

# Sunday School Lesson

## MAIN THEME:

*God sees beauty, gifts and hope in people and places all around the world! Sometimes we only see problems, but God can see what can grow from difficulties. Global servants join in God's work by helping people learn and by bringing healing to those who are sick. They use the gifts God has given them to show love to others. You can be a part of that too!*

## LESSON

**1] Hold up an acorn (or show a picture). Ask, "What do you see?"**  
Allow for answers, but bring attention to how small it is and how ordinary it looks. Have them hold it in their hand.

**2] Now show a picture of a large oak tree. Ask, "What do you see now?"**  
Emphasize how the giant tree started as a tiny acorn. When we look at an acorn or hold it in our hand, we might only see something small. But God can already see the big, strong tree that will grow from it.

Talk about how life can be like that, too. We might see problems or can be sad or disappointed. But God is really great at seeing what is inside of us—like gifts, and strengths—that can grow and help us to overcome difficult times.

**3] Read Isaiah 61:1-4:** When Isaiah wrote these words, God's people were feeling discouraged. Their city had been ruined. They felt sad and hopeless. But God gave them a promise. God said that He would bring comfort instead of sadness, joy instead of sorrow, and hope instead of despair. It says that God's people would become great trees that show God's goodness (International Children's Bible)!

Just like God sees a mighty tree in a tiny acorn, God saw hope and a good future for His people when others only saw hard times.

**4] God wants to give us hope! Ask, "Can you think of Bible stories where God brought hope to people in hard times?"**  
Possible answers could be: God providing manna and water in the desert, David defeating Goliath, Jesus healing the sick or feeding the hungry crowds, Jesus raising Lazarus, and Jesus forgiving our sins.

Explain: Over and over, God saw hope and possibilities where other people saw hardship.

**5] Show the picture of Global Servants Anita and Rick Gutierrez.** Just like those stories from the Bible, God brings hope to us and to others around the world. Let me tell you about some people serving God in another part of the world.

Anita and Rick Gutierrez serve in South Africa (show map). They are doctors who help people learn how to be healthy and care for their families. They also teach people new skills in farming so that they can have a better, healthier future.

They do more than just treat illness and teach skills. They look for the gifts and abilities God has already placed inside people. Just as God sees a tree inside an acorn, Anita and Rick look for the potential God has placed inside each person.

**6] Ask, "What are some gifts or abilities God gives people?"**

Guide answers to things like kindness, helping, music, leadership, farming, building, creativity, etc.

**7] Show the pictures of global servants working/serving people.** Global servants like Anita and Rick use their own gifts to help others. But they also help others discover and use the gifts God has given them! For example, Anita and Rick teach people about health. Then those people go out and teach their family members and others in their own community!

This is how God's work of hope keeps growing. Around the world, people use their gifts in different ways. Some people use their gifts to teach. Some grow food. Some care for the sick. Some build things. Some lead churches.

But no matter what, God uses all kinds of people in all kinds of places to bring hope.

**8] Bring it together:** Remember the acorn? God saw a mighty tree.

Remember God's people in Isaiah? God saw hope and healing?

And Anita and Rick? They use the gifts God has given them to help others learn and grow. They help people discover the gifts God has already planted inside them, too.

And God sees those same possibilities in you.

**9] Ask, "What gift has God given you that could help someone else?"**  
Allow the kids to answer and affirm responses as amazing possibilities.

Just like an acorn becomes a mighty oak tree, God can use the gifts he has given you in amazing ways. And just like Anita and Rick, God may one day invite you to use those gifts to serve people in another part of the world!

## OBJECTS NEEDED

- Pictures of Anita and Rick Gutierrez or other IM global servants that your church supports (IM's downloadable prayer cards are a great resource for this)
- Pictures of the global servants "in action" serving different people and communities.
- Picture of an acorn or flower seed. (Or a real one!)
- Picture of a large oak tree or a beautiful flower.
- Optional: A map to show the location of missionaries

## CLOSING PRAYER

Lord, thank you for seeing hope and possibility in every person and every place. Help us to see others the way you do. Thank you for the gifts you have planted in each of us. Help those gifts grow so we can be trees of goodness that share your love with others. Thank you for global servants who are helping people learn, heal and grow around the world. Give them strength and joy as they serve. Amen.