

Thirteenth Sunday in Kingdomtide/Thanksgiving Sunday/Stewardship Sunday

**Gathering the Fruit of the Spirit**

*Old Testament: Isaiah 57:14-16* (NRSV)

A Promise of Help and Healing

<sup>14</sup>It shall be said, 'Build up, build up, prepare the way, remove every obstruction from my people's way.' <sup>15</sup>For thus says the high and lofty one who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, and also with those who are contrite and humble in spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite. <sup>16</sup>For I will not continually accuse, nor will I always be angry; for then the spirits would grow faint before me, even the souls that I have made.

*New Testament: Ephesians 5:17-21* (NRSV)

<sup>17</sup>So do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. <sup>18</sup>Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, <sup>19</sup>as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts, <sup>20</sup>giving thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Christian Household

<sup>21</sup>Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ.

**2 Peter 1:5-7** (NRSV)

<sup>5</sup>For this very reason, you must make every effort to support your faith with goodness, and goodness with knowledge, <sup>6</sup>and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with endurance, and endurance with godliness, <sup>7</sup>and godliness with mutual affection, and mutual affection with love.

**1 Corinthians 12:1-11** (NRSV)

Spiritual Gifts

<sup>1</sup>Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed. <sup>2</sup>You know that when you were pagans, you were enticed and led astray to idols that could not speak. <sup>3</sup>Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking by the Spirit of God ever says 'Let Jesus be cursed!' and no one can say 'Jesus is Lord' except by the Holy Spirit. <sup>4</sup>Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; <sup>5</sup>and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; <sup>6</sup>and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. <sup>7</sup>To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. <sup>8</sup>To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, <sup>9</sup>to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, <sup>10</sup>to another, the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. <sup>11</sup>All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.

*General Concept: The ministries of church reflect the presence of the Spirit in its life and work.*

*N/K/YE:* **The Spirit of God is present in us.**

*ME/OE:* **The Spirit of God is reflected through the works of the church.**

*Y:* **The ministries of the church manifest the fruits of God's Spirit.**

*A:* **The vitality of the church ministries reflects the presence of God's Spirit.**

*Exegesis of the Biblical References*

The text of Isaiah 57:14-16, a text from the post exilic era, signifies God's assurance to the contrite and the humble in spirit. The text reiterates the truth of God's steadfast compassion and love for His people always showing mercy to those who remain humble and contrite even in the face of various temptations they have experienced in their history. Verse 16 says; "For I will not contend for ever nor will I always be angry; for from me proceeds the spirit, and I have made the breath of life." God's compassion and graciousness will always overrule divine anger and even the demand for divine justice for those who fall short of God's expectations. For how could God contend with His own creation and remain angry with His own people whom God created from His own image and likeness?

God created all of creation and have blessed it all and described it all as good. Creation, including humanity are all bearers of the mark of the divine creator having been blessed by God. However, because of the gift of freedom given also by the creator, the human being has been tempted on major occasions to decide in favor of what is wrong and lived lives that are completely against the will of the creator. Thus, the spirit of wickedness and self-centered stubbornness of God's people emerged and the people led by their ruling elite started committing evil against each other and forgot and ignored their ethical covenant obligations before God.

The people become unholy and ungodly before the presence of God with acts of injustice and social abuse especially against the poor and the powerless of the land and idolized the wealth and politics of foreign powers. They then suffered the consequences of their wicked ways and went through the pain and agony of the exile experience. There in Babylon they became so desperate and began to realize the gravity of what they have done, how far they have strayed from the way of the Lord, and with the help of their religious leaders who were exiled with them, they began the arduous task of humbling themselves in deep repentance and contrition, returning to the faith of their ancestors, pleading once more to their God for forgiveness and restoration.

On the other hand, God who remains holy and merciful remembered His promises to their ancestors who had also shown weaknesses in various ways but have learned to humble themselves before God and have always tried to walk according to God's just and righteous will. Being faithful to His covenant promises to them God would always remain compassionate to those who indeed humble and contrite themselves before the Lord, for our God is a God of life and love and not a God of cruel vengeance.

