

**BACKGROUND SCRIPTURES:** Matthew 16:13-20;  
Mark 4:26-32; Romans 12:4-8; Ephesians 1:15-23; 2:13-22;  
4:4-6, 11-16; 5:22-27; 1 Timothy 3:15

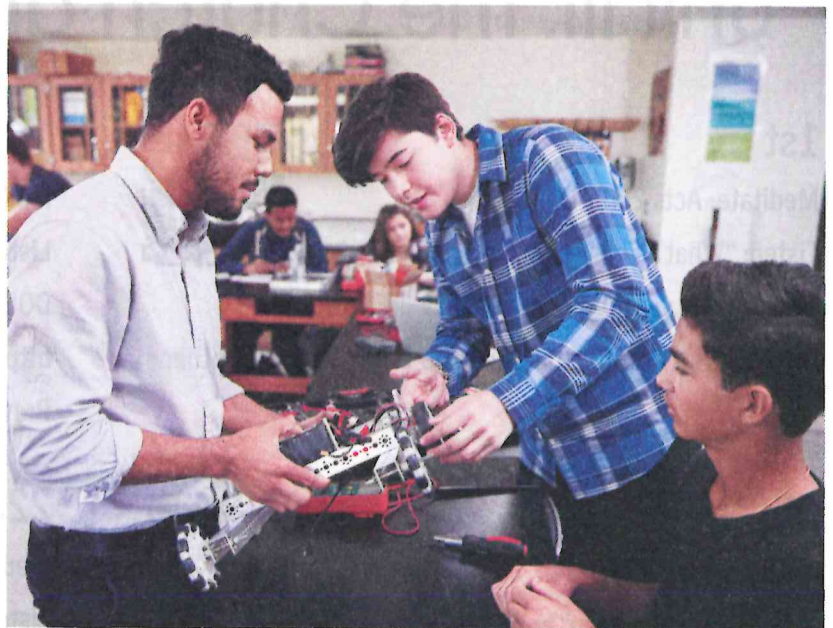
**PRINT PASSAGES:** Mark 4:26-32; Ephesians 4:4-6, 11-16



## L9 Working Together Makes Us Better

### REFLECT

Walt, Eli, Noah, and Theo are students at Canton High School. Theo had known Eli and Noah (twins) since grade school. Walt was new to the crew. They enjoy their time in school and outside of school. They have good aspirations. Walt wants to be an electrician like his dad. He was already very good at making and wiring small toys and controlling them with a remote control. Theo likes to build things; he wants to go into construction. He helped his uncle, who is a contractor, build the community youth center. His uncle allowed him and his brother, Alvin, to do small but safe jobs around the construction site. Theo was fascinated by it all.



Noah and Eli are blessed to have well-to-do parents, so they have the privilege of getting what they need and sometimes what they want. They desire to become entrepreneurs. Their parents are teaching them how to talk to businesspeople to negotiate, persuade, and make good deals.

The boys are all in a mechanical engineering class. Each year, there is a local competition. A \$2,500.00 prize is given to the best project. The project is then moved to regional level. The boys eagerly entered the competition. Now, they must decide on what they would present. They all have gifts and talents. They decide on a state-of-the-art robot—a life-sized one that can walk and talk in several languages! It glows in the dark and can change colors. The boys knew what each of them had to do: Eli and Noah were in charge of getting the materials for the robot; Theo would build the robot, and Walt would wire the robot for mobility, speech, glow, and color changes. The boys knew that they each must be dedicated to doing his part, or the entire project would fail. You need the materials, the builder, and the electrician. They must all work closely together to build the one robot.



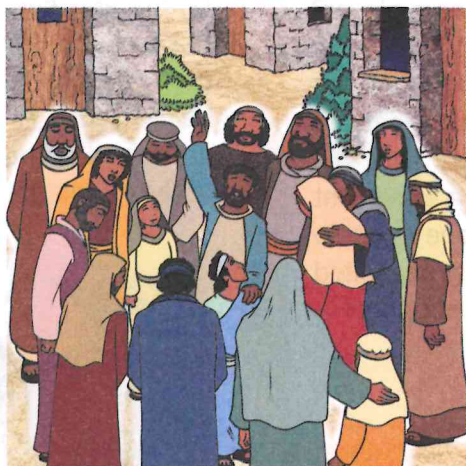
**Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.**  
(Ephesians 4:15-16)





## Mark 4:26-32; Ephesians 4:4-6, 11-16

**26** He also said, "This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. **27** Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. **28** All by itself the soil produces grain—first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. **29** As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come." **30** Again he said, "What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? **31** It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest of all seeds on earth. **32** Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds can perch in its shade."



