

**SUBTOPIC THEME:**  
What Do I Have to Offer

**LESSON OBJECTIVE:**

*To show students that they were created intentionally and with unique skills and abilities, which God intends for them to use and develop throughout their lifetimes.*

*By encouraging them to exist in the power and love of the Lord, we empower kids to discover more about*

*who they are and how they can change the world. This will bring about a deeper understanding of the way we were created in God's image and what that means in the context of belonging. By bringing awareness, encouraging self-discovery, and instructing them on how to follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit, the students will develop resilience and purpose in their life.*



**Set Up Info:**

*Supplies Needed:*

1. A ruler or measuring tape
2. Copies of the Student Response sheet (printed below)
3. Bibles so you can look up the Scripture story (or copy the ones below)
4. A passion to see students' hearts transformed!

*Instructive Prep:*

Wondering if we have anything to offer is a very normal thing to think about. It's natural for us to wonder where and how we fit into the world around us, and, of course, we want to know that the people in our lives will accept and love us. It can be tricky to take a look inside and try and see what you bring to the table. But as scary and intimidating as it can be, it is absolutely vital. If we go through life without exploring our God given abilities, we are destined to live a life unfulfilled and probably without much joy either.

Military teens repeatedly experience the stress of waiting to see if they belong. With regular moves and friends who change locations just as much, their world can seem like a revolving door sometime and feeling like they belong may seem impossible. By showing each student that there is more to who they are and that there is work to be done to develop and fine tune their talents, we equip them with confidence and a sense of security as they begin to understand that their identity is

rooted in who God says that they are uniquely created. This new understanding will foster resilience in their lives and additionally give them the ability to speak God's truth and love to those around them!

The progression of these studies is four-fold: learn, feel, do and what next. The goals are for students to (1) learn something new, (2) connect at an emotional level to some degree, and (3) participate in doing something during the study (like writing a resolution or making a list of goals). Finally, (4) the what next focuses on a change in attitude and/or behavior, which you will find in the challenge of the Life Application section. Remember, the movement is toward spiritual and emotional transformation in kids' lives, so the application section based on God's truth is really the crux of the time together! Have fun and lead well.

## INTRO:

*The fact of the matter is we all have unique abilities and skills. We were made by God with great care and detail. He even etched pieces of himself into each and every one of our souls. It's incredible to think about how purposefully and lovingly we were made. With that in mind, it seems inconceivable that some of us actually waste these amazing talents we have been given! But we all do it. Everyday there is another reason or excuse for why we can't spend time on that right now or why it would be better to try this other thing that seems cooler. It's such a waste of such a generous and powerful gift! Take a look at this story and think about what an article about your life might say.*

## INTRO STORY:

Here's a piece of an article from [bleacherreport.com](http://bleacherreport.com) about the top 25 NBA players who have wasted their talents. This part is just about Allen Iverson:

"On paper, it does not seem as though Allen Iverson wasted any talent whatsoever. He was an 11-time All-Star, won an MVP award, and was the league scoring champion four times. In 14 seasons, the former Georgetown Hoya averaged 26.7 points and 6.2 assists.

Yet, while he might have been a star on the hardwood, Iverson was anything but that in the locker room. Off the court, he was a clubhouse cancer.

In Philadelphia, he clashed with head coach Larry Brown on multiple occasions and went on a well-publicized rant after Brown criticized him for missing practice many times. After more clashes with the front office, including being late to the Sixers Fan Appreciation Night, he was traded to the Denver Nuggets.

He was productive in a season and a half with Denver before being traded to the Detroit Pistons, where his decline began. Injuries relegated Iverson to the bench.

After signing a one-year deal with the Memphis Grizzlies, Iverson basically quit on the team after three games stating, "I would rather retire than be a bench player." He later attempted a comeback with the Sixers that same year, and looked a shell of his former self.

That all being said, how did Iverson waste his talent? Well, despite his stats, the man's work ethic left something to be desired. Had he been committed to practicing and putting the team before himself, perhaps he would have won a few championship rings and become a true legend.

Right now, he just looks like a ballhog who could shoot well."

### INTRO QUESTIONS:

1. How do you feel toward Allen Iverson after hearing what he could have accomplished?
2. Do you think wasting talent is a big deal or not that important? Why or why not?

