



THE GIFT GOD HAS FOR YOU

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FACILITATOR GUIDE

YOUR BEST GIFT

What is your favorite (or one of your favorite) gift you ever received?

Did you ever get a gift that helped set the passions of your heart in a particular direction? **[art, music, science, sports, mechanics, etc.]**

What is a gift you always wanted but no one ever got for you?

Ecclesiastes 5:19—

Everyone also to whom God has given wealth and possessions and power to enjoy them, and to accept his lot and rejoice in his toil—this is the gift of God.

According to this verse, what are some of the gifts from God? **[Wealth; possessions; the ability to enjoy what you have; the ability to be satisfied with your situation; and to be happy with what makes your living—these are all gifts for which we can give God the credit.]**

Do you have all these blessings, some of these blessings, or none?

What are the blessings for which you are most grateful?

When you pray would you say you spend more time...

- Praising God
- Thanking God
- Asking for help with something for yourself
- Praying for other people
- Other _____

UNDERSTANDING GOD'S GIVING

Matthew 7:11—

If you then, who are 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!

What kind of gifts do you tend to buy for others? Practical/useful? Fun? Jokes? Educational?

What kind of gifts does God give?

John 4:7-15—

7 A woman from Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink."

8 (For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.)

9 The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.)

10 Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water."

11 The woman said to him, "Sir, you have nothing to draw water with, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water?"

12 Are you greater than our father Jacob? He gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock."

13 Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again,

14 but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

15 The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water."

According to verse 10, what gift was Jesus offering to give to the woman? [Living water.]

What is meant by "living water"? [Read Acts 10:44-45]

Acts 10:44-45—

44 While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word.

45 And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles.

What are the benefits of drinking water? [Nourishes; satisfies; necessary for life; cleanses, etc.]

When Jesus offered the woman "Living Water," He was offering a spiritual element that would do the same thing for our soul that water does to our body. Because our soul never dies, the "Living Water," which is the indwelling of the **HOLY SPIRIT** gives us spiritual nourishment, perfect satisfaction in Christ, eternal life, and sanctification which leads to **SPIRITUAL MATURITY**.

What is God most interested in —our physical needs or our spiritual growth and maturity? [He cares about our physical and will use our infirmities to accomplish the lessons and grow the qualities He desires for us. He hopes to increase our faith, build our character, give us a testimony, and draw us closer in our relationship with Him.]

THE BENEFITS OF TRIALS

The woman at the well had to “face the crowd” daily at the well. Her way to deal with a difficult situation in her life was to avoid the crowd altogether.

What is your coping mechanism for dealing with difficult situations? [Avoidance. Prayer for it to go away. Prayer for strength to go through it. Pass it on to someone else. Etc.]

James 1:2-4—

2 Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds,
3 because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance.

4 Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

What does James say are the benefits of trials? [Perseverance, maturity, completeness]

What is perseverance? [Patience endurance. It's the ability to go on despite the difficulty of the task.]

When has been a time that you have had to persevere through something?

As you were going through that situation would you have used the word “joy” to describe your struggle?

How does perseverance lead to maturity? [There are lessons to be learned when we go through difficult times. If we tend to quit when something gets hard we miss the lessons we could have gained in the experience.]

In what ways do you feel you have matured over the years?

Difficult seasons come to everyone eventually. The good news is the Bible tells us that they don't stay. God knows just what we can handle and what we need to learn through the ordeal. Just be sure to pray that God will help you learn what you need to learn so you won't have to repeat it!

There was once a saint who was asked by her pastor what her favorite verse of Scripture was. She replied with only a phrase, "And it came to pass." We may have to struggle for a while, but it is good to know that God sees our predicament and will bring it to pass.

STILL GOD

George Muller was a Christian evangelist in England during the 1800s. One day George began praying for five of his friends to be saved. After many months, one of them came to the Lord. Ten years later, two others were converted. It took 25 years before the fourth man was saved. Muller persevered in prayer until his death for the fifth friend, and throughout those 52 years he never gave up hoping that he would accept Christ! His faith was rewarded, for soon after Muller's funeral the last one was saved.

Was the delay in George's prayer a sign that God has bad hearing?

Was the delay in his prayer an indication that God was not in control of the situation?

What may be some reasons it took a while for some to come to Christ? [Their own stubbornness (we can pray for people, but we can't accept Christ for them). The timing had to be right.]

If George would have given up and quit praying too soon, what wrong conclusions might he have come to? [He might have assumed that God is not real or that God doesn't care about him or his concerns.]

Whether or not God answers your prayer should not be the litmus test that determines if God is real.

*Whether your prayer is answered or not,
God still remains God.*

Is there a prayer you are still waiting on to be answered? If so, can you still believe and trust God's sovereign plans?

PRAYER TIME

- Give thanks to God for all the times He has chosen to lead you to and through situations that have helped you to grow.
- Pray for God's will to be done in all your difficulties. Then pray that you will have the endurance to see the outcome through. All the while, look for God's hand at work in the moment.
- If you have a need, make it known to God. He is listening. But if He is silent in the matter, don't discount His ability to work through it in a positive way for you. Remember, God's timeline is different than yours.