

What's a Divine Call?

Kelsey couldn't believe her ears. "Mr. Johnson got a call to a different school?" She grabbed another plate and dried it off. "He can't leave! I love having him for a teacher!"

Her little brother Kent looked at his upside-down reflection in the spoon he was drying. He asked, "Why does Mr. Johnson have to go teach at another school just because he got a phone call? Why didn't he just hang up?"

Kelsey rolled her eyes. "Kent, it's not a *phone* call! It's a—What's it called, Mom?"

"It's a *divine* call," their mom said.

"Yeah, a divine call," Kelsey said. "And it means he might leave our school and not be our teacher anymore, right, Mom?"

"Yes, he could decide to go. Or he could decide to stay here." Their mom dried her hands off and leaned against the counter. "See, right now Mr. Johnson has two divine calls to think about," she explained, "the one here to our school and the one at the other school. At both schools, he would teach God's Word—plus math or choir or whatever he's asked to do."

"How does he decide?" Kelsey asked.

"He'll probably ask different people for advice," her mom said, "and he'll do a lot of praying. He'll ask God to help him decide which place is the best place to use his teaching gifts."

"So, what do we do—just wait?" Kelsey asked.

"Yep. We wait," her mom said, putting her hands back into the suds. "And we pray for him. And you can talk to him too, Kelsey. You can tell him how much you enjoy him as a teacher. All teachers like to hear that—whether they're thinking about calls or not."

Ephesians 4:11: So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the _____ and _____.

Discussion

1. Why is Kelsey a little upset? *Her teacher, Mr. Johnson, whom she really likes, has a divine call to another school. That means he might leave and become a teacher at the other school.*
2. True or False: Mr. Johnson has two calls right now. *True. Mr. Johnson has his call to Kelsey's school, and he has a call to a different school. He has to think about both teaching positions and decide whether he should stay where he is or move to the other school. At both schools, he would be serving God.*
3. How will Mr. Johnson decide whether to accept this call to the other school? (Have the students underline the answers in the devotion.) *Paragraph 6: "He'll probably ask different people for advice, and he'll do a lot of praying. He'll ask God to help him decide which place is the best place to use his teaching gifts." Note that there's not necessarily a right or wrong answer. Either decision can be God-pleasing.*
4. What can Kelsey and her family do to help Mr. Johnson? *They can pray for him, and they can encourage him, maybe by telling him how much they like him as a teacher at their school.*
5. Let's look up Ephesians 4:11. What two words are missing there? *Pastors, teachers. That passage says that all our pastors and teachers are gifts from Jesus. Mr. Johnson is a gift to Kelsey and her class, and all our teachers and pastors are gifts to us. What can we say to Jesus for our teachers and pastors? We can thank him for all our teachers and pastors. Knowing our pastors and teachers are gifts from Jesus, how will we treat them? We'll obey them, respect them, and do whatever we can to make their jobs joyful.*

Activity - Circle Talk: This activity expands the lesson rather than reviewing it. It asks the children to discuss positive attributes of pastors and teachers, and then to imagine themselves as pastors or teachers. What might they enjoy in those vocations? Be sure to encourage them as a class—and, perhaps privately, as individuals—to consider becoming a Lutheran pastor or teacher. The church needs more pastors and teachers! Perhaps they will be one of these gifts to the church! (We know that God wants only men to be pastors. But it's okay for all the children to think about what pastors do.)

Prayer: Thank you, Lord Jesus, for giving us pastors and teachers who share your Word with us. Please help us to respect and obey our pastors and teachers. And as we continue to talk about pastors and teachers this week, help us think about whether some of us might become pastors or teachers in your church someday. Amen.

Optional Hymn: 745:1,4 Hark, the Voice of Jesus Crying