### CENTRAL BIBLE PASSAGES

*It might not seem like that big of a deal for Allen Iverson not to have any championship rings. Maybe you think all this is overreacting and people should be able to do what they want. The thing is, we were created for more. There are so many times in this world when people decide to settle, decide they aren't worth it, decide that this is good enough; but, that's not the truth of what we were created to be. God made us all with love and care, and he instilled a piece of himself in us so that we could always seek more in this life. We can find more meaning, more love, more purpose, and more and more and more all through a relationship with Jesus Christ. Read this parable that Jesus told about how not only do we have the ability to seek more, but we have the responsibility.*

#### Matthew 25:14-30

##### *The Parable of the Three Servants*

"At that time the Kingdom of heaven will be like this. Once there was a man who was about to leave home on a trip; he called his servants and put them in charge of his property. He gave to each one according to his ability: to one he gave five thousand gold

coins, to another he gave two thousand, and to another he gave one thousand. Then he left on his trip. The servant who had received five thousand coins went at once and invested his money and earned another five thousand. In the same way the servant who had received two thousand coins earned another two thousand. But the servant who had received one thousand coins went off, dug a hole in the ground, and hid his master's money.

“After a long time the master of those servants came back and settled accounts with them. The servant who had received five thousand coins came in and handed over the other five thousand. ‘You gave me five thousand coins, sir,’ he said. ‘Look! Here are another five thousand that I have earned.’ ‘Well done, you good and faithful servant!’ said his master. ‘You have been faithful in managing small amounts, so I will put you in charge of large amounts. Come on in and share my happiness!’ Then the servant who had been given two thousand coins came in and said, ‘You gave me two thousand coins, sir. Look! Here are another two thousand that I have earned.’ ‘Well done, you good and faithful servant!’ said his master. ‘You have been faithful in managing small amounts, so I will put you in charge of large amounts. Come on in and share my happiness!’ Then the servant who had received one thousand coins came in and said, ‘Sir, I know you are a hard man; you reap harvests where you did not plant, and you gather crops where you did not scatter seed. I was afraid, so I went off and hid your money in the ground. Look! Here is what belongs to you.’ ‘You bad and lazy servant!’ his master said. ‘You knew, did you, that I reap harvests where I did not plant, and gather crops where I did not scatter seed? Well, then, you should have deposited my money in the bank, and I would have received it all back with interest when I returned. Now, take the money away from him and give it to the one who has ten thousand coins. For to every person who has something, even more will be given, and he will have more than enough; but the person who has nothing, even the little that he has will be taken away from him. As for this useless servant—throw him outside in the darkness; there he will cry and gnash his teeth.’”

### PERSONAL REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

*To determine in what order you should answer, measure each person's left index finger and go from longest to shortest.*

1. What do you think of the Master's reactions to his servants? Did he seem fair?
2. Make a list of 5 prominent talents you have. Next to each write three examples of times you used or developed these abilities in the past 2 weeks. If you can't come up with three, put a star for each example you are missing. If you have more than

- 4 stars, take some time to identify what else you can (and will) do to take your talent the next level (use Student response sheet)
3. What do you think of the idea that you could be punished or rewarded based on how you handle the skills God gave you? What emotions does that bring out?
  4. What are the things in your life that keep you from using your abilities? The third servant was frightened and had a pessimistic outlook. What outlook do you have? (use Student response sheet)

**LIFE APPLICATION:**

1. How have you seen your talents impact someone else in the past? Write down at least 3 ways you want to use your talents to change the world in the next week (use Student response sheet)
2. Identify as a group your 5 biggest roadblocks to going after more with your talents and skills. Talk about why these are so effective in keeping you from using and developing your talents. Together, come up with ways to counteract those negative influences and work together to encourage one another to overcome any obstacles in your path. (Use Student Response Sheet)

1. MAKE A LIST OF 5 PROMINENT TALENTS YOU HAVE. NEXT TO EACH, WRITE 3 EXAMPLES OF TIMES YOU USED OR DEVELOPED THESE ABILITIES IN THE LAST 2 WEEKS. IF YOU CAN'T COME UP WITH 3, PUT A STAR FOR EACH EXAMPLE YOU ARE MISSING. IF YOU HAVE MORE THAN 4 STARS, TAKE SOME TIME TO IDENTIFY WHAT ELSE YOU CAN (AND WILL) DO TO TAKE YOUR TALENT TO THE NEXT LEVEL.

2. WHAT ARE THE THINGS IN YOUR LIFE THAT KEEP YOU FROM USING YOUR ABILITIES? THE THIRD SERVANT WAS FRIGHTENED AND HAD A PESSIMISTIC OUTLOOK. WHAT OUTLOOK DO YOU HAVE?

- ## What Do I Have to Offer – SG