

Ordinary Time, Proper 15



The Children's Illustrated Bible

Be careful then how you live, not as unwise people but as wise, making the most of the time. So do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. Be filled with the Spirit, as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves. Sing and make melody to the Lord in your hearts, giving thanks to God at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

—Ephesians 5:15–20
adapted

Master Potter

Give each kid a chunk of clay and ask them to describe it. Discuss: We are like a lump of clay, but God is the potter and skillfully molds and shapes us into something of God's own design. There are no prerequisites except that we remain soft and easy to mold. Demonstrate how a piece of old clay (left out overnight) is difficult to mold and shape. This is similar to us being stubborn or hard-hearted, making it difficult for God to mold us into wonderful beings. Give each of the children a plastic bag to keep their clay in so it will stay soft and moldable.

Discuss: Do you sometimes feel inferior if you can't play piano or draw or study as well as your friends? Are you learning and willing to do the things that please God? Do you try to please God in all your thoughts and words and actions? God has something special in mind just for you, and the important thing is to be willing to do what God wants you to do. Then you'll be like workable clay, and God will use you to accomplish great work.

Have the kids mold the clay into something they especially like to do or are good at.

Present a Present

Give one box to each kid, asking them to wrap it with wrapping paper, ribbons, and other decorations.

Discuss: What is the best part of a present? Shake your boxes and see what is in them. They are empty! Ask if anyone would want one of these presents with all the fancy ribbons if they knew that nothing was inside.

If we offer ourselves as a present to God, we should make sure our lives are filled with good stuff. Our lives should be filled with the fruit of the Spirit, and as we sanctify ourselves for God, we will be filled with good things inside and out.

Have kids write on slips of paper all the good gifts and talents they have. Kids can help identify the gifts they've seen in one another. Have kids fill their gift boxes and add treats such as snacks and small gifts. This present will remind you of how to keep yourself filled with good things, or sanctified, for God.



Wisdom Flag

Use a flat bedsheet, or a big roll of paper, to create a flag for the children to share in the worship service. Invite someone to read Ephesians 5:15-20 and Psalm 111:1-3. Using the ideas in the passages, have the children draw their images of "wisdom" to share in the worship service. Have crayons, markers, rubber stamps, and paint available so the children will have enough tools to express their creativity.

Praise the Lord! Give thanks to the Lord with your whole heart, in the company of the congregation. Great are the works of the Lord. Following the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; all those who practice it have a good understanding.

—*Psalm 111:1–3 adapted*

Complete the maze.

