

Child Stewardship Week

THE GOD REMAINS



Inter-American Division



Dear leaders of the Children's and Adolescent Ministry, we are facing a very special week, the week of child stewardship, with the title "The God who Gives."

During this week we encourage you to help the kids understand God's love through stewardship, with different stories that will emphasize this. Talking about selfishness, generosity, grateful hearts and many more. At the same time, each day there will be a challenge to carry out and different activities.

We pray that each leader, teacher or volunteer this week can be a channel of blessing for children and adolescents, being a joyful and love-filled week.

May God bless each activity carried out this week and the Holy Spirit may be with you.

Thank you for everything you will do for the little ones.

With sincere appreciation.



*E. Edith Ruiz-Espinoza
Dir. Ministry of Children and Adolescents
Inter-American Division*



Thematic Sketch

1

A God Who Gives

5

She Gave More Than Everyone

2

The Generous Soul

6

You Are My Hands

3

You Did It to Me

7

My Heart for Jesus

4

The Danger of Selfishness

8

A Grateful Heart



A God who gives

- **Bible Text:** For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. (John 3: 16)
- **Thought:** God is the first giver; when we look at Jesus Christ on the cross, we see God, who gave everything for love.
- **Introduction:** *When heaven brought a gift to earth: the shepherds saw it; it was a wonderful thing. That beautiful night while they were caring for their sheep, the Angel Gabriel came to give them the good news, the Messiah had been born in Bethlehem. But this was not enough, and God gave them another blessing. The shepherds saw the choir of angels singing: Glory to God in the highest and on earth Peace, good will to men (Luke 2: 14). Why did so many angels sing? The answer is simple: this day, all the angels from heaven had come to earth to bring the greatest gifts to Jesus the Savior. Yes, the shepherds contemplated it in that humble manger in Bethlehem. That child, so tender and so beautiful, although in a manger, was the King of the Universe.*



A God Who Gives

God is the most generous being in the universe. In the Bible, God is always giving blessings to all his creatures. He always gives generously out of love. We can think of all the things God has given us.



1: The Gift Of Life: One of the most beautiful gifts we have is life. God is the Creator of life. The Bible begins with this beautiful statement: "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1: 1). God made everything with love, as it is written: "And God saw everything that he had made, and he was very good. (Genesis 1: 31). The wise Solomon also tells us about God, who made everything with love: "He made everything beautiful in his time, and has set eternity in the heart of man" (Ecclesiastes 3: 11). All of creation rejoices in the gift of existence and speaks to us of the loving Creator. According to the psalmist David "the heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament shows the handiwork of his hands" (Psalm 19: 1) and the patriarch Job leads us to observe all created things to see how wonderful God is: "But now ask the beasts, and they will teach you, And the birds of the air, and they will tell you; Or speak to the earth, and it will teach you, and the fish of the sea will explain to you. ¿Who among all these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this? (Job 12: 7 -9)



2: The Gift Of Food, Care, and Protection: God is the one who cares for us and feeds us at all times. It is written in the psalms: "The eyes of all look expectantly to You, and You give them their food in due season. You open Your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing." (Psalm 145: 15 and 16). Jesus taught us that God is so kind that if He cares for and feeds even the most minor and most insignificant beings of creation, all the more reason He cares for and feeds us. (Matthew 6 :26). Jesus also taught us that God is our loving and kind Father. He taught us that God cares for each of his children and gives him care and protection. He said, "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it will be opened to you. Because everyone who asks, receives; and he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, it will be opened. What man is there among you that if his son asks for bread, he will give her a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a snake? So if you, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him



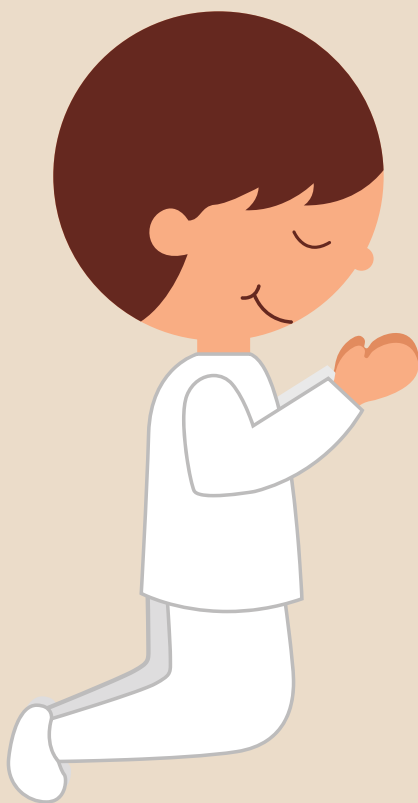


3: The Greatest Gift of Love: Of all that God has done for humanity, of all that God has given us, the most precious gift is Jesus. Jesus himself made this great love known to us when he said, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16). This passage tells us about the most precious gift that God has given us: his son Jesus. Also, in this passage, we find what God wanted to achieve by giving his son: the salvation of all who believe. But there is something else. Why did he do it? Why such a great sacrifice? The answer is this: Because God loved the world.

4: Invitation: would you like to thank God today for everything he has given you? Have you ever heard this story? A group of elementary school students were asked to write down what they thought were the "7 Wonders of the World". Despite specific differences, the following were the ones that received the most votes: 1. The Pyramids of Egypt, 2. The Taj Mahal, 3. The Grand Canyon of Colorado, 4. The Panama Canal, 5. The Empire State Building, 6. St. Peter's Basilica, 7. The Great Wall of China. While she was counting the votes, the teacher noticed that there was a girl who had not finished writing her suggestions. So she asked her if she had problems with her list, to which the girl replied: -Yes, a little. I can not finish deciding because there are many. The teacher then told her: - Well, read us what you have so far, and maybe we can help you. The girl thought about it for a moment, but then she read: - I believe that the seven wonders of the world are: To be able to see, to be able to hear, to be able to touch, to be able to taste, to be able to feel, to be able to laugh, to be able to love. Everything we have, what we are, it is God who has given it to us. Do you want to thank God for everything He has given you? Because you have a family, God gives you food, health, your friends, your brothers, and above all, do you want to thank him for giving Christ Jesus?