Ephesians 5:17-21 reminds us therefore, in response to what God has done for us not to be foolish in the way we live our daily lives, but to live always in accordance with the ethical and moral demands of a life transformed and forgiven by God, to always discern and know the will of God for the good of the community, to be filled with the spirit of God in everything we do as a body united by one faith and to always give thanks to the Lord with hymns and spiritual songs whenever and wherever we worship God. This will be our distinct witness before the rest of the world as we carry on with our mission as a household, a fellowship called by God. According to 2 Peter 1:5-7, we are to exert every effort to manifest our faith with all the virtues that will shape the life of the community as one that has been molded ultimately by the spirit of love, God's love for all of us and our love for each other as fellow children of one creator. This is what will make us strong as a body of believers, able and empowered to carry on the task of continuing Christ's mission for the transformation of our society and of the whole creation itself.

*Companion Guide for the Teachers and other End-users*

The various ministries display a rich harvest of the fruit of the Spirit from the orchard of a church which is faithful and loyal to Christ. The Greek word ministry, diakonia, means service. The forms of service will vary according to the social circumstances where the church or a congregation is located. The needs in a rural context, for example, may be few but very basic. Due to a severe lack of cultural opportunities in the area, the task of educating and equipping the members to effectively respond to the needs of the members and the community should be a top priority. At the other end, highly urbanized areas pose a different set of challenges to the church, such as the diminished physical presence of parents aggravated by the pervasive influence of computer gadgets on the minds of children and youth. The integral functions of the church—worship, preaching, teaching, pastoral care, fellowship, stewardship, community service, social concern—should take into account the particularities of the social context.

The various ministries of the church introduce to the wider society futuristic images of the reality of the kingdom that is to come. The church's witness to the wider world is its life and work which is sustained, animated, and governed by the Spirit.

More than that, however, the church is needed in contribute to an on-going wider critique of the government's development strategy that fosters overseas employment as a major locomotive of economic development. It is a strategy prescribed by powerful foreign governments to resource-rich but underdeveloped countries, which in reality, serves the greed of giant transnational capital at the expense of the local populations. This strategy drives landless and small farmers to the cities where job-generating local manufacturing industries are abandoned in favor of the more lucrative economic activities like infrastructure projects, import-export, finance and banking, information and communications and entertainment. These types of industries may raise the nation's Gross National Product but makes only a minimal dent on a populous nation's massive problem of unemployment. This is the basic reality behind the mass exodus of Filipinos to find employment overseas.

Justice for the nation, for all sectors of Philippine society and for the OFWs in particular is for the church a matter of faith and loyalty to the Lord.

## Nursery/Kindergarten/Younger Elementary Levels

### I. Objectives

At the end of the session, the learners are expected to:

1. explain the presence of the Holy Spirit in us;
2. name the spiritual gifts received from God;
3. tell how these gifts are used to help others; and
4. commit to thank God for these gifts and use them to serve others.

### II. Concept: The Spirit of God is present in us.

**Materials:** The Holy Bible (preferably NRSV), materials used in the activities

### III. Learning Experiences

#### A. Opening Worship

1. Welcome time
2. Opening prayer: "Dear God, thank you for many blessings that you have given to us. Thank you for the sunshine and the rain, for trees and flowers around us, and for birds and other animals. But most of all, we thank you for loving us and bringing us here in Sunday school. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."
3. Opening song: "This Little Light of Mine"  
This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine.  
This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine.  
This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine.  
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine!  
Hide it under a bushel, NO! I'm gonna let it shine.  
All around the neighborhood, I'm gonna let it shine.  
Don't let Satan put it out! I'm gonna let it shine.  
Let it shine 'til Jesus comes. I'm gonna let it shine.

