

Serving through gifts and talents: Teacher's topic guide

God is a Servant Year 4

Spiritual Awareness: Be faithful in little things

God has given each one of us different gifts and talents. It is our responsibility to develop these gifts and talents so that we may use them to serve God and others. Using our gifts and talents for God is being faithful to the One who gave us these abilities in the first place. It is important to use our gifts and talents with humility.

Values: Our response to 'God is a Servant'

- **Service:** follow the example of Jesus, the greatest servant
- **Helpfulness:** being willing to help others and put others before our own
- **Appreciation** of people who serve through their occupations
- **Humility:** thanking God for our gifts and realizing that we are not better than anyone else; we all have different gifts

Outcomes: Students will

- identify occupations within the community and the way in which these occupations serve us
- identify particular skills and talents displayed by people working in professions
- identify personal strengths and weaknesses and to list ways of developing or improving these
- identify strengths in others and to encourage others in their abilities
- understand the importance of encouraging those who lack skills in certain areas
- identify ways of using personal gifts and talents for God, with humility

Bible stories and passages

- 1 Peter 4:10 As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace.
- Matthew 25:14-29 Parable of the talents
- Luke 12:35-47 Be faithful in doing what Jesus wants us to do.
- 1 Corinthians 12:4-8 Our God-given gifts
- Matthew 5:15 Don't hide your light under a bushel.
- Luke 18:9-14 The rich man and the tax collector, (pride versus humility).
- Luke 14:7-11 Don't make yourself important.
- Matthew 20:20-28; Mark 10:35-45 A servant of all

Bible verses

- Luke 6:10 Whoever is faithful in small matters will be faithful in large ones; whoever is dishonest in small matters will be dishonest in large ones.
- Matthew 20:26 If someone wants to be great he must be the servant of the rest.
- Luke 13:30 Those who are now last will be first, and those who are now first will be last.
- Matthew 16:24 Jesus said, "If anyone wants to come with me, he must forget self, carry his cross and follow me."

Key Questions

What does it mean to serve?

How do people in the community serve us in the jobs they do?

What is a talent? Can you think of a job that requires a talent?

What talents has God given me? What talents has God given my friends / family?

What should I do if I am good at something?
What should I do if I am not good at something?
How can I use my gifts and talents for God?
What is humility? Should I boast about the things I can do well?

Activities

- Make a study of the “Gardner’s theory of multiple intelligences”. (See **Beacon Media research cards.**)
- List personal gifts and talents and gifts and talents of others.
- Discuss steps we can take in improving in the areas in which we are not gifted.
- Discuss the problem of looking down on people who are not good at the things you are good at.
- Discuss ways in which we can use gifts and talents in serving others and in serving God.
- Identify people in the community who use their gifts and talents in work situations.
- Make a chart showing gifts and talents of every child in the class. Class members can make suggestions.
- Each child can make a card for another child in the class to show appreciation. Use a 'hat' to distribute names. The card can mention gifts and talents of the individual...*I appreciate you because...*
- Discuss importance of accepting each person, and accepting ourselves, for the way God made us; not complaining about our weaknesses; remembering that we can't be good at everything; not boasting about our strengths.
- Discuss gifts and talents in the Bible. Look up the Fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23. Discuss how these fruits can be gifts to use for others. Also look up the gifts that God gives to us in 1 Corinthians 12:4-8. Discuss personality strengths and special abilities.
- Read the beacon Media “On Safari” stories about gifts and talents.

Assessment

Use a personal gift or talent to help someone in the community. Present a report on what you did and give an oral presentation to the class.

Beacon Media resource: “On Safari” literacy resource, Level 26

This is a teaching series on special gifts that we can observe in the animal kingdom, and the examples that we can apply to our own lives.

Research cards: Gifts and talents

Biography: Joeli Bulu (joeli Bulu play available on DVD)

Values education Year 4

God is a Servant

Diligence

God does everything perfectly. He never gives up.

Diligence is...

- doing a job properly
- working hard at your job
- not giving up until the job is done (*perseverance*)
- keeping things neat and tidy

Activities

1. Take a survey. Find out how many in the group are learning a particular skill that requires diligence. Make a chart. Write the name of each person, the skill they are learning, how often they practice, how long they practice, and whether they find it difficult or easy.
2. Write a list of **distractions** that could occur while you are doing **one** of these things:
 - a) doing homework
 - b) training for athletics
 - c) practicing a musical instrument
 - d) keeping your room tidy
 - e) doing jobs for Mum.
3. Write down the thing that requires the most diligence for **you**. Explain why it can be difficult for you.

