

YEAR C | QUARTER 2

8

A Chain of Grace

Service
We follow Jesus by serving others.

POWER TEXT

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms" (1 Peter 4:10).

KEY REFERENCES

- Acts 21:1-16
- *The Acts of the Apostles,* chap. 37, pp. 389-398
- *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 10, pp. 106-110
- student story on page 92 of this guide

OUR BELIEFS

- No. 17, Spiritual Gifts and Ministries
- No. 21, Stewardship
- No. 14, Unity in the Body of Christ

OBJECTIVES

The students will:

- **Know** that they can use their spiritual gifts and natural abilities to serve others.
- **Feel** a desire to use their gifts for God.
- **Respond** by determining how they can use those gifts to serve others.

POWERPOINT

We join God in His work when we use our spiritual gifts to serve others.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Several people use their gifts and abilities to serve God and help advance the gospel. Philip the evangelist; Philip's four daughters who prophesy; Agabus, a prophet from Judea; and Mnason, an early disciple from Jerusalem, use their different abilities to empower various serving activities. Even though some have messages for Paul that are not easy to deliver, they faithfully do what God commands them to do.

This is a lesson about service.

God gives each of us different spiritual gifts and talents. He needs all of those in reaching people. It is not always easy to serve and use our talents for God. God will provide the courage and strength we need, if we are open to Him.

Teacher Enrichment

"He who becomes a child of God should henceforth look upon himself as a link in the chain let down to save the world, one with Christ in His plan of mercy, going forth with Him to seek and save the lost" (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 105).

"The example of Christ in linking Himself with the interests of humanity should be followed by all who preach His word, and by all who have received the gospel of His grace" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 152).

How could I be a link in the chain of God's grace? What gifts has He given me to use for Him?

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 the 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 Readiness	10-15	*A. Grace Links*	Bibles; small strips of paper for a paper chain; pens/pencils; tape, stapler, or glue; (optional: world map or globe)
		B. Teaming Up	Bibles, chalk or masking tape
* Prayer and Praise	15-20	See page 87. Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.	songbooks, serving tray, world map, pushpins
2 Bible Lesson	15-20	Introducing the Bible Story	Bibles, nested boxes or bags
		Experiencing the Story	Bibles, white/chalkboard, markers/chalk
		Exploring the Bible	Bibles, white/chalkboard, markers/chalk
3 Applying the Lesson	10-15	*Scenarios*	
4 Sharing the Lesson	10-15	*Service Flags*	paper, art supplies, sticks for each student
* Closing		A. Prayer and Closing Comments B. Reminder to Parents C. Coming Up Next Week	

1

READINESS ACTIVITIES

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

A

YOU NEED:
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ small strips of paper
- ☐ pens/pencils
- ☐ tape, stapler, OR glue
- ☐ (optional: world map or globe)

Grace Links

Organize your students into groups. (The number of groups depends on the size of your class.) Give each student several small pieces of paper for the links of a paper chain and a pen or pencil. Give each group tape, stapler, or glue. Instruct the students to discuss and then write on their slips of paper activities they can do with their gifts, talents, and abilities in order to help and bless others. If adult facilitators are available, have them assist the students in their discussion. (Ideas: Help the students focus on those outside of your faith community; sing at a nursing home, pray for others, comfort someone, listen to someone who needs to talk, plan an outreach activity, help with a soup kitchen, help prepare a meal at home for visitors your parents bring home.) Instruct each group to make a chain of the slips they have written on.

When you are ready, have each group share what is on a few links of their chain with the entire group. Ask an assistant to link the group chains into one long chain. If you have a world map or globe, drape the long chain across or around it.

Debriefing

Ask: **What did you learn from this activity?** (things we can do for others; how much we can do if we work as a group) Share the quotations from Teacher Enrichment with your students. **How can we be grace links?** (by staying linked to Jesus and using the gifts He gives us to serve and help save others) Ask students to find and read aloud with you 1 Peter 4:10, this week's power text:

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms."