Prayer: Thank you, Lord, for everything you have given me. For life, for my family, for food, for care, for my friends, and everything around me. But, above all things, I want to thank you because you have given me Christ Jesus, and you love me.



Activities: Write on a piece of paper the reasons why you are grateful to Jesus and pray to God for them.

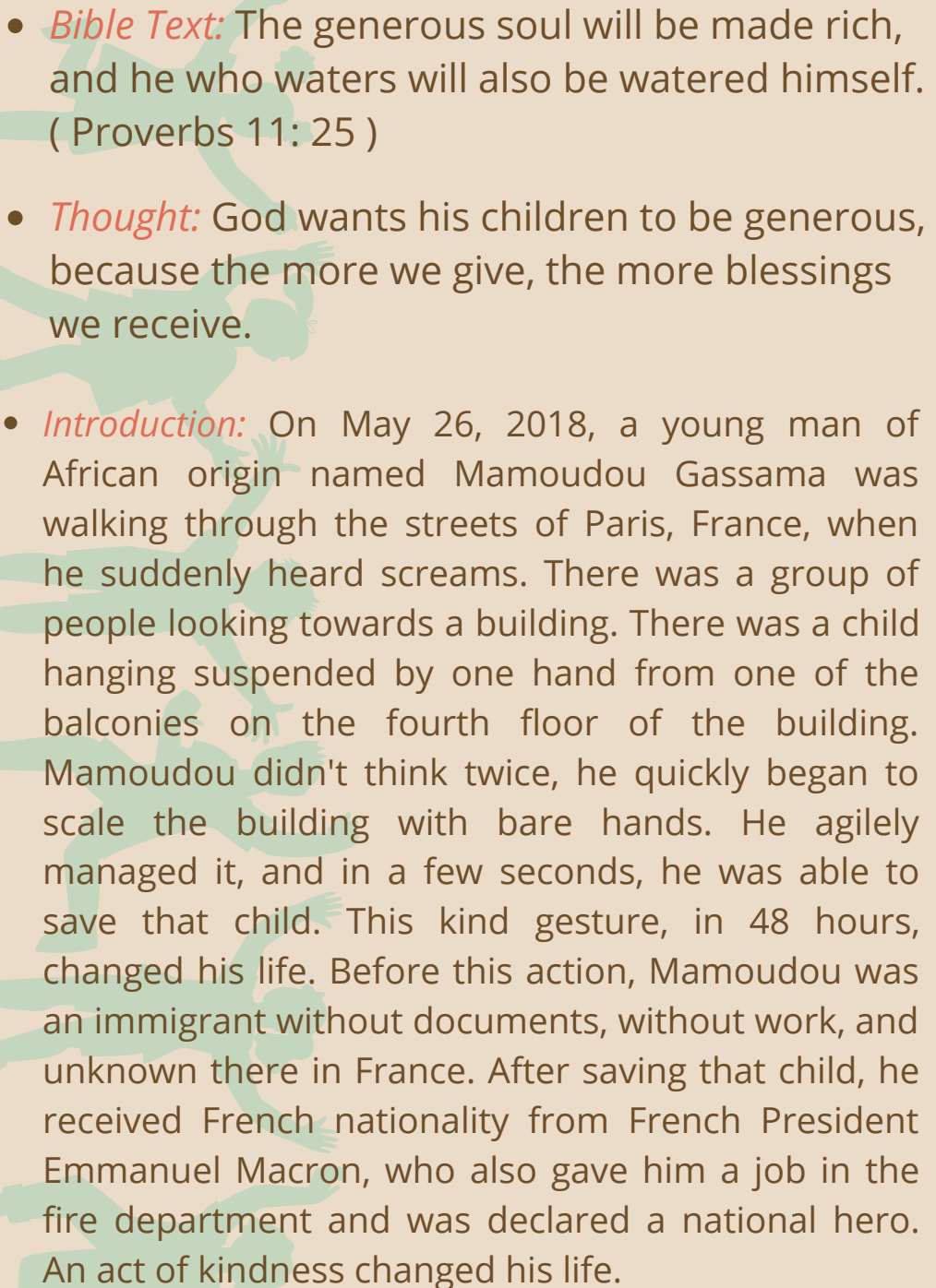
Challenge: Make a heart and write inside a verse from the Bible that is related to thanking God and give it to a person you want to know about Jesus.



¡But thank God, who gives us victory
through our Lord Jesus Christ!
1 Corinthians 15:57



The Generous Soul

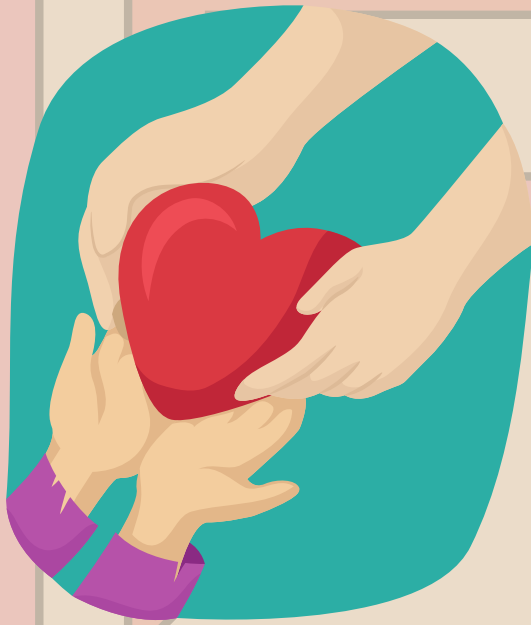
- 
- *Bible Text:* The generous soul will be made rich, and he who waters will also be watered himself. (Proverbs 11: 25)
 - *Thought:* God wants his children to be generous, because the more we give, the more blessings we receive.
 - *Introduction:* On May 26, 2018, a young man of African origin named Mamoudou Gassama was walking through the streets of Paris, France, when he suddenly heard screams. There was a group of people looking towards a building. There was a child hanging suspended by one hand from one of the balconies on the fourth floor of the building. Mamoudou didn't think twice, he quickly began to scale the building with bare hands. He agilely managed it, and in a few seconds, he was able to save that child. This kind gesture, in 48 hours, changed his life. Before this action, Mamoudou was an immigrant without documents, without work, and unknown there in France. After saving that child, he received French nationality from French President Emmanuel Macron, who also gave him a job in the fire department and was declared a national hero. An act of kindness changed his life.

