:

Students with physical disabilities may not be able to lift the weights. Have them guess how much they weigh as they watch the other students lift the weights.

- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ weights

YOU NEED:

Experiencing the Story

Have the students take turns reading aloud Matthew 25:14-30. Then ask for five volunteers to read the skit on pages 138, 139 (if possible, arrange for your volunteers to have the script a week ahead so they can practice).

Debriefing

Ask: **Why do you think the master was so hard on the lazy servant? What excuses do people have for not using the talents they have? Are all talents obvious? Can some be developed? What are some talents other than skills?** (Time, money, opportunities.)

- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ copies of skit (pp. 138, 139)

APPLYING THE LESSON

Exploring the Bible

Divide the students into two groups, having one group find Romans 12:6-8 and the other 1 Corinthians 12:8-10.

Say: **Each group should make a list of the spiritual gifts listed in their texts.**

Ask: **What spiritual gifts did you find?** Write them on the board and underline any that appear twice. **Are there any that surprise you? Why do you think prophesying was listed twice? Is it more important than the other gifts? What is prophesying?**

Say: **Prophesying is the power to speak authoritatively for God and is not limited to predicting future events. It is talk that builds up people's faith and gives knowledge and explanation about God.** (Point out to the students that Ellen White is not the only person given the gift of prophecy.) **God gives us all gifts. Based on our lesson what is the most important thing about our spiritual gifts?** (That we use them.)

Say: **Spiritual gifts and talents are not necessarily the same thing. But with either talents or spiritual gifts, we want to serve God and others.**

 ***We serve God when we use our talents to help others.***

YOU NEED:

- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ white/chalkboard
- ☐ paper
- ☐ pencils
- ☐ markers/chalk

Name That Talent

Hand out a sheet of paper. Say: **Write your name down the side of the page like an acrostic. Swap your paper with someone else. Write a talent or gift that the person on the paper has, beginning with one of the letters of their name. Then pass the paper on. If you are the last one to write a talent against a letter of their name, pass it back to the person whose name is on the paper.**

Afterwards say: **We all have gifts, some big and some small, but each is enhanced and multiplied when it is used in God's service. Remember,**

 ***We serve God when we use our talents to help others.***

Debriefing

Ask: **Who is using their gifts? In what other ways might they use them?**

YOU NEED:

- ☐ paper
- ☐ pencils

Sample of an Acrostic

Draws pretty pictures for the people at the nursing home.

Often shares her lunch with me.

Never calls me names.

Not a fair-weather friend.

Asks me to be on her ball team when we're at recess.

LESSON 8

4

SHARING THE LESSON


Using Our Talents

Ask students to share how they used their talents during the past week to help someone.

Debriefing

Ask: **How did the people you helped respond to your service? What did you learn about the benefit of using your talents?**

Say: **Let's say the power point together:**

 ***We serve God when we use our talents to help others.***



Closing

Prayer and closing comments:

Say: **God has given us many different talents. Let's pray and ask God to help us use our talents to bless those around us and to bring glory to Him.**

Reminder to parents:

Say: **Check out the student Bible study guide to find Parents' Pages for your use in family worship, or however you wish to use them to spiritually guide your children. You may listen to the podcast of the lesson online at www.juniorpowerpoints.org/podcast.php?channel=1.**

Coming up next week:

Say: **Jesus talks about sheep and goats. We serve others as we become more like Jesus.**

Notes

LESSON 8

Student lesson

Talents: Use Them or Lose Them

Think back to when you were learning to ride a bicycle. Did you manage it the first time? No? Some things take time to learn to do. In the same way we need to practice using our talents. The more we practice the better we will be and the more we can do to serve Jesus. Let's imagine the story of three servants who were given talents by their master.

Jotham, Korazin, and Lamech looked at each other. They stood waiting for their master. Why had the master sent for all three of them? They were the three most senior servants in the household, but it was unusual for the master to send for all three at the same time. Something was up.

Jotham and Korazin stood speculating about what the master had in mind when suddenly Lamech caught a glimpse of the master striding toward the house. "Here he comes," he whispered to the others.

"There you all are," said the master with a smile. All three felt much better. The master was fair, but when he was not happy about something, he let you know.

"I have had an unexpected message today, and I have to go away on business. I will be away for some time. I have been watching each of you closely and feel that you are ready for some more responsibility. So I am going to give each of you some money to use while I am away. When I come back, I shall expect you to account for it."