What does the Bible say about diligence and perseverance?

Philippians 3:14 Run towards the goal.

James 5:7-11 Blessed are those who have persevered.

Acts 9:36-42 Dorcas showed diligence in sewing.

Proverbs 31:10-29 The diligent wife.

Hebrews 6:10-12 Diligence in helping others

Art Year 4

God is a Servant

Topic: Gifts and talents

Biblical connection

The story of the talents reminds us that God expects us to identify, develop and use the gifts and talents He has given us, for His glory, and to serve Him.

Bible art as a wall display: the story of the talents

Colossians 3:23 Whatever you find to do, do it with all your heart.

Expressing gifts and talents through visual art

This theme can be an opportunity for students to find and develop their creative talents. Provide students with a variety of art materials, and give opportunity for a variety of art forms, such as painting, drawing, construction, threads and textiles, collage.

Also use this theme to allow students to make gifts for others.

The study on diligence in week 4 is an opportunity to apply diligence to art or craft projects that require much patience and precision, e.g. small dot painting; sewing projects

Studying artists and art work who have used their gifts and talents

This is an opportunity to study art work of talented and famous people. The study can extend to architecture.

A challenging example is the art of handicapped people who have lost the use of their arms and take up painting with their foot or mouth. One such painter is the Christian, Joni Eareckson, (Biography can be revised from Term 1 God is Love).

Joel Bulu

Biography



Joel Bulu was born on the island of Vavau, one of the friendly islands of Tonga. At the age of 23 he heard a report that the Lotu had come to his land. The “Lotu” is the word used to describe the Christian faith that the missionaries brought to Tonga.

On hearing the report of the Lotu, Joel firmly declared that he would never stop worshiping the gods of his own people.

One day he met a Tongan man who had been told about the Lotu and he told Joel that people of the Lotu have a Promised Land where they go after death...a beautiful land among the stars.

“a land among the stars,” thought Joel, “how wonderful that sounds... a land where there is peace and happiness. I would like to believe in the Lotu so that I can go to that land. From this day I will choose the Lotu and throw away the gods of my own people...but my family will be so angry with me. What can I do? I think I’ll have to run away,” he said to himself.

Joel decided to run away to the village of Chief Ulkalala, who had accepted the Lotu. The chief invited him to come and stay for a while.

Back in Joel’s village the people had heard that Joel had become one of the Lotu and had cast away their gods. The heathen priest decided that Joel should be clubbed to death.

When Joel returned to the village his friends told him that he must give up the Lotu or something bad would happen. So Joel told his friends that he would give up the Lotu and once again worship their gods.

“Now I am sorry for telling my friends that I will no longer believe in the Lotu,” thought Joel. “But I have only spoken these words with my lips. Deep in my heart I will still believe in the Lotu.”

One day, a white person, Mr. Thomas came to Joel’s village. He was a missionary.

Mr. Thomas told the people a story from the Bible: “There was once a man who planted good seed in his field, but while people were sleeping, an enemy came and planted weeds in the field. The weeds grew thick and tall and the good plants could not grow. God’s enemy is Satan, who wants to plant weeds among the good seeds. The weeds are like the evil in the world... the fighting, killing and

stealing. But God's spirit is the good seed. His Spirit can live in the hearts and minds of those who are willing to accept Him. He will forgive those who come to Him."

Joel thought about the many wrong things he had done in his life. He thought he would never see the land in the sky. He went to have a chat with Mr. Thomas. Mr. Thomas explained to Joel that he could ask God for forgiveness and God would accept him.

One day Joel met another white missionary on the path. This missionary had come from Fiji. When he heard that Joel had become a Christian he asked if Joel would go with him to Fiji to tell the people about the God of the Bible. Joel decided that he would go to Fiji with the missionary. They got their boat ready and sailed to Fiji.

When they arrived in Fiji, at Rewa where there was much fighting and killing going on. These were terrible times. Day after day they saw bodies of people who had been killed. They saw dead bodies floating by on the river. The sound of the death drum went on and on. The chiefs did not want to hear about the Lotu, but still the work of the missionaries went on.