Say: **God has given us different talents and spiritual gifts. He wants us to join Him and use them to serve others. Our power point this week is:**

We join God in His work when we use our spiritual gifts to serve others.

(Adapted from *No-Miss Lessons for Pre-Teen Kids* [Loveland, Colo.: Group Publishing, 1997], p. 56. Used by permission.)

B

YOU NEED:
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ chalk OR masking tape

Teaming Up

Draw four large circles on the floor (or divide the room into four parts) and label them: Words Team, Music Team, Creativity Team, Planning Team. Say: **I am going to read a list of statements that involve gifts and skills. Together let's decide which team a person with that gift or skill belongs in. Then, if you are a person with that gift or skill, move to the appropriate part of the room. You may cross from one part to another as I read the statements.** Students may disagree about what team is appropriate for the following because some statements can apply to more than one. When you have read the statements, possibly composing more that would apply to your group, ask the students to sit down to discuss the activity.

Say:

1. **I'm a member of a debate team.**
2. **I sing a lot for others.**
3. **I love organizing camp programs and retreats.**
4. **I love to go on band trips.**
5. **I love to prepare morning worship for my class (or another group).**
6. **I enjoy making things.**
7. **I like to surprise my friends on their birthdays.**
8. **I write poems.**
9. **I enjoy acting and role-playing.**
10. **I started a foreign language club.**
11. **I've designed some computer games.**
12. **I like to decorate hats, sneakers, and T-shirts.**

(Note: This activity will also give you a good insight into what your students enjoy and help you to plan future activities that are appropriate for your group.)

Debriefing

Ask: **What happened in this activity?** (Responses might include: I moved from place to place; I didn't fit in any place; I definitely belong in the _____ area; I couldn't decide which place was for _____.) **How was this activity like your life?** (Encourage a variety of responses.)

Say: **Each of you has gifts and talents.** Help each student express at least one ability, gift, or talent that they have. Ask students to find and read aloud with you 1 Peter 4:10, this week's power text:

Prayer and Praise

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms."

God has given us different talents and spiritual gifts. He wants us to use our talents—whether many or few—for Him. Our power point this week is:

We join God in His work when we use our spiritual gifts to serve 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

"Make Me a Servant" (*He Is Our Song,* no. 126)
"We Are an Offering" (*He Is Our Song,* no. 136)
"Give of Your Best to the Master" (*The SDA Hymnal,* no. 572)

Mission

YOU NEED:
- ☐ world map and push pins

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

YOU NEED:
- ☐ serving tray

Say*:* **One way we can serve God is by giving our offerings. Our money goes to help spread the good news about Jesus in other places.**

Prayer

In advance, think about each student in your group and identify a special gift or talent that they have. (If you have a large class, let the students do it for each other in groups.) Write each individual's gift on a card. Distribute their "gift" cards to the students. Say: **God has given us many different gifts and talents. This morning when we pray I am going to mention each of you by name and a special gift that I think you have. At the end of the prayer I am going to give us all an opportunity to commit our gifts to God's service. If you would like to commit yourself to God in this way, put your card in the middle of the prayer circle at the appropriate time.**

Say: **Dear Father: Thank You for** [insert names] **and their gifts of** [insert gifts]. Repeat for each student. **Thank You, Father, for the many other talents You have given each person bowed here this morning. We lay down our cards to symbolize giving ourselves in service to You.** [Insert any special requests here.] **Thank You for being with us now. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

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

2

BIBLE LESSON

YOU NEED:
- Bibles
- nested boxes OR bags

Introducing the Bible Story

Nested boxes are those that fit inside one another. Place the boxes or bags in front of you. Ask: **For what could this box be used?** Encourage responses. Open it and hold up the next box. **What about this one?** Continue with the boxes until you get to the smallest one. **This one? It's so tiny, what use would it have?** Encourage responses. Say: **Let's find and read our power text together.** Give them time to find and read 1 Peter 4:10 aloud with you.