The boy shared his food with Jesus: As we thought of acts of kindness and generosity, the story of the boy who shared his lunch with Jesus came to mind. That boy was happy, the opportunity had come to go see Jesus and listen to him. His mother had prepared a delicious lunch for him, five loaves of bread and two fish. She put them in a basket and happily went to see Jesus. Arriving at the place where Jesus was, that child saw a large crowd, he could not count the number of people there. He strove to be as close as he could to Jesus, he was thrilled to see and hear him. He was so captivated by the presence of Jesus, his healing works, his kind words, his wonderful message and he decided to stay there until evening. Suddenly hearing Jesus and his disciples talk about the need to feed the people, that boy brought his lunch to Jesus. Then Andrew said, here is a boy who has five loaves and two fish. But what is this for so many people? What are five loaves and two fish for such a large crowd? It is impossible for us to feed a crowd of more than five thousand people with only five loaves and two fish. However, for Jesus it was enough. This little boy's act of kindness was a blessing to the crowd, but most of all to him, because his story was recorded in the Bible forever. (John 6: 1 -15). Have you thought that an act of generosity can change your life forever?



When you share, God blesses you: According to Solomon the wise man, there are those who share, and more is added to them; There is one who scatters, yet increases more; And there is one who withholds more than is right, but it leads to poverty. (Proverbs 11: 24, 25). Every time we share what we have, every time we help others and give, the most blessed person is ourselves. Solomon the wise man emphasizes it again with the following proverb: Cast your bread upon the waters, for you will find it after many days. Give a serving to seven, and also to eight, for you do not know what evil will be on the earth. (Ecclesiastes 11: 1, 2). This verse can be understood in the following way, when you share, you will have many friends and they will help you when you no longer have or you may be going through difficult situations. Jesus said, "Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away." (Matthew 5: 42). Isn't it beautiful to know that we can be a blessing to others? Isn't it also beautiful to know that every time we share what we have, God also blesses us? There are more Bible verses that show us this blessing: It is more blessed to give than to receive (Acts 20: 35); God loves a cheerful giver (2 Corinthians 9:7).





When you share, you express that you love Jesus: In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus invites us to share with everyone. He says that God makes the sun rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust (Matthew 5: 45) that is why we, his children, whenever we have the opportunity, we must do good to everyone. Not only to those we know, not only to our friends, but also to those we don't know, even those people who don't love us. Why do it? Because we have Jesus in our hearts.

When you share with Jesus, He multiplies it:


From the story of the boy of the loaves and the fishes, we learn wonderful lessons. When you give Jesus what you have, he will multiply it to be a great blessing. Have you ever thought what five loaves and two fish are to feed such a large crowd of more than five thousand men without counting children and women? For us it is only five loaves and two fish, but for Jesus it was enough to feed a large crowd. There are some people who gave God what they had, and God worked great things through it. Moses had a rod in his hand and handed him over to God. By means of this rod God worked great miracles, even parted the Red Sea. Peter had a boat and handed it over to Jesus; there, in this boat, Jesus performed the miracle of the miraculous catching of fishes, there Jesus calmed the storm and from there He gave the world great teachings.



Invitation: Would you like to ask God to give you a generous heart? Remember this promise: The generous soul will prosper; And he who waters will also be watered himself. (Proverbs 11: 25)

Activity: Write the ways you can help the people around you.

Challenge: Do an act of kindness in the next 24 hours... it can be sharing what you have, helping an old man, helping a friend with their homework, helping your parents, etc. and share your testimony tomorrow.

- 
- Tidying my room
 - Picking up trash
 - watering the plants
 - sharing my lunch



You Did It to Me

- *Bible Text:* And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.' (Matthew 25:40)
- *Thought:* When we help those in need, we are serving Jesus
- *introduction:* It was November 28, 2012 there in New York, United States, it was very cold. People walked in the streets with their coats, their shoes appropriate for the time. Sitting on a stool was a homeless man shivering with cold and bare feet. Suddenly a young policeman arrived, who brought him some new boots. At the moment that the policeman handed him the boots, a tourist passed by, took a photograph of the moment, uploaded it to social networks and the image went viral. What motivated this police officer to perform this act of kindness? One journalist wrote: "Fortunately there are still good and selfless people in the world." Jesus Christ told his disciples that, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me. (Matthew 25: 40)



The example of Jesus

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said, “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.” (Matthew 5: 7) Jesus taught it with words, but also by example. Jesus' life was an example of mercy and compassion for all human beings. Matthew the disciple wrote that Jesus, seeing the crowd, was moved with compassion for them, because they were like sheep not having a shepherd. (Mark 6: 34) Jesus saw each person as a child of God and a candidate for his kingdom.

One day while Jesus was teaching in a city, a man came with leprosy. The disease had invaded his body and disfigured it. He could barely walk and he smelled really bad. When people saw him, they fled, no one wanted to be contaminated by his presence. Now a leper came to Him, imploring Him, kneeling down to Him and saying to Him, “If You are willing, You can make me clean. Then Jesus, moved with compassion, stretched out His hand and touched him, and said to him, “I am willing; be cleansed. As soon as He had spoken, immediately the leprosy left him, and he was cleansed.” (Mark 1: 40 -42)

There will always be people to help: God said that there will always be needy people on earth. To the Lord, these needy represent an opportunity for his children to be generous. Along with this truth, God commands his children to be generous with those who suffer poverty and misery (Deuteronomy 15: 11). God had given orders to his people to take care of the orphans, widows, foreigners and the needy that were in the town and gave commandments for it. One of the most beautiful stories is that of Ruth the gleaner. She went to Boaz's field to glean, that is, she dedicated herself to collecting what was left of the harvest, what fell and left by the workers. Ruth was happy when she got home and told Naomi that Boaz and his workers had treated her well. Why did Boaz allow an unknown person to glean in his field? The answer is that God had given laws to care for those most in need.





