

Explore It

FOR LEADERS



HEART TO CHANGE THE WORLD

SELF-DENIAL
APPEAL

Matthew 25:35-40

This session we look at how Self-Denial Appeal started – people challenged to go and do something. We look at our Mission Partner countries and ask the children to think about how life may be different for children in developing countries, exploring what we might want or need.

We explore how God calls us all to be generous, not just our parents. What can we do as children to support work in developing countries? Explore with the children what they spend their money on – do they know where products come from – this can help to change the world.

Each child will need:

- Pens/pencils and paper or a drawing app
- Self-Denial video questions sheet

Start It

🗨 **Say:** In the Disney film *Encanto*, nearly all the Madrigal family members have a special gift.

Ask: How many *Encanto* characters can you name and what are their gifts?

All the character information can be found in this link: https://disney.fandom.com/wiki/The_Madrigals

Ask: Which of the Madrigal gifts would you most like to have?

Video

Screen share: *Encanto* movie clip – you didn't get a gift? (1 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vmPvNqqik3E>

🗨 **Say:** In the clip we find out that Mirabel Madrigal doesn't appear to have a gift like the rest of her family. (Try not to share any spoilers.)

Ask:

- How do you think that makes Mirabel feel?
- What special contribution does Mirabel make to her family and her village?

🗨 **Say:** God has given each one of us gifts to serve those around us.

Sing It

Today's song is a little calmer than usual but you can join in with the chorus each time and be reminded that:

**'We all have gifts to share,
Everyone, everywhere.
Let the truth be told,
Miracles unfold.
We all have gifts to share.'**

— Susan Kay Wyatts

Screen share: 'We all have gifts to share' by Susan Kay Wyatts (3 mins 50 secs)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uWuX8VxSujo>

Tell It

- **Say:** The Madrigal family are known for serving the village in Encanto. They use their gifts and talents well, but at times their reasons for using them are a questionable.
- **Say:** For the first half of the film, Luisa uses her strength on the outside so that everyone thinks she is strong on the inside. Isabella creates beautiful flower gifts to make sure everything stays looking perfect, and Mirabel does everything she can to make up for the fact she doesn't appear to have a family gift.
- **Say:** As Christians, God has given us gifts, talents and resources to use – not to prove anything or to make us feel better about ourselves, but to serve others. We serve others because that's what Jesus loved to do, and we want to be more like him.

Ask:

- What gifts, talents and resources do you have to offer?
- How can you use your gifts, talents and resources to help others?

- **Say:** In the New Testament, Jesus talked about how important it is to serve others, no matter who they are.

Screenshare: Matthew 25:35-50 (ICB)

"I was hungry, and you gave me food. I was thirsty, and you gave me something to drink. I was alone and away from home, and you invited me into your house. I was without clothes, and you gave me something to wear. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me."

'Then the good people will answer, "Lord, when did we see you hungry and give you food? When did we see you thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you alone and away from home and invite you into our house? When did we see you without clothes and give you something to wear? When did we see you sick or in prison and care for you?"'

'Then the King will answer, "I tell you the truth. Anything you did for any of my people here, you also did for me."'

Ask:

- I wonder what is Jesus trying to teach us about serving others in these verses?
- How should that change the way that we see people in our schools and communities?
- If you could sum up the message of this Bible reading in one sentence, what would it be?

Create

Give the group some time to create a picture that sums up the message of Matthew 25:35-40. They could use a paper and felt-tips, or a drawing app to share their ideas digitally.

If the children run out of time, they could finish the drawings later, and these could be posted on the church social media sites to share the message of Matthew 25:35-40.

Action It

🗨️ **Say:** Every year, Salvationists across the world take part in The Salvation Army's Self-Denial Appeal. We're going to watch the first video together and discover more about this important part of The Salvation Army's service to others.

Give each child a copy of the Self-Denial video questions sheet to answer while they're watching the clip. Read through the questions with them first before watching the clip. Depending on your group's ability, you may wish to split up the questions among your group.

Video

Screenshare: *Self-Denial 2022/Episode 1/Care for Creation* (5 mins 27 secs)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2_tC0zqYnYo

Discuss

Watch the clip and discuss each question on the handout.

➔ What theme is The Salvation Army focusing on this year for the Self-Denial Appeal?

Care for creation

➔ Name one of the countries mentioned in last year's Self-Denial Appeal.

Mali, Burkina Faso, Pakistan, Bangladesh and the Philippines.

➔ What is the idea behind the Self-Denial Appeal?

The idea is you go without something for a week or even a month – that's the Self-Denial bit – and the money you save, or the money you decide to give, supports The Salvation Army's work around the world.

➔ What happens to the money that is raised?

It is redistributed to the people who need it across the world.

➔ How did The Salvation Army use Hadleigh Farm in William Booth's day?

People from the city slums could find the chance to find new skills and employment away from the desperate poverty of the East End.

➔ How is The Salvation Army helping people who are suffering across the world due to climate change?

The Salvation Army provides support and relief for people affected by storms and floods. In Kenya The Salvation Army provides help so people have access to water, sanitation and hygiene.

Discuss what the children found out together.

Ask:

➔ How is The Salvation Army living out the words of Jesus in Matthew 25:35-40?

➔ As a member of The Salvation Army, how can you use your gifts to care for creation and care for those in need?

Pray It

Read through Matthew 25:35-40 again.

Note the different groups of people in need, mentioned by Jesus.

Spend time praying together for:

- Those who are hungry and cannot find any food to eat.
- Those who are thirsty and struggle to find clean water.
- Those who are lonely and have no one to turn to.
- Those who are struggling to stay warm as they need new clothes.
- Those who are feeling ill at home or in hospital.
- Those who are in prison, trying to make up for the mistakes they have made.

Ask God to help you to be more like Jesus, serving others without discrimination.

Explore It

Remember to send home the Explore It (For Me) and Explore It (Together) ideas for children and families.