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms."

Say: **In the same way that each box can be useful, so can our spiritual gifts. As our power point reminds us,**

We join God in His work when we use our spiritual gifts to serve others.

YOU NEED:
- Bibles
- white/chalkboard
- markers/chalk

Experiencing the Story

Say: **Today as we read Acts 21:1-16, we will notice that God gave the believers special gifts so that they could serve Him and His church.** Have student volunteers take turns reading Acts 21:1-16. Write the following headings on the board: Person, Deed, Spiritual Gift. Appoint a scribe to fill in the chart as the students answer the following questions.

Ask: **Who were the various people in this passage who helped the early church, or specifically Paul and his companions? What did these people do? Which spiritual gift(s) did the believers display?** (Disciples in Tyre, stayed with them for several days and foretold trouble in Jerusalem, hospitality and prophecy; Agabus, foretold Paul's bondage in Jerusalem, prophecy; Mnason, Paul and companions stayed at his house, hospitality; Philip, stayed at his house, hospitality; Philip's daughters [undoubtedly offered hospitality as well as preaching and prophesying in the early church].)

Leave room for more answers on the chart for Exploring the Bible.

We join God in His work when we use our spiritual gifts to serve others.

3

APPLYING THE LESSON

YOU NEED:

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

Exploring the Bible

Say: **The passage we just studied gave us a brief glimpse of some people and a time they used their spiritual gifts. Let's look at some texts that show some other events, and even other gifts demonstrated by the same people.** Assign individuals or groups to look up the following passages: Acts 11:27, 28 (Agabus; prophesied famine, prophecy); Acts 4:36; 11:19, 20 (encouragement, evangelism, apostleship); Acts 8:4-13, 26-40; Acts 21:8, 9 (Philip; healing, evangelism, teaching, miracles, apostleship, hospitality). Have the scribe write in the answers on the chart. Ask: **What does this chart tell us?**

We join God in His work when we use our spiritual gifts to serve others.

Accommodation for students with special needs: Use the Bibles with tabs to help students who don't know all the books of the Bible to become familiarized with them.

Scenarios

Read the following scenarios to your students. At the end of each, ask what spiritual gifts are being displayed.

1. A man studying to be a pastor, his wife, and their three teenagers have just arrived from another country. Their luggage and money have been stolen. They need a place to stay, clothing, and cash. Your Sabbath School class organizes a car wash to help raise money. Each student promises to bring one piece of clothing they really like for the kids. Your grandmother offers to let the family stay at her house. The youngest teen doesn't speak the language, so you help him with his schoolwork. (organizing, giving, hospitality, teaching)

2. Michel's friends call him "Preacher." Sometimes he stands on a street corner and asks people if they know Jesus. He saves his allowance to buy small books or pamphlets to leave on buses and at phone booths. When he helps feed the homeless he puts a small paper about God in each bag. He distributed Bible study cards to all his neighbors. His pastor has asked him to speak for Youth Week of Prayer. (preaching, evangelism)

3. Priyanth is always bringing animals home, especially injured ones. He has built splints for birds, wrapped wounded dogs' paws, and fed stray cats. The local veterinarian wants to hire Priyanth to assist him during the week. (healing, mercy)

4. Everyone comes to Shaina with their problems. She listens carefully and waits till they are finished to ask questions. She gives advice only when asked. Her friends have found that her advice is usually correct. Sometimes they wonder if she can read their minds. (discernment, encouragement, wisdom)

Repeat the power text, 1 Peter 4:10, aloud with the students.

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms."

Encourage them to try saying it from memory without your prompting. Say: **Remember, our power point is:**

We join God in His work when we use our spiritual gifts to serve others.

(Adapted from *No-Miss Lessons for Pre-Teen Kids* [Loveland, Colo.: Group Publishing, 1997], pp. 57, 58. Used by permission.)

