



The Same Spirit

(based on 1 Corinthians 12)

Many years ago, a group of people met as part of God's church. They lived in the city of Corinth (KAWR-ihnth). One day, they began to argue about who was the best follower of Jesus.

Some of the people in the church sent a message to their friend Paul asking for help. Paul wrote a letter back to help the church understand some important things. When the letter arrived, the people gathered to hear what Paul had to say.

Dear friends,

God has given each one of us special gifts and talents. We can all do different things and all these gifts come from the Holy Spirit.

Some of us teach, while others understand hard things. Some of us have great faith, while others can heal the sick and do amazing miracles. All these gifts come from the Holy Spirit.

The church is like a body. As you know, a body is made up of different parts. Each part has an important job to do.

Some people are like the eyes because they notice people who need help. Others are like the feet because they travel to many places with the good news of Jesus.

Some people are like the mouth because they use words to teach and encourage. Others are like the hands because they help people.

Each person in the church is part of the body. Everyone does something different, but we all work together to show God's love. Remember, dear friends, we need each other because we are all part of God's church.

Your friend,

Paul

The people realized it was silly to argue about who was the best follower of Jesus. They were all important! They all had a job to do and they needed each other. If they worked together, they would be able to do wonderful things for God. And that's what they did!



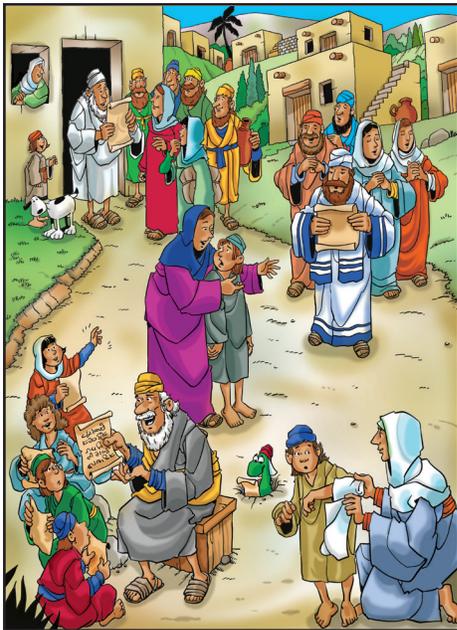
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Use one or more activities from each section to explore grace and gratitude with your children this week.

Recognizing God's Grace

- Read and enjoy the story with your children—imagine and wonder.
- Help your children make a list of all the tasks that must be done so your household can run well, everything from paying the electric bill to locking the door at night. Talk about how each task requires different gifts and everyone is needed to make the house function at its best.
- What do you have to show your children about how they've grown? It could be pictures, plaster casts, hand or foot prints, or bronzed baby shoes. Discuss the things they have been able to do as they have grown. Brainstorm how we can grow in service as part of Christ's body, as we grow in faith.



Responding to God's Grace

- Ask your children to draw a picture of an event or service at your church. Talk about all the gifts that are necessary to make that happen.
- Discuss what gifts members of your family are sharing as part of the body of Christ at your church. Do you sing hymns? Recite the creed? Does someone serve on a committee to teach?
- Play a guessing game. Let your children decide which parts of the body to use. Write each body part on a slip of paper. Let each person draw a slip, and let the group ask questions to guess what body part was drawn.

Celebrating in Gratitude

- Sing "Head and Shoulders, Knees and Toes," "Do Your Ears Hang Low," and "Dem Bones." Enjoy singing these songs about the parts of the body.
- Discuss the gifts God has given members of your family. Affirm each person. Ask your children which of their gifts they are most thankful for.
- Pray:

God, thank you for giving me gifts I can use in serving you. Help me to recognize those gifts and develop them to serve you even better. Amen.