The command of Jesus: Jesus before going to heaven, he gave commandments to his disciples telling them that every time they helped someone in need, they were actually helping him. When he comes the second time, he will say: "Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me. Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You? And the King will answer and say to them, Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'" (Matthew 25: 34 -40)

How to achieve it: Her name was Dorcas, which means “Gazelle” although she was also known by her Hebrew name “Tabita”. She was a disciple of Jesus. She loved Jesus very much and served people by giving alms, helping the poor. She Dorcas was very fond of sewing clothes and giving them to widows, orphans and those who did not have. What a beautiful example of kindness, compassion and generosity! “I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.” (Matthew 25: 40)

Invitation: Today God invites you to be generous with those most in need, always remember these words “I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.” (Matthew 25: 40)



Activity: Make a list of people in great need. And pray for them.

Challenge: Take a help to someone who is on the list. He can be a homeless person, some migrants, orphans etc.





The Danger of Selfishness and Greed

- *Bible Text:* Honor the Lord with your possessions, and with the first fruits of all your increase; So your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will overflow with new wine. (Proverbs 3: 9- 10)
- *Thought:* Selfishness and greed are evils that we have to avoid. We cannot receive God's blessings when we close our hearts and hands.
- *introduction:* The Monkey's Greed: Monkeys are usually very greedy. For example, when they pull a coconut from the palm tree, they cling to it so much that there is no way to get it off. The natives who hunt monkeys to sell them take advantage of this characteristic to capture them alive. These hunters take a normal-sized coconut and make a hole in it so that the monkey's hand can enter almost fitted. They then tie the coconut to the end of a chain, connect the other end to a nearby stake, and disappear from sight. It doesn't take long before a monkey appears on the spot and sees the coconut. He then puts his hand into the hole to get out some of the white flesh of the coconut, which he likes to eat so much. But when closing his hand to extract the food, he discovers that his closed hands, and he cannot take it out. The monkey is now furious, but at the same time, he refuses to let go of the part of the pulp in his hand. In this way, the poor monkey is imprisoned. And as long as he doesn't open his hand, he won't be able to eat what he has in it, nor will he be able to escape. He doesn't realize that by letting go of the portion of coconut he is holding, he can regain his freedom. But the monkey's greed is so great that he's entrapped and condemned until the hunter takes him to sell him.

The story of one who fell into greed: This characteristic of the monkey brings to mind memories of a heartbreaking story in the Bible. One day the people of Israel went to war against a small town called Ai. Both Joshua and the people of Israel thought it would be an easy battle to win. But the Israelites were defeated. Joshua and the whole congregation were sorrowful. They decided to pray to God to find out what had happened. God did not leave his people unanswered. In his great love, he revealed to them what had happened. It turns out that Achan, a man from the tribe of Judah, had given in to selfishness and greed. God had forbidden them to take the treasure from Jericho. All the loot found in Jericho would belong to God and should be consecrated only for Him. So no one had to take it to his house. But Achan saw that there was a lot of money, clothes, and a lot of gold. He knew all of this belonged to God, but greed and selfishness overcame him. He decided to take various things, hide them in his store, and wait for the war to end to enjoy it. Achan believed that God would not know. When Joshua and all the people learned of Achan's theft, by divine order, all the people stoned him with all his belongings. (Joshua 7)



Free from selfishness and greed: The story of Achan teaches us that greed and selfishness are sins that offend God. In the Tenth Commandment, God forbids greed and selfishness (Exodus 20: 17). God, in his love, wants each of his children to be free from selfishness and greed. For this reason, he did two extraordinary things.

a) First, He made us stewards to care for and share what he has given us. The Bible says that God created man in his image and likeness and blessed man and woman and told them: "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that [a]moves on the earth." (Genesis 1: 28). The Psalmist David tells us that this is one of the great blessings we have received from God: When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained, what is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit[a] him? For You have made him a little lower than [b]the angels, and You have crowned him with glory and honor. You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet,

All sheep and oxen even the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea that pass through the paths of the seas.

(Psalm 8: 3 -8).

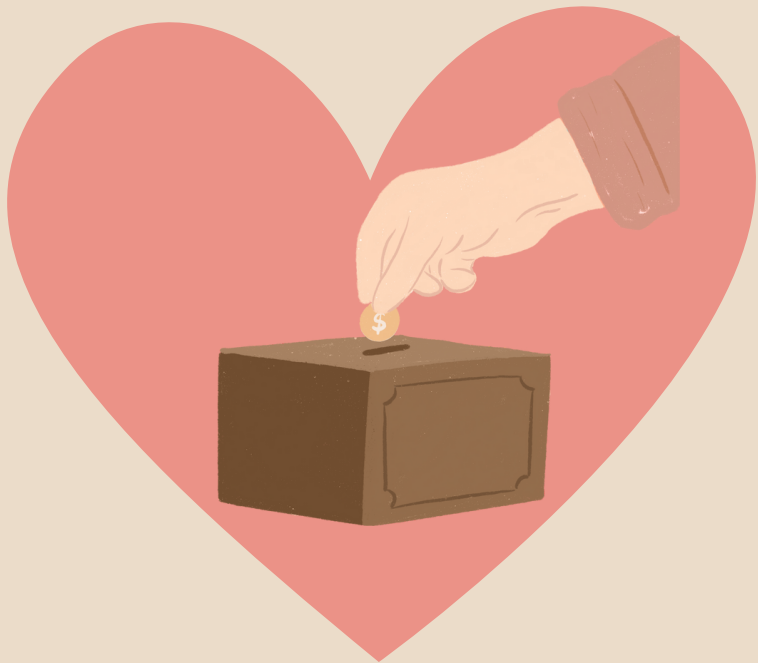
b) The second thing that God has done is to send Jesus to teach us to love. Jesus said: A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. That you love one another (John 13: 34). Jesus taught it not only with his words but also with his example. He said: Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. (John 13: 13).