.....  
**4** There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; **5** one Lord, one faith, one baptism; **6** one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

.....  
**11** So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, **12** to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up **13** until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. **14** Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. **15** Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. **16** From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

## INTERSECT

**T**HE LESSON SCRIPTURE PASSAGES TEACH US THE IMPORTANCE OF WORKING TOGETHER. God has equipped Christians with gifts. Some Christians have broadened their gifts to include talents. God expects us to use our gifts and talents to work together to build unity in the church and the community.

You may think at times that your gift or your role is small and insignificant. But your role, your gift, should not be underestimated. You may think, "Anybody can do that." But they may not be as dedicated or appreciative of having the opportunity to be part of a larger unit. For example, your role in a theatrical production may be to pull the curtain (opening and closing). This is a huge role. It sounds small, but can you imagine the result if there was no one to do it? It's just as important as the actors. If the curtains do not open or they open and close at the wrong times, then the show could be a flop. This is why we all must work together and never undermine the others' roles.

We are one body in Christ, all working together to build His kingdom. We must have unity when working together. There are different roles in the church: ushers, deacons, pastors, teachers, dancers, singers, musicians, custodians, treasurers, and more. Each is responsible for its part. If one party fails to do its duty, it affects the entire church. Imagine not having custodians. Let's understand and respect each other's gifts and talents, no matter how small they seem to be.



**Respond to the questions below on a separate sheet of paper.**

1. In the parable of the mustard seed, to what is the seed being compared?
2. What does the phrase "with such big branches that the birds can perch in its shade" mean?
3. Can you explain the parable of the growing seed in Mark 4:26-29?





## THERE'S AN APP FOR THAT!

Are you participating in a church ministry or any type of team sport or other team projects? Have you experienced being a team player, or the disruption caused by your or someone else's not being a team player? Let's look beyond your own church ministry: The church choir's lack of unity has caused

the choir to be disciplined and suspended. They will not sing for three months. This would have a significant impact on the entire church body. Everyone must do their part on the team, and each team must be unified to do its part and faithfully and spiritually support the entire church body.



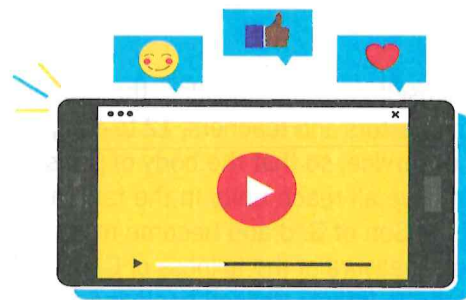
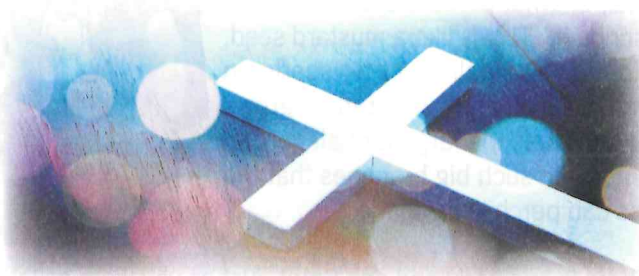
## CONNECT

In lesson 4, we studied spiritual gifts. We completed the spiritual gifts questionnaire to determine the gifts with which we are closely aligned. Our gifts are to be used to help others, serve God and His people, and build the kingdom of God. No one should be prideful of their gift. God gives, and God can take away. Let's review the spiritual gifts again by viewing the video "All Spiritual Gifts EXPLAINED in Less than 10 Minutes" at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cWK5BRzFymQ>.



## STEPPING OUT!

This is your challenge for the week: Study spiritual gifts. Look around your church, community, or family and see how these gifts manifest. Make observations on how you think the gifts can be utilized even more. Do you see gifts that are not being used at all? Do you see gifts that are not being optimized to their full potential? If so, make a note of them. You may mention it to your leaders.



## MEDIA MISSION

Visit the following online site to check out 1 Corinthians 12:12-27, which describes "Unity and Diversity in the Body": <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2012%3A12-27&version=NIV>. Your other mission is to search online for a song, poem, phrase, picture, an additional Scripture, video, or anything else that speaks to the lesson Scripture passages.

