

THE GIFT OF MEN

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: EPHESIANS 4:10-16



The STORY

Read about the gift ministries of the church in Ephesians 4:10-16.

Please note: *The discussion questions in the following sections are written to serve as a guide in teaching our youngest children. Three to six year olds are not going to be able to answer these questions like their older brothers and sisters. Please refer to the God's Story Preschool Curriculum Outline for additional ideas.*

After reading the story, use the following questions to involve the children in a discussion.

- Paul tells us that God gave us special men to help us. What are they called? (Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers.)
- Why did he give them to us? (To equip us or to help us be a part of the church.)
- Paul tells us that these men are to help us do the work of ministry. What does God want people in the church to do? (God wants people to learn about the Gospel and share it with others. God wants us to help each other as we do this. God wants us to worship Him and do the work of ministry to honor Him.)

CRAFT QUESTIONS

Coloring sheets have been provided that exemplify today's lesson: a pastor speaking from a pulpit. Engage the children by asking:

- Why is it important that we listen to the men that God gives to teach and lead us? (They can help us to follow God's Word.)
- Pastors are called shepherds in the New Testament. What do they do that is like a real shepherd? (Pastors feed the people God's Word just like a real shepherd takes the sheep to the pasture for food. Pastors protect the church from dangerous teaching and false teachers just like real shepherds protect the sheep from wolves. Pastors care for the people for God just like a real shepherd cares for the sheep for his master.)
- What does it mean when Paul says we can be tossed to and fro by the waves? (We are like ships in a storm that can get tossed to and fro by the waves.)

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SNACK QUESTIONS

While the children are eating the snack, engage the children by asking:

- What did the apostles in the New Testament do? (They planted churches and cared for these new churches. They also helped the churches with their problems.)
- Do we still have men serving the church this way today? (Yes, God still wants us to start new churches. We won't stop this activity until Jesus returns again.)
- Do you know how any other churches have been started? (You can start with telling them the story of how your church was started and how the pastor and/or apostle working with your local church helped make it fruitful. If your church has planted other churches you can share those stories as well.)

WHERE IS the Gospel?

Please use the following comments connecting today's lesson to the Gospel to help inform your understanding and serve you by aiding your preparation for class. Remember, we want to do more than present disconnected Bible stories and lessons to our young children. We want them to understand how each story in the Bible plays a part in God's greater plan of redemption.

The purpose behind giving these gift ministries to the church is outlined by Paul in verses 12 and 13. He tells us that they are given for the building up of the body of Christ until we attain unity and the knowledge of the Son of God.

The most important knowledge of the Son of God is what the Son accomplished at Calvary and what that means for our lives. Christians who recognize the amazing sacrifice of Christ to pay the penalty of our sins will not be fooled by the competing voices of the world. The only answer to our dilemma as sinners is the work of Christ. Other voices might sound comforting, but ultimately will not serve to remove our sin and guilt. Once we understand the Gospel, our humble opinion of ourselves along with a thankful heart will ground us firmly on the Gospel and no manner of waves or wind will try to dislodge us. To help us God equips men to teach and care for us along the way.

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY

BE A DOER OF THE WORD

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.