#### B. Getting Ready

1. Prepare small transparent bags with candies of different colors, shapes, and sizes. Give each child a bag. Let them taste two or three candies. Then ask them to describe their observations. Tell the class that these candies are like the talents that we have.
2. Tell the class to say some of their talents. You may ask the class to mimic their talents and let the other children guess these talents. As they mention these talents, write them on the board for later use.

#### C. Learning Time

1. Wrap nine boxes. Prepare posters of the nine spiritual gifts (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control). Put inside box each of the posters of nine spiritual gifts.
2. **For N/K:** Paul talks about the spiritual gifts that we have just finished talking about. He says that these gifts are like the boxes. To know the gifts is to open the boxes and accept all the gifts.
3. **For YE:** Say: Paul writes to the Christians at Corinth that God has given each Christian two vitally important gifts. The first is the **gift of faith in Jesus Christ, his work of redemption, and thus forgiveness of sin**. The second is the **gift of one**

**or more special abilities, which are to be used for the purpose of unifying the body of Christ and for the growth of God's Kingdom.** These abilities are called spiritual gifts given to us by God. Like other presents, it is impossible to fully appreciate and make use of our spiritual gifts until they have been opened.

3. Call a child to unwrap each of the nine boxes. Let the children called to unwrap these boxes stand in front of the class and together show the posters. Ask the other children to read all the nine spiritual gifts.
4. Go back to the list of talents and ask the class how of these talents are made possible by the spiritual gifts. Examples: Listening to others (patience, goodness); Singing, dancing, drawing (love, joy); Helping others in their school work (kindness, joy, love); etc.
5. Read to the class <sup>4</sup>Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; <sup>5</sup>and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; <sup>6</sup>and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone.” (1 Corinthians 12:4-6).

*D. Deepening Activity/Sharing Time*

1. As our first gift, God gave us the gift of faith in Jesus Christ. What can we do to tell others about this gift? (Any chance we have, we tell to others that we believe in Jesus Christ and we will follow him. We can sing praises. We can make artworks showing our trust in him.)
2. All of us received a special gift from God through the Holy Spirit.
  - a. How do we feel about it? (Happy, excited, thankful)
  - b. How can we show that we can we are thankful for these gifts? (We share our blessings to others. We do our work at home and in school well. We plant trees. We keep the rivers clean.)
  - c. How can we show that we are a part of the body of Christ? (We help in the programs of the church. We attend Sunday school. We join in the choir. We help the church workers by being an usher.)
  - d. How can we help in building God's kingdom? (First, we show others that we are thankful of God's gift of faith in Jesus Christ. We serve others.)
3. Tell the class to sing again the song “This Little Light of Mine”.

*E. Discovering the Biblical Truth*

Ask: How do we show that the Spirit of God is present in us?

*F. Applying the Biblical Truth*

1. Teach the memory verses: “Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; <sup>5</sup>and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; <sup>6</sup>and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone.” (1 Corinthians 12:4-6) Teach only verse 4 to the N/K class.
2. **For N/K:** Give each child a sheet of paper with the nine spiritual gifts. Suggest a fruit for each of them and let the children color these fruits. Then ask them to say something about their work.
3. **For YE:** Reflect together about gifts received from parents, friends, teachers and relatives. Let them talk about these gifts and why are these given to them (They are loved). Let them recall what their parents remind them to say when they receive a gift (Thank you.) Then let them apply this to God's gifts to them. Let the children say: “Thank you, God for the gift of \_\_\_\_\_. I will use it to serve others.”

G. *Closing Worship*

1. Tell the class to recite the memory verses.
2. Offering: Instead of passing the offering plate, let the children line up to bring their offering to the front.
3. Closing songs: "Give Thanks" and a good-bye song  
"Give Thanks"  
*Give thanks with a grateful heart, give thanks to the Holy One.  
Give thanks for what the Lord Jesus Christ has done.  
And now let the weak say, "I am strong."  
Let the poor say, "I am rich."  
Because of what the Lord Has done for us, give thanks.*
4. Closing prayer: "Dear God, thank you for all the blessings you have given to each of us—food, shelter, clothing. Help us to use this to be kind, gentle and good to others. This is our prayer in Jesus' name. Amen."