What belongs to God is holy: Another lesson we can learn from the story of Achan is that there are things that belong to God, and what belongs to God is holy. He asks us for it and wants His children to obey Him by dedicating everything they own to Him. One of the beautiful stories we have heard is about a boy named Colgate. You may have heard it before, but it is worth remembering. Colgate was a boy who lived in England. While still very young, he decided to go to the United States to look for work. At just 16 years old, he is walking the streets selling soaps in a wooden box hanging around his neck to earn a living and help his mother, who was his widow. Before Colgate left his house to work in the United States, his mother called him and gave him a Bible. In the Bible, she taught him a biblical text; This passage is in the book of Malachi 3: 10. The verse said: Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and try Me now in this, says the Lord of hosts, If I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it. His mother read them to him, underlined them, and told him always to remember this passage and that he should always put God first. Colgate believed God's Word and decided to return God's tithes of everything earned. Colgate began selling soaps on the streets and endured difficult times; he obeyed God faithfully, giving him his tithes and offerings. Over time his business prospered and becoming a great businessman. One day he decided to throw a big party to let people know who had helped him in his company. On one wall, in large letters, was written the Bible verse: " Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and try Me now in this, says the Lord of hosts, If I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it. " (Malachi 3: 10) This day, Colgate made known to the world that God is faithful and that he keeps his promises. The story does not end there; Colgate not only decided to give the tithe but also 20%, then 30%, and even 90% of his profits to God.

Invitation: Would you like to obey God today by giving Him what belongs to Him? Remember the following: "God is faithful and keeps his promises."

Challenge: Set a special offering to God and deliver it this Sabbath at church.

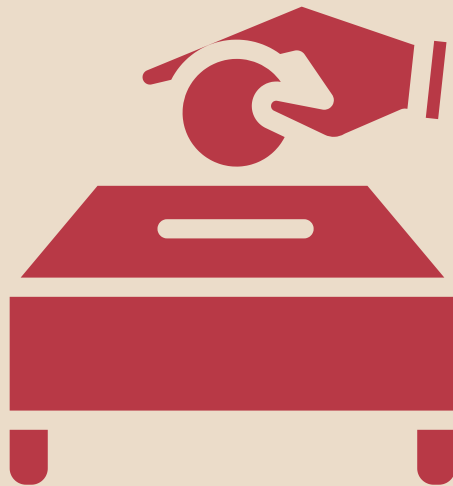


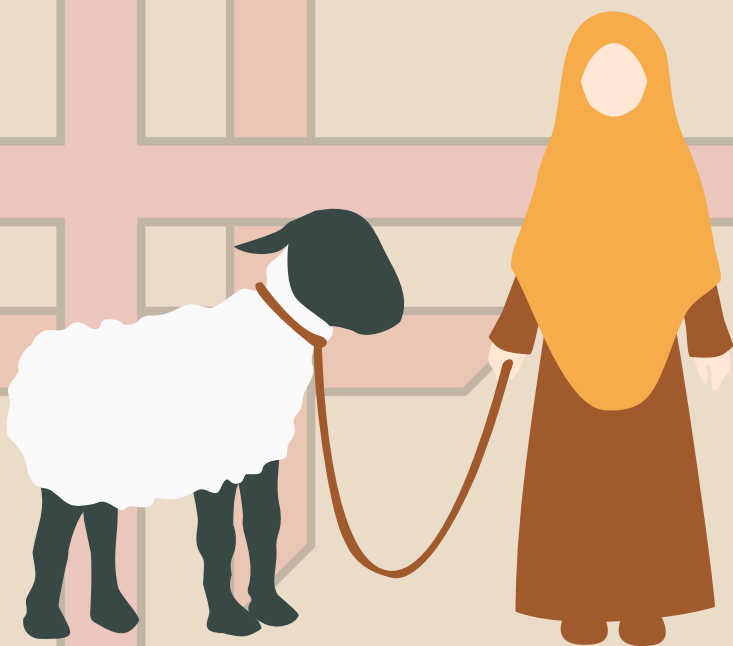


She Gave More Than All the Rest

- *Bible Text:* So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of [a]necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. 2 Corinthians 9: 7
- *Thought:* The offering belongs to God; although it is voluntary, God wants it to be given with joy and that his indications be obeyed.
- Braulio Pérez Marcio brought to mind the story of a Persian king who always took his treasurer with him to reward the virtuous actions he witnessed. One day he saw an old man planting walnut trees. What are you doing good old man? the king asked. Walnut plants oh king. The man answered. And why do you plant walnut trees whose fruits you will not be able to eat? The king asked again. The old man replied. I plant walnut trees to pay my debt to those who planted those whose fruits I tasted in my youth. Given this response, the king awarded him the prize. What a noble attitude of the old man. This story reminds us of someone who was also observed. That person was not observed or praised by an earthly king, but by the king of kings and Lord of Lords Christ Jesus.
- *The widow's offering:* The Biblical story tells us that Jesus, being in the temple, observed those who delivered their offerings. And He looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the treasury, and He saw also a certain poor widow putting in two mites. So He said, "Truly I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all; for all these out of their abundance have put in offerings for God, but she out of her poverty put in all the livelihood that she had." (Luke 21: 1 -4). What a beautiful example of this poor widow.

The offerings belong to God: God asked the people of Israel to bring him offerings: Speak to the children of Israel, that they bring Me an offering. From everyone who gives it willingly with his heart you shall take My offering. (Exodus 25: 2). According to this biblical passage, the offerings are for God and are voluntary. In the biblical account, God wanted to dwell in the midst of his people. For this He asked that a sanctuary be built. To build the sanctuary and to maintain it, God decided to seek the collaboration of the people of Israel. Not all the people could build, not all could work in the sanctuary, but all could help in this beautiful work. The way that all the people of Israel could help God was through his offerings. In the same way, God seeks the collaboration of all his children. We can't all do the same work, but we can all be God's helpers, and we can do it through our offerings.





