

Gifted

Ephesians 4:7–16 & Romans 12:6–8 | Equipped for a Purpose

Message Reflection Guide

Don't Be Afraid! From *Life in the Spirit* By Robertson McQuilkin

When our children were small I would occasionally take speaking engagements away from our home base in Japan. The children developed a celebration response when I would return. Once, when I came in the gate, four-year-old Kent was playing in the back yard. He'd flooded it to make a gigantic mud pie and was thickly coated with sticky black goo from head to toe. He sighted my entrance and sounded the alarm: "Daddy!" he shouted and ran to embrace me. Here I was, all dressed up in my one preacher-suit. What should I do? Oh, hug him good, of course.

As his siblings sat me down and began fanning me, Kent suddenly disappeared. In the kitchen he pushed a chair over to the wall cabinet where he knew the powdered drink mix was stashed. He'd never done it before, but his daddy was hot and thirsty. He poured an ample supply into a tall glass and, though he didn't know about stirring, he did know about water. Chair to the sink. The glass was

too tall, so he anchored it with two chubby, muddy fingers grasping the rim on the inside.

When Kent brought it to me, what do you suppose I did? No, I couldn't pitch it out into the garden, for the little guy was watching me like a hawk. "Did you make this all by yourself?" I asked. He nodded two silent, quick jerks. I took a sip of the gritty, brown drink. Kent waited a moment and then, with eager anticipation, he asked, "Did you like it?" You think I lied, don't you? But I didn't. I told the very truth. "Kent, I loved it!" Oh, I didn't love the gritty brown water, but it was his love-gift to me. I loved it!

When the Lord returns and we gather to celebrate, the gift offered by the best among us will have in it a muddy finger or two. But if it's the gift of our true love, He'll be well pleased. "I love it!" He'll say, and our joy will be complete. Our next stop on the spiral up is the marriage made in heaven. Rejoice! Don't be afraid.

Conversation Starter

Name a person you are/were close to that had a personality almost opposite of yours. How do those differences work out in your relationship?

Getting into the Scriptures Read Ephesians 4:7-16 and Romans 12:4-8

Brandon said, "**God, through the Spirit, has gifted each believer with a unique gift for a unique purpose.**" What is your experience with learning how the Spirit has gifted you?

The goal of believers using their spiritual gifts is bring spiritual maturity to the body of believers.

To reach spiritual maturity, God has given us spiritual gifts. From the list in Romans 12:4-8, with which gift would you most identify?

To reach spiritual maturity, God has given us Christian leaders. How has a Christian leader made an impact on your spiritual growth?

To reach spiritual maturity, God desires that we work in unity. After reading the list in Romans 12:4-8 again, which spiritual gift seems to be opposite of your personality? How can you work together with believers with that gifting? For example, many people with the spiritual gift of prophecy have a hard time showing mercy to others. How could a person with the gift of prophecy work together with a person with the gift of mercy?

Making it Real

Fill in the blank: After praying to the Holy Spirit, I am beginning to sense that God wants me to help bring Spiritual maturity to Christ's body by _____.