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SHARING THE LESSON

YOU NEED:
- ☐ sticks for each student
- ☐ paper
- ☐ art supplies

Service Flags

Distribute the supplies. Tell each student to design a flag with their name down one side, and one phrase beginning with each letter of their name, describing ways they can use their gifts and talents to serve others. (Example: P—Pray for those who don't know Christ; A—Altruism to always help where I see a need; T—Take Bible correspondence lessons to someone who has asked for them.)

When the creating is finished, ask students to share what is on their flags.

Debriefing

Ask: **What did you learn about yourself while making your service flag?** (Encourage responses.) **Which of the ideas you wrote on your flag will you plan to do this coming week?** (Encourage sharing and a commitment to do at least one of the things listed on their flag. Particularly focus on serving those not of your faith community.)

Remind the students that they are links in God's chain of grace to serve and save humanity. (Refer to the quotations in Teacher Enrichment.) Ask them to repeat the power point with you.

We join God in His work when we use our spiritual gifts to serve others.

As a closing song of commitment, sing "Lord, Be Glorified" (*He Is Our Song,* no. 148).

Alternative

Plan a class project of service to the church. Assign responsibilities to each child, planning around their giftedness. Work together to serve the church family.

Closing

Prayer and closing comments:

Ask God to help each student feel like a special part of His plan for serving and saving those around them, and to help them find ways to use their special gifts this week for others.

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: **Paul is arrested. By the power of God's grace we can witness wherever we are.**

Notes

Student lesson

A Chain of Grace

Imagine you are on a journey to see some old friends. You are really looking forward to seeing them. On your journey you hear that you will be in danger when you reach your destination. Would you continue with your journey or put it off until another time? Read on to discover what Paul did in such a situation.

Paul stood on the deck of a large sailing ship still tied to the dock in Tyre. He and the friends traveling with him had just spent seven restful days here while the ship was unloaded. Paul could see there were still a few tears on the faces of those waving goodbye. The Holy Spirit had impressed these believers to tell Paul that dangerous things were waiting for him in Jerusalem.

Paul was just beginning the very last part of his very last missionary trip. One more short stop, and he would visit his old friend Philip, the evangelist, and his daughters in Caesarea. Then he would go on to Jerusalem, where he knew God was directing him, even though his friends had warned him of danger.

On the three missionary trips that Paul had taken, many people had come to believe in Jesus, the Messiah. Paul had once been mistaken for Mercury, the chief speaker for the Greek gods. Actually, Paul had been the chief speaker for Jesus. But he was not the only one God was using to build the early church. Many people with many different gifts were joining God in His work to bring the gospel of grace and the truth about Jesus to everyone.

For instance, Philip, the friend Paul was on his way to visit, was one of the seven God had chosen to help the 12 apostles with their work. As more and more people in Jerusalem started to believe in Jesus, helpers were needed to make sure that everyone was taken care of and had enough to eat. The apostles, such as Peter, James, and John, were busy preaching and teaching. Philip and others used their gifts as administrators to make sure everything was managed well. Once Philip had been sent by God's Spirit to an Ethiopian officer who was reading while he crossed the desert. Philip had explained the Scripture and then baptized the man. Now Philip's daughters preached and prophesied and helped the church as well. They were a family dedicated to God. Paul was looking forward to enjoying their hospitality for a few days.

At Philip's home Paul and those traveling with him enjoyed rest and freedom among friends. Then one day a visitor arrived. His name was Agabus. He also was led by God's Spirit.

Agabus entered Philip's house and walked over to where Paul sat. He picked up Paul's belt. Seating himself, Agabus wrapped the belt around both his own hands and feet and then looked up at Paul. "This is a message from the Holy Spirit. The owner of this belt will have his hands and feet shackled by the Jews in Jerusalem and will be turned over to the Gentiles for trial and execution."

Paul's friends realized that this was another warning to Paul about what was to happen in Jerusalem. They did not want him to keep going. They begged him not to go.