God wants the offering to be very special: The offerings that the children of Israel brought to God had to be such that they were pleasing to Him (Leviticus 19: 5). For this reason, God has left indications of how He wants them to be. Offerings. For example, when it came to a sheep, God would only accept a sheep without blemish. What we can learn from it is the following: "although the offering was voluntary, God wanted the best to be given and that His indications be followed."

God loves a cheerful giver: The Apostle Paul lets us know God's desire for each of his children. For this he wrote: "So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of [a]necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver." (2 Corinthians 9: 7) God wants each of his children to be happy when giving their offerings. God wants us to bring him the offerings according to our possibilities but with joy and happiness. God loves a cheerful giver. In other words, "God loves the one he gives with joy."


The example of Abel: One of the most beautiful examples of the Bible is that of Abel. The biblical story says: And it happened with time, that Cain brought from the fruit of the earth an offering to Jehovah. And Abel also brought some of the firstborn of his sheep, some of the fattest of them. And the LORD looked favorably on Abel and on his offering; but he did not look favorably on Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.

What made the difference in Abel's offering? The answer is simple. Abel brought the best he had and offered it to God, he gave his offering with joy, with faith and following God's mandate. What a noble example! Long after Abel's death, his offering was remembered and he topped the list of great heroes of the faith. The Apostle Paul wrote: "By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks." (Hebrews 11: 4)



Invitation: Would you like to follow this wonderful example? God wants you to be like Abel and bring your offering with joy and happiness.

Challenge: Make a commitment to Jesus to always bring your offering with joy and happiness.



I promise to give my offerings to
GOD with joy and love.



You Are My Hands

- *Bible Text:* And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come. Matthew 24: 14
- *Thought:* God wants us to be his hands, feet, and voice so that his word may be preached throughout the world.
- *Introduction:* In World War II, a small town is bombed. In this city, there was a statue of Jesus, which was severely damaged. The villagers picked up the scattered pieces of that statue and hired a sculptor to put it back together. The sculptor did a beautiful job restoring the figure of Jesus; however, the villagers could not find the hands of the statue. Finally, after several discussions, they reached an agreement. The statue of Jesus would remain without hands; however, they put up a sign with a visible inscription: "You are my hands."
- The divine command: there are two very challenging passages, and Matthew records both passages. Both passages tell us about the preaching of the gospel. The first passage is a prophecy: And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. (Matthew 24: 14). The second passage is a command "And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying: All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you, and behold, I am with you every day, until the end of the world. Amen." According to the first passage, the gospel will be preached to the whole world and then, only then will the end come. In other words, before the end comes, the gospel must be preached to the whole world. The question is how is it going to be achieved? In the second passage, he commands his disciples to preach the gospel and make disciples. What is challenging is that this gospel has to be preached to all nations. The question is the same how will this be achieved? Jesus gives us the answer. Jesus wants us to be his hands, feet, and voice so that others know him. He assures us that he will be with us until the end of the world. (Matthew 28: 20)

Called to be a missionary: God wants us all to work for him by being a missionary wherever we are. The Waldensians had a motto: "You will be missionaries, or you will be nothing." People who give their lives to serve Jesus are precious to him. It is written: "For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. How then can they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how can they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without a preacher? And how will they preach if they are not sent? As it is written: How beautiful are the feet of those who announce peace, of those who announce the good news!" Would you like to be a missionary of Jesus, making your light shine wherever you are?



Contributing with your mission offering: We can be the hands, feet, and voice of Jesus so that others can know him. I am going to tell you the story of a boy named Theodore. This boy was born in a region of great spiritual need called "the 10 40 window." The 10 40 window covers many countries where Christ is not known and is difficult to preach. By the grace of God, Theodore's family came to know the Word of God and gave Jesus Christ. Theodore wanted to be a missionary since he was little. He wanted to preach about Jesus. One day a missionary arrived in Africa and invited him to prepare to serve God. How would he achieve it if his family was humble and there was no Adventist university in the country where he lived? Thanks to God, many people gave a special offering for missionary work every Saturday in the 10 40 window in various parts of the world. Thanks to this special offering, a special opportunity was opened for Theodore. In this way, he was able to prepare to be a pastor and dedicate his whole life to Jesus. Thank God today, Theodore is a missionary and serves the Lord; Through his work, more than a thousand people have already accepted Christ as his savior.

Blessed are all these people who contribute their offerings to the missions every Saturday. So many have not been able to go to the mission field personally but have been the hands, feet, and voice of Christ through his mission offerings. Thanks to these offerings, preachers have been trained. The offerings were also used to build churches, hospitals, and community centers to help those in need, schools, and much more.



Invitation: Have you ever thought that your offering, however simple it may be, can reach the farthest places on earth and contribute to great projects? One of the greatest blessings we have here on earth is to be the hands, feet, and voice of Jesus so that many believe in him.

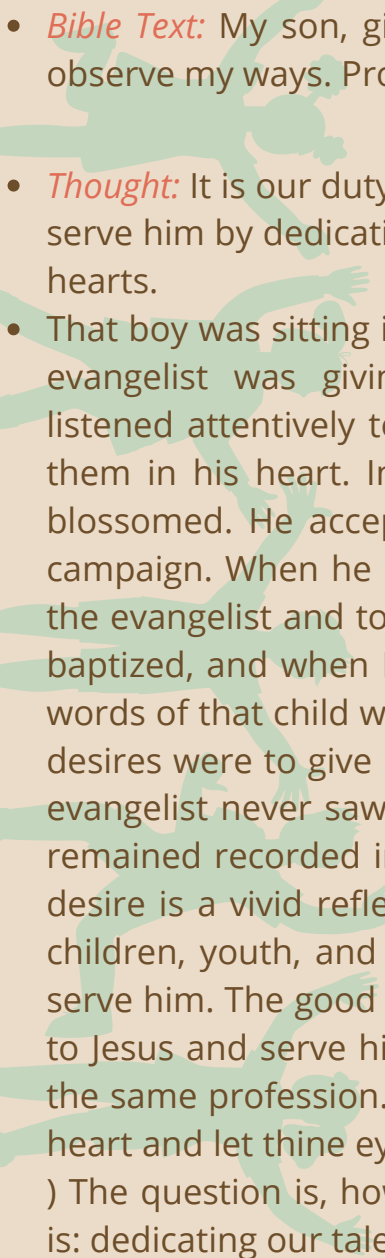
Activity: Pray to God for the places where the gospel has to be reached by our missionaries. For all the ministers who dedicate their lives to God worldwide.