## Middle and Older Elementary Levels

### I. Objectives

At the end of the session, the learners are expected to:

1. list the spiritual gifts received from God;
2. describe how these gifts are used to help others;
3. commit to thank God for these gifts and use them to serve others; and
4. explain how the Spirit of Christ is reflected in the work of the church.

**II. Concept:** The Spirit of God is reflected through the works of the church.

**Materials:** The Holy Bible (preferably NRSV), worksheets, materials needed in the activities

### III. Learning Experiences

#### A. Opening Worship

1. Welcome time
2. Opening prayer: Dear God, thank you for many blessings that you have given to us. Thank you for the sunshine and the rain, for trees and flowers around us, and for birds and other animals. But most of all, we thank you for loving us and bringing us here in Sunday school. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.
3. Opening song: "This Little Light of Mine"  
This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine.  
This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine.  
This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine.  
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine!  
Hide it under a bushel, NO! I'm gonna let it shine.  
All around the neighborhood, I'm gonna let it shine.  
Don't let Satan put it out! I'm gonna let it shine.  
Let it shine 'til Jesus comes. I'm gonna let it shine.

#### B. Getting Ready

1. Prepare the class to do the activity "Every Job is Important!" Tell the class to list the things they do at home and in school. Make sure that each learner has listed at least two jobs. Let them read what they have written.
2. Ask the pupils what could happen if they fulfill the job or fail to do the job assigned to them. Encourage them to talk about the importance of fulfilling one's responsibility.

#### C. Learning Time

Divide the class into three groups. Assign each group any of the following biblical references. After they have read the verses, let them paraphrase each verse. Expect the sentences under each biblical text.

1. Ephesians 5:17-21
  - a. To be wise is to understand God's will.
  - b. There are many ways of demonstrating being filled by the spirit: not to be drunk with wine; sing praises to God in our hearts, giving thanks to God for everything, and helping one another in reverence for Christ.

2. 2 Peter 1:5-7
  - a. Exert all efforts to grow in godliness.
  - b. Be diligent in demonstrating your faith in Jesus Christ by using knowledge in Christ to show goodness, self-control, endurance, mutual affection and love for others.
3. 1 Corinthians 12:1-11
  - a. Refrain from worshipping idols because this is the work of those who do not know God.
  - b. God's gift to us is our faith in his begotten Son, Jesus Christ and through his Holy spirit has gifted each of us spiritual gifts to be used to serve God and others for unifying the body of Christ and for building up God's Kingdom.
  - c. The Holy Spirit has given a variety of gifts, services, and activities.
  - d. These gifts are given for the common good.
  - e. To God's believers, these gifts are given: wisdom, faith, healing, performing miracles, discernment of spirit, and proclaiming Christ.
  - f. All of these gifts, services and activities are activated by the Spirit of God just as God wills.

*D. Deepening Activity/Sharing Time*

Discuss the lesson. Ask these questions.

1. Read 1 Corinthians 12:1. Why did Paul give the Corinthians advice about spiritual gifts? (Paul does not want the Corinthians to be uninformed.)
2. Read 1 Corinthians 12:2. Describe the people of Corinth when Paul write this.(Soem of them were pagans who have been enticed to worship idols.)
3. Read Ephesians 5:17. How can we avoid being foolish? (By understanding the will of God)
4. Read 1 Corinthians 12:3. Why can someone speaking by the Spirit of God not say, "Jesus be cursed"? (The Holy Spirit will not allow it. The Holy Spirit is the only one who can say, Jesus is Lord' But Satan will encourage us to curse Jesus.)
5. Read 1 Corinthians 12:4-6. Are all gifts given the same? Why or Why not? Do you agree in unity in diversity? Why or Why not?
6. Read Ephesians 5:17-20. What are the ways of living one's life wisely? (Understand the will of God. Do not get drunk with wine. Sing praises to God. Give thanks to God always in the name of Jesus Christ.)
7. Read 2 Peter 1:5-7. What is Peter's advice on growing in godliness? (Be disignet in supporting one's faith. Use the knowledge of Jesus Christ in serving others.
8. Read 1 Corinthians 12:7. Who is given the manifestation of the Spirit? (To everyone whose motive is to serve god and others for the common good.)
9. Read 1 Corinthians 12:8-10. Enumerate the spiritual gifts described by Paul. Of these spiritual gifts, which gift do you think you have received?
10. Read 1 Corinthians 12:11. Who determines how the gifts are distributed? (The Holy Spirit)

