

NOVEMBER *God's Leaders are Gifted*

Read 2 Kings 20:1–6, 1 Corinthians 12, and John 11. What similarities do you see?

Grandma Benson died in her 94th year. She'd been living in a small room at the nursing home for many years. Her mind was not always clear when I visited with her. She seemed to remember her childhood better than the years she had been active in the congregation some twenty years before.

I thought the funeral would be small. Few people seemed to remember her, few ever mentioned her name. To my surprise, when I arrived to do the service the room was packed.

One couple told me, "Most of the people you see here are still in the church because of that wonderful woman. She taught us all. More importantly, she loved us all—and we knew it."

Some people's gifts are easy to see. Others have quieter and less obvious gifts. Grandma Benson loved the children she taught in such a way that they knew they were loved—a wonderful gift, but not very flashy.

For reflection and discussion

On a piece of paper list your gifts—the talents, abilities, or strengths that God has given you. Next to each of your gifts, write down how you have used it. Which gifts are easiest to use? Which have been most effective? Which still wait to be put to good use?

Share your list with someone else. Talk about how you can invite the Spirit to lead you to a more effective use of the gifts you have received "for the common good."

God is a giver. Hezekiah was given 15 years of life; Lazarus resurrection; and Paul tells us that each of us is given "the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good" (1 Corinthians 12:7). What sets us apart as leaders in the church is not that we have gifts—God gives gifts generously to all. It is that we are willing to use our gifts to the glory of God and for the sake of God's people.

Jesus said and continues to say, "You did not choose me but I chose you. . . ." (John 15:16) We are chosen and gifted so that we can lead the "abundant life" of purpose and service.



Prayer

Lord, make us instruments of your love and care as we discover the gifts you have given and set our hearts and minds on using them to your glory and the benefit of others. In the name of the one who was gift for us, help us to be the gifted who give. Amen.