Challenge: Set aside your mission offering in time to deliver it on the thirteenth Saturday.

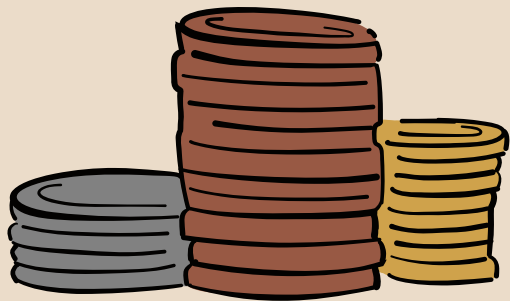




My Heart Is For Jesus

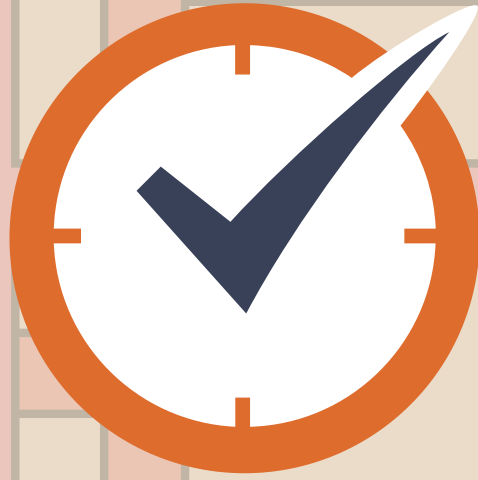
- 
- *Bible Text:* My son, give me thine heart and let thine eyes observe my ways. Proverbs 23: 26
 - *Thought:* It is our duty to give our talents to Christ Jesus and serve him by dedicating our time, our whole being, and our hearts.
 - That boy was sitting in the first pew of that room where an evangelist was giving some biblical lectures. The boy listened attentively to each of the sermons and treasured them in his heart. In his tender heart, the love of Christ blossomed. He accepted the call on the last night of the campaign. When he had the opportunity, he ran to talk to the evangelist and told him: "I am 9 years old, I want to be baptized, and when I grow up, I want to be a pastor." The words of that child wildly struck the evangelist. His deepest desires were to give his heart to Jesus and serve God. That evangelist never saw the boy again, but those words have remained recorded in the evangelist his mind. That child's desire is a vivid reflection of what is in the heart of many children, youth, and adults: to give his heart to Jesus and serve him. The good news is that we can all give our hearts to Jesus and serve him, although not all of us can practice the same profession. The Lord says: My son, give me thine heart and let thine eyes observe my ways. (Proverbs 23: 26) The question is, how can we serve the Lord? The answer is: dedicating our talents to God.

- *The parable of the talents:* Jesus told the parable saying: For the kingdom of heaven is like a man who, going far away, called his servants and gave them his possessions. To one, he gave five talents, and to another two, and to another, to each according to his ability; then he went away.
- And he who had received five talents went and traded with them and gained another five talents. Likewise, the one who had received two also gained another two. But he who had received one went and dug in the ground and hid the Lord's money from him. After a long time, the Lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them. And when the one who had received five talents came, he brought another five talents, saying: Lord, you gave me five talents; here you go, I've gained another five talents on them. And his master said to him: Well done, good and faithful servant; You have been faithful over little, I will put you over much; Enter into the joy of your Lord. When the one who had received two talents also arrived, he said: Lord, you gave me two talents; here you go, I've gained another two talents on them. His master said to him: Well done, good and faithful servant; You have been faithful over little, I will put you over much; Enter into the joy of your Lord. But the one who had received one talent also came and said: Lord, I knew you that you are a hard man, that you reap where you did not sow and gather where you did not spread; therefore, I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the earth; here you have what is yours. His Lord answered he said: Wicked and negligent servant, you knew that I reap where I did not sow and that I gather where I did not scatter. Therefore, you should have given my money to the bankers, and when I came, I would have received what is mine with interest. So take away the talent, and give it to him who has ten talents. For to him who has, it will be given, and he will have more; from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. And throw the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.



God gave talents to all his children: God's children have received talents, and God wants him to use them for his service. Therefore, James said, Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. (James 1: 17). Think about what you like to do, and you do it well. Each person has the gifts and abilities that God has given him. Intelligence, the gift of speech, strength, and energy. Everything must be dedicated to God, remembering that we belong to Him. So many talents are manifested in different professions. Some are doctors, teachers, cooks, mechanics, builders, carpenters, psychologists, nutritionists, etc. God wants us to use our abilities to serve him. Have you thought about your talents and how you can dedicate them to God?





The talent of time: one of the most important talents that all human beings receive is the time that God gives us. Ellen White says: "Our time belongs to God. Every moment is His, and we are under the most solemn obligation to improve it to His glory. Of no talent He has given will He require a more strict account than of our time. (COL 342. 1) Here are two essential things to keep in mind. 1) Use the time to do good things and 2) Dedicate the Sabbath to God: the fourth commandment said: remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy, six days shall thou labor and do all thy work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God (Exodus 20: 8, 11).

The body belongs to God:

it is interesting to know that our strength is a talent from God, and we must use it for Him. When we don't take care of our bodies, we waste this precious talent that God has given us. The Word of God says that our body belongs to God and that we are the temple of the Holy Spirit. (1 Corinthians 6: 19, 20). God is interested in the health of each of his children. He says, "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth." (3 John 2) In other words, God wants you to do well in everything and be healthy in all aspects of your life.



