



SESSION 4 of 4

The talents

MEETING AIM

To think about how we use the gifts God has given us.

BIBLE PASSAGE

Matthew 25:14-30.

BACKGROUND

Like the parable of the tenants in the vineyard, this can be a tricky story to share with young children. However, the idea of being good at things is something children can grasp. Help them understand that God gives us skills and talents, and we can use these to help others and tell them how amazing Jesus is. Think about how you use the money, gifts and talents God has given you for his kingdom. Do you have an example that will help children explore the story further?

5 CIRCLE TIME

Welcome each child by name and invite them to join your circle and share in the snacks you have brought. Chat together about what has happened since you last met. Ask the children if anyone has done anything surprising or special for them. Perhaps they had a treat or went to a birthday party. If possible, share an appropriate example from your own life.

10 INTRO ACTIVITY

You will need: paper; marker pen; child-safe scissors

Before the session, fold one piece of paper per child into a concertina. Draw the outline of a person on the front. Make sure the hands go right to the edge so that when you have cut and unfolded the paper you have a garland of paper people holding hands.

Give each child a concertina and show them how to cut around the figure and turn one thing into several! You will need to help the children with this, but try to let them do as much as they can. Play with the paper people for a while. Encourage the children to name the people and decide what they are like.

10 BIBLE STORY

You will need: a bag containing plastic coins

Gather the children together and tell them this story:

Jesus told a story about a man who was going on a journey. He called his servants and asked them to look after his money while he was gone. To the first servant he gave five bags of gold. *Count out five plastic coins.*

To the second he gave two bags of gold. *Count out two plastic coins.*

And to the third he gave one bag of gold. *Count out one plastic coin.*

After a long time, the man returned. The first servant came to him. He gave him the five bags of gold and then another five bags he had gained while the man was away. *Count out another five coins and place them next to the first five.*

"Well done, good and faithful servant," said the man. "You have done well with small things, so I know I can trust you with big things."

The second servant came to the man. He gave him the two bags of gold and then another two bags he had gained while the man was away. *Count out another two coins and place them next to the first two.*

"Well done, good and faithful servant," said the man. "You have done well with small things, so I know I can trust you with big things."

The third servant came to the man. He gave the man back his one bag of gold. He said: "I know you are a hard man and I was afraid. So I hid the money in the ground and didn't use it to make more money." *Point to the one coin.*

"Lazy servant!" the man said. "You could have at least put it in the bank to get the interest. Take this gold and give it to the man with ten bags. Those who use what I give them will be given more, but those who don't will have it taken away."

5 CHATTING TOGETHER

Chat about the Bible story using these questions. Try to involve all the children in your discussion:

- What is your favourite part of this story?
- How would you describe the man who was going on a journey?
- Do the servants in the story have names? What are they like?
- How do you think the servants in the story made their money?
- What do you think this story is really about?

10 CREATIVE RESPONSE

You will need: plastic coins from 'Bible story'; paper people from 'Intro activity'; crayons or felt-tip pens

Share the plastic coins around. Comment that this story is about using the things we have been given as best we can. God doesn't always give us money like the man in the story, but he gives us things we are good at. Ask the children what they are good at. If any of them struggle for ideas encourage the others to make suggestions. How can they use those gifts to help others? Encourage examples such as: "I'm good at football, and I could ask lonely children to play with me."

Remind the group that it isn't about doing good things to make God love us, as he already loves us! He wants us to share his love with other people and make the world a better place.

Ask the children to think of grown-ups who use the talents God gave them to help other people. Take the paper-chain people and invite the children to draw someone using their talents to help others on each person (eg doctor, firefighter, lollipop lady, parent). They should draw themselves on the last person, showing how they can use their talents.

10 PRAYER

You will need: paper people from 'Creative response'

Ask the children to hold up their paper people and thank God for one of the people they have drawn. Go around the group, letting each child who wants to say their prayer. If they are struggling, you could give them simple sentence starts, such as: "Thank you, God, for..." They can then add their person (eg my teacher, my daddy, our Sunday group leader) at the end.

Once everyone has said what they want to say, hold up your paper chains, give everyone a big cheer and shout: "Thank you, God!"

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