*E. Discovering the Biblical Truth*

Ask: Hoes does the church reflect the presence of the Holy Spirit in the church? (Through the church's programs and ministries)



*F. Applying the Biblical Truth*

1. Teach the memory verses: "Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses." (1 Corinthians 12: 4-6, 11)
2. **For ME:** Tell the class to tell the difference between presents as rewards and presents as tools for service. Have them recall the things they receive as recognition for their good work. Emphasize that these presents are rewards. Let them realize that the presents in the form of spiritual gifts are the tools they will use to serve God and others. Have them make individual plans of using their spiritual gift to be of service to others in bringing joy and peace. Let them end their plan with this prayer: Father, I thank you for giving me the gift of Jesus. Thank you for letting the Holy Spirit give me the special gift of \_\_\_\_\_ (state the gift) .I pray for your guidance in using this gift to serve \_\_\_\_\_ (name the recipient) according to your will. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.
3. **For OE:** Divide the class into four groups. Tell each group to make a gratitude tree. Provide the necessary materials. Give them the following insights that will help them in making the tree. We thank God for blessings of food, clothing, shelter, and other needs in life. We thank God for the talents and spiritual gifts we received. Have them prepare leaves of varied colors and write the blessings they have received. Then have them prepare different fruits and label them according to the spiritual gift received and how they can use them to serve others. Have them decorate their tree with these leaves and fruits. Call on each group to explain their work.

*G. Closing Worship*

1. Tell the class to recite the memory verses.
2. Offering: Instead of passing the offering plate, let the children line up to bring their offering to the front.
3. Closing songs: "Give Thanks" and a good-bye song  
"Give Thanks"  
*Give thanks with a grateful heart, give thanks to the Holy One.*  
*Give thanks for what the Lord Jesus Christ has done.*  
*And now let the weak say, "I am strong."*  
*Let the poor say, "I am rich."*  
*Because of what the Lord Has done for us, give thanks.*
4. Closing prayer: "Dear God, thank you for all the blessings you have given to each of us—food, shelter, clothing. Help us to use this to be kind, gentle and good to others. This is our prayer in Jesus' name. Amen."

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## Youth Level

### I. Objectives

At the end of the session, the learners are expected to:

1. explain how the ministries of the church reflect the fruit of the Holy Spirit;
2. describe the spiritual gifts received from God and express one's gratitude for these gifts;
3. explain how the spiritual gifts given to each believer help in serving others; and
4. commit to thank God for these gifts and use them to serve others.

### II. Concept: The ministries of the church manifest the fruits of God's Spirit.

**Materials:** The Holy Bible (preferably NRSV), worksheets

### III. Learning Experiences

#### A. Opening Worship

1. Welcome time
2. Opening prayer: "Dear God, we thank you for the many talents and gifts that you have given to each of us. Give us the wisdom to understand your purpose in each of us and the willingness and ability to use these gifts in serving you and others. This is our prayer in Jesus' name. Amen. "
3. Opening song: "Ipakig-ambit Mo/To Others Share Your Many Gifts" (HFJ # 299)

#### B. Getting Ready

1. Prepare the class to do the activity "Every Job is Important!" Tell the class to list the things they do at home and in school. Make sure that each learner has listed at least two jobs. Let them read what they have written.
2. Ask the pupils what could happen if they fulfill the job or fail to do the job assigned to them. Encourage them to talk about the importance of fulfilling one's responsibility.