Your heart for Christ: God wants you to give him your heart. He says to you: My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways. (Proverbs 23: 26). Jesus knew it very well for this he said: "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." (Matthew 6: 21). "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind."

(Matthew 22: 37). "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matthew 6: 33)

Bezaleel an artist in the Bible: have you ever heard of Bezaleel? He was from the tribe of Judah, and his name means "in the shadow of God." Bezaleel was a craftsman and a great artist; he was very talented. So when God wanted the sanctuary to be built, God chose him to be the one to work on it. What a blessing! God used this man's talents for such a beautiful and sacred work.



Invitation: In the same way, God wants you to put your talents, gifts, and abilities at his service. Above all, do you want to tell Jesus that you give him your heart today? Are you willing?

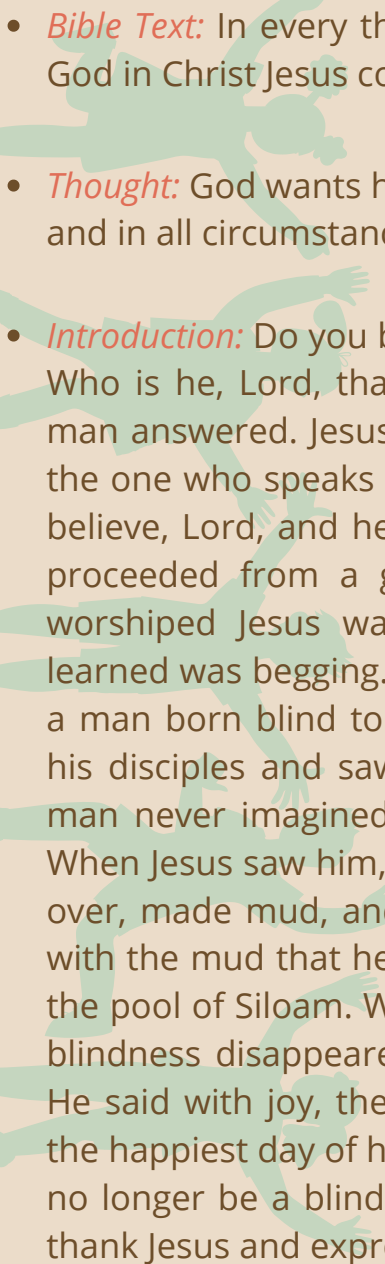
Activity: Think about what your talents are and write them down. Reflect on how you can use them for God.

Challenge: Practice a special song, poetry, or verse, and share it.





A Grateful Heart

- 
- **Bible Text:** In every thing, give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. 1 Thessalonians 5: 18
 - **Thought:** God wants his children to be thankful at all times and in all circumstances
 - **Introduction:** Do you believe in the Son of God? Jesus asked. Who is he, Lord, that I should believe in him? The young man answered. Jesus said to him: you have seen him, and the one who speaks with you, he is he. The boy told him: I believe, Lord, and he loved it. (John 9:35-39). This worship proceeded from a grateful heart. The young man who worshiped Jesus was born blind. The only job he had learned was begging. In those years, there was no hope for a man born blind to see. One day Jesus was passing with his disciples and saw him sitting and begging. That blind man never imagined that this day would be a great day. When Jesus saw him, he had compassion for him. He came over, made mud, and smeared the eyes of that blind boy with the mud that he had made. Then was sent to wash in the pool of Siloam. When he finished washing his eyes, the blindness disappeared. What a thrill! I can see! I can see! He said with joy, the one who had been healed. This was the happiest day of his life. Jesus had healed him. He would no longer be a blind beggar and outcast. How could I not thank Jesus and express it through worship?

We worship God when we understand who He is: The young man healed from blindness understood that Jesus was the Son of God. When we know who God is, our response will be manifest in worshiping Him. In Psalm 100, a call to worship is shared; the psalmist says:

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.
Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence
with singing.

Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made
us,
and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of
his pasture.

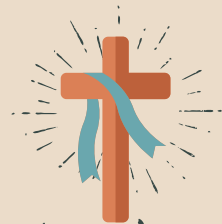
Enter into his gates with thanksgiving,
and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and
bless his name.

For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting;
and his truth endureth to all generations.



This psalm defines for us how we should worship God:

a) With our voice: sing for joy to God; b) With our service: serve the Lord with joy; c) Coming to his house of prayer with our gifts: come before him with rejoicing (According to the divine mandate, no man had to appear before Jehovah empty-handed. Deuteronomy 16: 16 The psalmist explains why we must express our gratitude to God through worship. a) First, it is because of the recognition that Jehovah is God, He is our creator, and we are his people. b) The second reason is because of the character of God; God is good, merciful, and faithful.



We worship God when we understand what he has done for us: The boy who had received his sight worshiped Jesus in understanding that Jesus was the one who had healed him. When we realize that God has done great things for us, He will fill our hearts. In Psalm 103, David gives some reasons for giving thanks to God.

Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:
Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases;

Who redeemeth thy life from destruction;
who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies;

Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things;
so that thy youth is renewed like the eagles.

Psalms 103: 1 -5



A thankful heart is pleasing to God: God wants us to be grateful; Let gratitude become a habit. The divine mandate is this: In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. (1 Thessalonians 5: 18). One of the fascinating stories of a grateful heart is the experience of Mary. Mary was the sister of Lazarus and Martha. She liked to sit at Jesus' feet to learn from Him (Luke 10: 38 -39). One day Mary decided to thank Jesus and brought him a bottle containing a costly perfume. She poured it on the feet of Jesus. Suddenly the house where Jesus was was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. Where was the scent coming from? They soon discovered that Mary had brought it and poured it on Jesus. Some criticized and tried to humiliate her. Still, Jesus congratulated and also defended her, expressing that she had done what was right. People would always talk about Mary everywhere the gospel was preached.



Invitation: Would you like to thank God for all his goodness? Would you like to ask God to give you a heart full of gratitude?





Seventh-Day Adventist Church

Inter-American Division
Children and Adolescents Ministries