...and then finally they got an invitation to come to the island of Kandavu to tell the people about the Lotu. Two Bible teachers were sent: a Fijian named Isaac and a Tongan named Abraham.

Joel heard reports that the chief of Vusanamu had ordered for a canoe to be made ready to go to Kandavu to kill Isaac. Joel decided to sail to Kandavu himself to save Isaac. He took a few Christian friends with him.

The wind was strong, the sea ran high and the rain came pouring down all day.

It was late at night when they reached Kandavu. They went to the town, not knowing whether Isaac was dead or alive.

When they arrived they could smell the smell of human flesh baking in an oven. They feared that this body could be Isaac's.

Through the wind and rain they found Isaac's house. They crept inside, fearing that his murderers might be sleeping there. But God had protected Isaac. He was sleeping in his bed.

Joel went back to Rewa, but back in Rewa things grew worse. The houses had been burnt to the ground and many people murdered. Joel had to leave Rewa and decided to sail to Vanua Levu, to a place where the Christian message would be received. But when he reached Solevu he met an old heathen priest who had heard of the Lotu and wanted to know more. He asked Joel to stay a while to teach the people about the God of the Bible.

After staying some time in Solevu, Joel sailed on to Vanua Levu. Here many people wanted to listen but the heathen priests hated him and spoke evil of him. Joel needed help, so Abraham was sent. Joel also gathered a group of young local Christian men to help him.

"The heathen priests made life difficult. They dug up the Christian's plantations, upturned their bread pits and killed their livestock.

One day their best pig was taken. The young Christian men wanted to take revenge but Joel would not allow it.

“No matter what happens,” said Joel, “do not fight. We will keep the peace. Everybody, sit down on the grass and stay where you are.”

As the warring tribe came towards them they suddenly turned around and walked away.

Later Joel met with the leaders of the warring tribe. He asked why they did not attack.

“A power took over us and we couldn’t use our clubs or spears,” said the head chief. “Our arms just couldn’t move. Now we know of the power of the Lotu God. We’ve stolen your pigs, we’ve killed your chickens and we’ve spoiled your gardens. We’ve treated you very badly. But you are a true man Joel Bulu, and your God is a true God. Take this whale’s tooth as a sign of peace between us, and please tell us more about your God.”

So the people of Vanua Levu threw away their gods and worshipped the Christian god.

Joel Bulu worked for 40 years as a missionary to Fiji, on the island of Ono, in Lakemba and many other places. He had many difficult times, but he always trusted God to help him through the difficult times. It was his faith in God that made him such a great man.

Gifts and talents 1

We all have gifts and talents

Student activities

We all have different strengths and weaknesses.
The things we are good at are gifts from God.
We are good at some things but not so good at other things.
We have different likes and dislikes.
That's how God made us.

Some people are better at understanding some things than others.

Some of us find it easy to understand how a flower grows, but find it difficult to learn how to play a musical instrument. For others, music might be easy, but playing football is difficult.

Here is a list of things that people can be good at:

Sport, maths, reading and writing, making friends with people, being organized, music, art, knowing about animals and nature

1. Write a list of the things you are good at.
2. Write the names of your family members. Now write what they are good at. Which gifts are the same as yours?
3. Write a list of the things your best friend is good at.
4. Read 1 Peter 4:10. How does God want us to use our gifts and talents?



Gifts and talents 2

Body-Smart

You may be body-smart. You will enjoy sports and are good at swimming, athletics, football, gymnastics and other sports.

You enjoy learning through 'doing something'.

1. How do you learn best?
 - Listening
 - Reading
 - Watching
 - Doing the thing you are trying to learn
2. Who do you know that is body-smart? What are they good at?
3. If you were in a team and someone was not good at the sport, how should you treat them? Should you shout at them for missing the ball? How would this make them feel?



Gifts and talents 3

Number-Smart

You may be number-smart.

You will be good at mathematics and other number activities.

You will also be good at solving problems.

1. Who do you know that is number-smart?
2. If you are not number-smart, what should you do?
 - Get worried when you find maths difficult
 - Ask the teacher for help
 - Try your best because maths is useful
3. What can maths be used for in every-day life?
4. Give an example of a problem that can be solved by using maths.



Gifts and talents 4

Word-Smart

You may be word-smart.

You will enjoy reading, writing and talking about things.

You will find learning new languages easy.

You will be good at spelling, reading and writing.