#### C. Learning Time

1. Divide the class into four groups. Assign each group with anyone of these references (Isaiah 57:14-16, Ephesians 5:17-21, 2 Peter 1:5-7, and 1 Corinthians 12:1-11). Tell each group to brainstorm what they understand with each text. Have them share their insights to the big group.
2. After the reports, discuss the insights. Expect the following from the discussion.
  - a. God lives in high places. God lives in humble hearts. When we have humble hearts, God will revive us. (Isaiah 57:15).When we trust God and humble ourselves before him, the best is yet to come.
  - b. God gives each person different gifts and talents. The nine spiritual gifts are freely given by God through the Holy Spirit. Expected reaction: We cannot boast or take credit for our talents and spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:4-8). God gives us gifts to use in serving others (1 Corinthians 12:7).
  - c. Christians are known by their fruit (2 Peter 1:5-7). Peter sets forth a "**deliberate, disciplined approach to spiritual growth.**" Since God has given spiritual riches to us in Christ through the Holy Spirit, it is our responsibility to grow in godliness.
  - d. Paul, in his letter to the Church at Ephesus tell Christians to be wise (Ephesians 5:15-21) and not to be fools. God helps the wise to develop their spiritual gifts. God gives us opportunities to use them to serve others.

- e. All the spiritual gifts are activated by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:11) and that these gifts are to be used to serve God and others (Ephesians 5:21). When each person uses the gifts God has given him or her, the body of Christ works properly.
- f. The Greek word ministry, diakonia, means service. The forms of service will vary according to the social circumstances where the church or a congregation is located.

*D. Deepening Activity/Sharing Time*

1. Isaiah used the words high and humble. Compare them in terms of position of God and human beings. (God is supreme. Human beings can never reach the supremacy of God. But God, though almighty, lives in the lowly hearts of people as long as they have humble hearts.) Is this too good to be true?
2. Peter mentioned the need for Christians to grow in godliness.
  - a. How can a right motivation help us to grow in godliness? (Right motivation in the Christian life is essential! God's grace as shown to us in Jesus Christ is the right motivation to grow spiritually. While it is right to desire God's blessing on our life, our family, and our work, the right motivation behind that desire should be, "God, I want your blessing so that my life will bring glory to your name! You set your love on me and saved me when I was in the gutter of sin. You called me out of darkness into your marvelous light. Now, Lord, I want to grow in godliness so that my life proclaims your excellencies (1 Pet. 2:9)!")
  - b. How can diligence help us to grow in godliness? (To be diligent in Christ, one has to be eager, earnest, zealous, persevering, and struggling in doing his work. Peter tells us to make every effort to consider our faith in Jesus Christ as our foundation in serving God and to use God-given gifts in serving others. God has given us the necessary provisions and is working powerfully in us. For our part, we need to will and work for his good pleasure, especially in godly relationships.
3. Paul reminded the Ephesians to live wisely since Christ is in us and through the Holy Spirit, God gifted us with spiritual gifts. Read the following and share your thoughts on how these things can help us live wisely.
  - a. Using the time for good purpose instead of wasting it on shallow exercises
  - b. Using one's understanding of God's will to do things that will please God
  - c. Being filled with the Spirit to bear his fruits
  - d. Singing spiritual songs, making melody to the Lord with our hearts
  - e. Giving thanks to God recognizing how he blesses our lives and walks with us
  - f. Submitting to one another, and respecting other's gifts rather than scrambling for supremacy
  - g. Having reverence for Christ rather than blaspheming God
4. Why does God care so much about the downtrodden and the contrite?
5. Do you and your congregation care for the downtrodden and contrite with the same intensity?

*E. Discovering the Biblical Truth*

Ask: How do the ministries of the church manifest the fruits of God's Spirit?