"You're breaking my heart," Paul responded. "I believe God is sending me to Jerusalem. I am thankful that He is letting me know ahead of time what to expect. But I can't turn back."

"The Lord's will be done," his friends responded. For the last few days at Philip's house they spent memorable moments together.

Finally the day came when Paul and his friends started the walk from Caesarea down to Jerusalem. At the end of the first day of walking they stopped for the night at the home of another friend, Mnason. A believer who had moved from Cyprus to be closer to Jerusalem, he was one of the first Gentile believers. His comfortable home was a place where Gentile believers could stay when coming to Jerusalem for church meetings or visits. Mnason was one more of the many, many believers who made up the body of the newly formed Christian church.

Paul didn't know what lay ahead for him, but he knew that God had blessed the believers with many different gifts. Each gift was to be used to administer God's grace to others. Each member of the growing church was one more link in God's chain of grace let down from heaven to save and to serve all who would believe in Him.

KEY REFERENCES

- Acts 21:1-16
- *The Acts of the Apostles,* chap. 37, pp. 389-398
- *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 10, pp. 106-110 ("Sermon on the Stairs")
- Our Beliefs, nos. 17, 21, 14

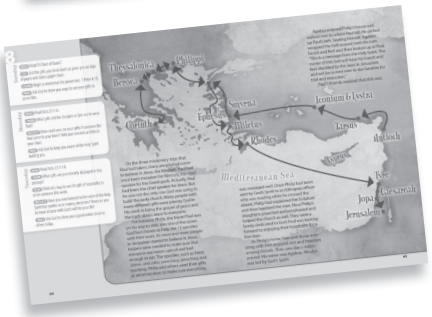
POWER TEXT

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms" (1 Peter 4:10).

POWER POINT

We join God in His work when we use our spiritual gifts to serve others.







Sabbath

DO Do this week's activity on page 61.

Sunday

READ Read Ephesians 4:11-13 and this week's story, "A Chain of Grace."

LIST List the gifts you think God has given you on slips of paper and start a paper chain.

LEARN Begin to memorize the power text, 1 Peter 4:10.

PRAY Ask God to show you ways to use your gifts to serve Him.

Monday

READ Read Acts 21:1-6.

THINK What gifts did the disciples in Tyre use to serve Paul?

REFLECT How could you use your gifts if someone like Paul came to your town? Add your answers as links in your chain.

PRAY Ask God to keep you aware of the Holy Spirit leading you.

Tuesday

READ Read Acts 21:7-14.

THINK What gifts are prominently displayed in this passage?

PLAN Think of a way to use the gift of hospitality to serve someone this week.

REFLECT Have you ever listened to the voice of the Holy Spirit that guides us in making decisions? How can you be more in tune with God's will for your life?

PRAY Ask God to show you opportunities to serve others today.

Wednesday

READ Read Acts 21:15, 16.

THINK Why do you think the gift of hospitality was so often displayed in Paul's day? Do you think it is used as often today? Why or why not?

TAKE Take the first step in practicing hospitality (for example, call or invite someone to do something with you).

PRAY Ask God for courage to use your gifts.

Thursday

COMPARE Compare Ephesians 4:11, 12 and 1 Corinthians 12:28-31. How alike or different are the spiritual gifts described?

THINK What spiritual gifts from this list do you think you have? Add them to your chain.

REFLECT In your Bible study journal, discuss with God any questions you have about using your gifts to serve others.

CREATE Make something that expresses praise to God for His gifts.

PRAY Thank God for the gifts He has given you.

Friday

READ Read 1 Corinthians 13 with your family during worship.

DISCUSS Discuss the various gifts each family member has. Share your chain.

PLAN Brainstorm ways to combine your gifts to do a family service project. Let family members add their gifts to your chain.

SING Sing "Make Me a Servant" or another song about service.

PRAY Commit your gifts and your plans to God.