You will be good at word games like Scrabble and crossword puzzles.

1. Who do you know that is word-smart?
2. If you are not word-smart, what should you do?
 - Get worried when you find reading, spelling and writing difficult
 - Ask the teacher for help
 - Try your best because reading, spelling and writing are useful
3. Why is reading useful in every-day life?
4. Why is spelling useful in every-day life?
5. Why is writing useful in every-day life?
6. Who do you know that speaks two languages well?



Gifts and talents 5

People-Smart

You may be people-smart.

You will like to mix with other people.

You like parties.

They are good at talking to people.

You like to belong to lots of clubs.

You like team games and are good at sharing your ideas.

1. Who do you know that is people-smart?
2. How can a people-smart person use their gift to share the Gospel?
3. Why are people-smart people lots of fun?
4. If you meet someone who is very quiet and not good at talking, should you:
 - Ignore them and go and talk to someone who is good at talking?
 - Ask them questions and help them make a conversation?
 - Try and get to know them because they might have something they can share with you?



Gifts and talents 6

Myself-Smart

You may be myself-smart.

You will know about yourself, and your strengths and weaknesses.

You will probably keep a diary.

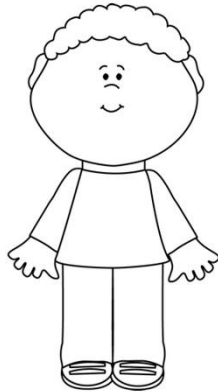
You will be good at setting goals for yourself.

You will be good at keeping your homework and your personal things organized.

You will be able to work well alone and not be distracted by other people.

You will think deeply about ideas.

1. Who do you know that is Myself-smart?
2. How can a Myself-smart person use this gift to help others?
3. What are the good points about a Myself-smart person?



Gifts and talents 7

Music-Smart

You may be music-smart.

You will enjoy music and can recognise sounds

You will have a good sense of beat and rhythm.

You might be good at singing or playing a musical instrument.

1. Who do you know that is Music-smart?
2. How can a music-smart person use their gift to spread the Gospel?
3. If you are not music-smart, can you still enjoy music?
4. If you are not music-smart can you still worship God through music?



Gifts and talents 8

Picture-Smart

You may be picture smart.

You will be good at art and also at other activities where you look at pictures, like map reading, finding your way out of mazes and graphs.

You could be good at photography.

You find it easy to think in pictures.

1. Who do you know that is picture-smart?
2. How can a picture-smart person use their gift to serve God?
3. How can a picture-smart person help you if you get lost?
4. How can a picture-smart person explain to someone something that is difficult?
5. If you are not good at art or drawing, what should you do?
 - Feel sad that you are not as good as others?
 - Try to improve your drawing skills?
 - Encourage and appreciate others who are good at art?



Gifts and talents 9

Nature-Smart

You may be nature-smart.

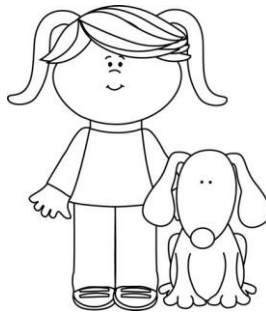
You like the world of plants and animals, and like learning about them.

You would like to have a pet.

You enjoy being outdoors in nature.

You care about animals and hate animal cruelty.

1. Who do you know that is nature-smart?
2. Why is it easy for a nature-smart person to praise God?
3. How can a nature-smart person serve God?
4. Even if you don't think you are nature-smart, we can still appreciate God's wonderful creation. What can we do to stop:
 - animals from suffering
 - rainforests being destroyed



Gifts and talents 10

God knows us

God knows us better than anyone because He made us.
He knows how many hairs are in our head.
He knows what we are good at, and what we are not good at.

Read and write out Luke 12:6-7.

We don't have to be good at everything

God loves us for who we are.
God can help us get better at the things we are not good at.
Maybe there are some things we will never be good at.
That's OK. Trying your best is all that matters.
Think about the things you *are* good at. These are your special gifts from God.
Work on your gifts so that you can serve God in a really special way.

God made you to be the person you are.
He did not make a mistake when He made you.

You created every part of me; you put me together in my mother's womb...When my bones were being formed, carefully put together in my mother's womb, when I was growing there in secret, you knew that I was there – you saw me before I was born. (Psalm 139)

Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you were born I set you apart. (Jeremiah 1:5)