*F. Applying the Biblical Truth*

1. Teach the memory verses: "Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses." (1 Corinthians 12: 4-6, 11)
2. Draw from the class the uses of quilts (table runner, curtain, blanket) Some quilts are decorative in nature and some are used to keep persons warm. Tell the class that they are making a quilt, God's service quilt. Let them think of how they can use their spiritual gifts to serve others. Prepare some cloth material cut into squares of the same size. Let each student get as many squares as they need and paste their plan of service on each square. After the squares are prepared, assign someone who will sew the squares to form God's service quilt. Let the class evaluate their output and share how they felt as they were doing it.
3. Ask the class to assess themselves and find out what ministry they think God is leading them to do to serve God and others. Present the following ministries and let the class choose on the basis of their faith and willingness and ability to use their gifts.
  - a. Sunday School/Vacation Bible School
  - b. Outreach Ministries
  - c. Childcare
  - d. Visitation
  - e. Music Ministry
  - f. Drama/Acting/Painting/Sports Ministry
  - g. Bus/Van Ministry
  - h. Building and Grounds Ministry/Garden Ministry
  - i. Food Preparation Ministry
  - j. Missions Ministry

*G. Closing Worship*

1. Offering
2. Closing song: "To the Work" (HFJ # 324)
3. Closing prayer: "Gracious God, we thank you for giving us the gift of Jesus. Thank you for letting the Holy Spirit give each of us the special gifts and abilities. Inspire us, guide us, and strengthen us as we use these gifts for your glory, for unifying your Body, and for helping build God's kingdom according to your will. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."  
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## Adult Level

### I. Objectives

At the end of the session, the learners are expected to:

1. explain the meaning of the Greek word “diakonia”;
2. conclude that the vitality of the ministries of the church reflect the presence of the Spirit of Christ
3. tell how the spiritual gifts are used to help others; and
4. commit to thank God for these gifts and use them to serve others.

### II. Concept: The vitality of the church ministries reflects the presence of God's Spirit.

**Materials:** The Holy Bible (preferably NRSV), worksheets

### III. Learning Experiences

#### A. Opening Worship

1. Welcome time
2. Opening prayer: “Dear God, we thank you for the many talents and gifts that you have given to each of us. Give us the wisdom to understand your purpose in each of us and the willingness and ability to use these gifts in serving you and others. This is our prayer in Jesus’ name. Amen.”
3. Opening song: “Ipakig-ambit Mo/To Others Share Your Many Gifts” (HFJ # 299)

#### B. Getting Ready

1. Instruct the class to do a “gratitude secret friend” exercise. Tell the class that at times they fail to thank the people who help them directly or indirectly (janitors, clerks, secretaries, street sweepers, traffic officers, mailman, drivers). Let the class choose the persons they want to thank but they have to find a way of thanking them secretly. They can write their plans but will execute these plans during the week.
2. Ask the class how they felt when they were writing their plan. Inquire from them if this exercise has changed the way they look at these persons and why. action!

#### C. Learning Time

1. Divide the class into four groups. Assign each group with any one of these references (Isaiah 57:14-16, Ephesians 5:17-21, 2 Peter 1:5-7, and 1 Corinthians 12:1-11). Tell each group to brainstorm what they understand with each text. Have them share their insights to the big group.
2. After the reports, discuss the insights. Expect the following from the discussion.
  - a. God lives in high places. God lives in humble hearts. When we have humble hearts, God will revive us. (Isaiah 57:15). When we trust God and humble ourselves before him, the best is yet to come.
  - b. God gives each person different gifts and talents. The nine spiritual gifts are freely given by God through the Holy Spirit. Expected reaction: We cannot boast or take credit for our talents and spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:4-8). God gives us gifts to use in serving others (1 Corinthians 12:7).
  - c. Christians are known by their fruit (2 Peter 1:5-7). Peter sets forth a “**deliberate, disciplined approach to spiritual growth.**” Since God has given spiritual riches to us in Christ through the Holy Spirit, it is our responsibility to grow in godliness.