Jotham, Korazin, and Lamech looked at the master not knowing what to say. The master continued, "Jotham, here are five talents of gold. You have the most experience, so I am giving you most."

"Korazin, I am giving you two talents of gold. Use them wisely and well."

"Lamech, I know you are young, but this is your chance to prove what you can do. Here is one talent of gold. Now, gentlemen, I look forward to seeing you in a few months and hearing a good report."

The three men left and went their separate ways. Each one was wondering what was the best thing to do with the money.

Jotham invested his in a new housing project. Korazin bought some land and planted a good cash crop. Lamech did not know what to do. He saw what the others had done and shook his head. *What will the master say if the houses don't sell? What will the master say if the crops fail and there is no profit? What should I do with my talent?* At last he hit on a fail-proof plan.

Late one night he went out into his garden and dug a big hole. He buried the talent and planted a small bush to mark the spot.

Time went by. Lamech felt a bit uneasy when all Jotham's houses sold for good prices. Korazin had an excellent crop and doubled his money. Lamech wondered if he should have done something more. Then he shrugged. At least he would not have to face the master's wrath for having lost his money.

Then the news came. The master had come home and wanted to see all three again. They all arrived at the appointed time. Jotham and Korazin looked relaxed and pleased. Lamech looked just a little nervous.

"Well," said the master, "how have things gone?"

Jotham cleared his throat. "I in-

vested in the new building project on the edge of town and doubled your money. Here are 10 talents of gold."

"Well done, good and faithful servant!" said the master and beamed. "You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things." Then he turned to Korazin.

"How did you do, Korazin?"

Korazin said, "I knew the extra houses would mean more people, so I bought a plot of land and grew some crops. They were good, and I also have doubled your money. Here are four talents of gold."

The master's smile grew even wider, and he said, "Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things." He looked at Lamech. "Now, Lamech, have you also doubled your talent? What did you do?"

Lamech looked down at the floor and wished that he were anywhere but there. "I . . . well . . . it was like this . . ."

The master looked impatient. Lamech took a deep breath and said, "I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. So I was afraid and I went out and hid your gold in the ground."

The master turned red in the face. "You did what?"

"I . . . I buried it," stammered Lamech.

"You wicked, lazy servant!" shouted the master. "You should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest."

Next the master ordered that Lamech's money be given to Jotham, saying: "For whoever has will be given

KEY REFERENCES

- Matthew 25:14-30
- *Christ's Object Lessons*, chap. 25, pp. 325-365
- *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 8, pp. 183-186
- Our Beliefs nos. 17, 21, 11

more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them." Then he had Lamech removed from his position. (See Matthew 25:21-29)

Now Lamech understood that the master was not interested in what happened to the talent. All he was interested to see was how each servant would improve his skills by using his talent. But it was too late.

After Lamech left, the master turned to Jotham and Korazin and said, "Well done. Let's have a meal, and you can tell me more about what you have been doing."

POWER TEXT

"We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith" (Romans 12:6).

POWER POINT

We serve God when we use our talents to help others.

Sabbath

DO Do the activity on page 61.

Sunday

READ Read Matthew 25:14, 15 and this week's story, "Talents: Use Them or Lose Them."

WRITE Draw a gift box and write on it the power text.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to reveal to you the gifts or talents He has given you.

Monday

READ Read Matthew 25:16-18.

REFLECT What are your talents and how are you helping them grow?

LIST List your talents in your Bible study journal.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to impress you with His plan for your growth.

Tuesday

READ Read Matthew 25:19-25.

EXERCISE Run or do some hard physical exercise.

COMPARE Compare the need for physical exercise and the need to exercise your talents.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Pray that God will show you a good "exercise routine" for the abilities He has given you.

Wednesday

READ Read Matthew 25:26-28.

THINK Reflect on the talents God has given you.

DO Use your talents to help someone today (i.e., cook, cut the grass, look after a sibling).

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to reveal other talents you may have.

Thursday

READ Read Luke 19:12-19.

RESEARCH Research Bible stories about people multiplying their abilities by using them as they could.

ASK Interview your friends and family to find out how they keep their talents in top condition.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Pray for opportunities to use your talents.

Friday

READ Read Luke 19:20-27.

SHARE Share what talents you appreciate in each other.

DO Use your talents to plan a surprise for your family.

SAY Repeat from memory the power text.

PRAY Pray that each person in the family will make the most of their talents.