



Calvin had been staring at the clock ever since eighth period began. “In 5...4...3...2...” he counted with timed precision. “1...” Just then, the bell rang all over the school. Calvin and his friends clamored to grab their things and rushed into the halls. School was finally over, and now it was time for some fun.

“Hey Andre, wait up!” Calvin called out.

“What’s up, Calvin?” said Andre.

“You missed auditions for the talent show yesterday,” said Calvin. “I thought you signed up.”

“Yeah, I came to the audition. I don’t sing and dance though, so there’s not much for me to do at the show.”

“Well, Mrs. Calloway is still looking for people to help out,” Calvin suggested. “She wants a

student to design the flyers that will be hung all over the school. I told her about some of your drawings and she wants to see them.”

“Really? Now that’s something I can do. Tell her I’m in!” Andre exclaimed.

“Why don’t you just come to rehearsal this afternoon. We get started at 3:15,” said Calvin.

Andre stopped to get his art portfolio from his locker and headed toward the auditorium.

“Welcome to the Ryland High School Annual Talent Showcase!” greeted Mrs. Calloway with excitement.

“Whether you’re singing, dancing, or working behind the scenes, you all play a very important role in the success of this production and I couldn’t do it without you. So thank you for being here. Now let’s get to work!

### from your Bible

**Ephesians 4:1–16, NIV**—As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.<sup>2</sup> Be completely humble and gentle; be patient,

bearing with one another in love.<sup>3</sup> Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

**<sup>4</sup> There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called;<sup>5</sup> one Lord, one faith, one baptism;<sup>6</sup> one God and Father of all, who**

is over all and through all and in all.<sup>7</sup> But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.<sup>8</sup> This is why it says: "When he ascended on high, he took many captives and gave gifts to his people."<sup>9</sup> (What does "he ascended" mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions?<sup>10</sup> He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.)<sup>11</sup> So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers,<sup>12</sup> to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up<sup>13</sup> 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.<sup>14</sup> 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.<sup>15</sup> 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.<sup>16</sup> 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.

## Scripture discussion

In this letter, the Apostle Paul is hoping to build the capacity of the church by teaching his faithful followers of Christ the important roles they play in the Body of Christ. He emphasizes that although we may have different callings, we all have a common purpose. Paul says that

although we have different gifts, we are called to use those gifts to strengthen the ministry. Our gifts and talents should be grounded in truth so that we can discern right and wrong. As we grow in the knowledge of God, we discover that our identity is in Him. God is glorified when the body of Christ unifies their gifts and proclaim the truth!

## make it real



### check it

1. Why didn't Andre audition for the talent show?
2. What other option did Calvin present to Andre so he could be involved in the talent show?
3. What did Mrs. Calloway say about everyone's role in the talent show?



### think it

1. How are we to walk concerning the vocation of our calling? (v. 1)
2. Name five specific callings that are listed in the text. (v. 11)
3. What three purposes do the callings mentioned in the previous question have? (v. 12)



### do it

Think of an interest or a talent that you possess. How can you use these gifts or talents to contribute to spreading the Gospel? Writing these things down can be the beginning of a plan by which you live to achieve your goals.



### keep it

**"There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism;" (Ephesians 4:4–5, NIV).**

the big idea: According to the Promise



When Milena was eight years old, she saw a commercial for Disney World. It looked like the most wonderful place for a kid to have fun. She'd been to Six Flags and a nearby water park, but they seemed dull and boring compared to what she saw in that commercial.

She ran through the house. "Momma, can we go to Disney World?"

Momma wiped her hands on a kitchen towel before adjusting the temperature of the oven. Milena watched her mother. She was just about to repeat the question when Momma turned and smiled. "I think that's a good idea."

"Really?!" Milena's eyes lit up. "We can go?"

"I promise," Momma said. Since Milena

knew that Momma always kept her promises, she wasn't concerned when they still hadn't gone to Disney World by the time she finished sixth grade. However, when they hadn't gone by her sophomore year of high school, she felt compelled to give a reminder.

"Momma, you promised that we'd go to Disney World forever ago. Are we ever going to get the chance to go?"

Momma smiled, "My word is my bond. If I make a promise, I'll keep it. You don't have to ask me again. Just trust me." Milena continued to wait. She was tempted to give up numerous times, but she chose to believe her mother. She finally received tickets for Disney World as part of her high school graduation present.

## from your Bible

**Luke 1:46–55, NIV—And Mary said: “My soul glorifies the Lord<sup>47</sup> and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,<sup>48</sup> for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed,<sup>49</sup> for the Mighty One has done great things for me—holy is his name.<sup>50</sup> His mercy extends**

to those who fear him, from generation to generation.<sup>51</sup> He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.<sup>52</sup> He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble.<sup>53</sup> He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty.<sup>54</sup> He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful<sup>55</sup> to Abraham and his descendants forever, just as he promised our ancestors.”

## Scripture discussion

Mary, the mother of Jesus, will forever remain the most blessed woman in history. Years before the birth of Jesus, prophets told God’s people that the Messiah would come. After several generations passed by, God chose Mary

to bring His only Son into the world. Mary responded by praising God for choosing her. Mary recognized that the birth of Christ was directly related to the promise God made to Abraham and his descendants. She realized that the birth of Christ would lead to the fulfillment of that promise.

## make it real



### check it

1. Explain why Milena initially had no doubts about what her mother promised.
2. What did Milena feel compelled to do?
3. How long did it take for Milena’s promise to be fulfilled?
4. Why do you think it took so long for Milena’s mother to keep her word?



### think it

1. Who will call Mary blessed? (v. 48)
2. Why will Mary be called blessed? (v. 49)
3. List at least three things God has done for those who fear him. (vv. 50–54)
4. To whom did God remember to be merciful? (v. 55)



### do it

Closely examine your life. In what areas should your faithfulness to God be strengthened? Trusting in God’s provision? Believing that God’s Word is true? Accepting the changes God takes you through? Releasing something precious? Ask God to strengthen you as you endeavor to walk in faithfulness.



### keep it

**“And Mary said: ‘My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,’” (Luke 1:46–47, NIV).**