- d. Paul, in his letter to the Church at Ephesus tell Christians to be wise (Ephesians 5:15-21) and not to be fools. God helps the wise to develop their spiritual gifts. God gives us opportunities to use them to serve others.
- e. All the spiritual gifts are activated by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:11) and that these gifts are to be used to serve God and others (Ephesians 5:21). When each person uses the gifts God has given him or her, the body of Christ works properly.
- f. The Greek word ministry, diakonia, means service. The forms of service will vary according to the social circumstances where the church or a congregation is located.

*D. Deepening Activity/Sharing Time*

1. Isaiah used the words high and humble. Compare them in terms of position of God and human beings. (God is supreme. Human beings can never reach the supremacy of God. But God, though almighty, lives in the lowly hearts of people as long as they have humble hearts.) Is this too good to be true?
2. Peter mentioned the need for Christians to grow in godliness.
  - a. How can a right motivation help us to grow in godliness? (Right motivation in the Christian life is essential! God's grace as shown to us in Jesus Christ is the right motivation to grow spiritually. While it is right to desire God's blessing on our life, our family, and our work, the right motivation behind that desire should be, "God, I want your blessing so that my life will bring glory to your name! You set your love on me and saved me when I was in the gutter of sin. You called me out of darkness into your marvelous light. Now, Lord, I want to grow in godliness so that my life proclaims your excellencies (1 Pet. 2:9)!")
  - b. How can diligence help us to grow in godliness? (To be diligent in Christ, one has to be eager, earnest, zealous, persevering, and struggling in doing his work. Peter tells us to make every effort to consider our faith in Jesus Christ as our foundation in serving God and to use God-given gifts in serving others. God has given us the necessary provisions and is working powerfully in us. For our part, we need to will and work for his good pleasure, especially in godly relationships.
3. Paul reminded the Ephesians to live wisely since Christ is in us and through the Holy Spirit, God gifted us with spiritual gifts. Read the following and share your thoughts on how these things can help us live wisely.
  - a. Using the time for good purpose instead of wasting it on shallow exercises
  - b. Using one's understanding of God's will to do things that will please God
  - c. Being filled with the Spirit to bear his fruits
  - d. Singing spiritual songs, making melody to the Lord with our hearts
  - e. Giving thanks to God recognizing how he blesses our lives and walks with us
  - f. Submitting to one another, and respecting other's gifts rather than scrambling for supremacy
  - g. Having reverence for Christ rather than blaspheming God
4. Why does God care so much about the downtrodden and the contrite?
5. Do you and your congregation care for the downtrodden and contrite with the same intensity?

*E. Discovering the Biblical Truth*

Ask: How does the vitality of the church ministries reflect the presence of God's Spirit.?

*F. Applying the Biblical Truth*

1. Teach the memory verses: "Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses." (1 Corinthians 12: 4-6, 11)
2. Ask the class to assess themselves and find out what ministry they think God is leading them to do to serve God and others. Present the following ministries and let the class choose on the basis of their faith and willingness and ability to use their gifts.
  - a. Sunday School/Vacation Bible School
  - b. Outreach Ministries
  - c. Childcare
  - d. Visitation
  - e. Music Ministry
  - f. Drama/Acting/Painting/Sports Ministry
  - g. Bus/Van Ministry
  - h. Building and Grounds Ministry/Garden Ministry
  - i. Food Preparation Ministry
  - j. Missions Ministry
3. Ask the class to help the church in recruiting members who can use their spiritual gifts by doing the following:
  - a. Praying for God's revelation
  - b. Matching gifts of members with ministry opportunities
  - c. Sharing spiritual growth with the young members of the church

*G. Closing Worship*

1. Offering
2. Closing song: "To the Work" (HFJ # 324)
3. Closing prayer: "Gracious God, we thank you for giving us the gift of Jesus. Thank you for letting the Holy Spirit give each of us the special gifts and abilities. Inspire us, guide us, and strengthen us as we use these gifts for your glory, for unifying your Body, and for helping build God's kingdom according to your will. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."