

(Use this version if you're honoring seniors.)

Today I'm giving you (*name the gift you're distributing*) to remind you that you are a blessing to all of us. We thank God for all of you whose lives display the vibrancy of the Gospel. You willingly share your stories, your inspiration, and your faith with us. Today we honor you as people blessed by God, people who, in him, bless us!



Shining His Light

The Lord is my light and my salvation. Psalm 27:1

Introduction

There's nothing quite as beautiful as a stained-glass window with the afternoon sun beaming through it. But did you know that the colored glass isn't technically a window at all? A stained-glass window with no light source behind it is dark, colorless, and opaque. Light passes through windows. But stained glass catches light. The light intensifies each part of the design. Without the light, it's impossible to see the masterpiece.

In medieval times, stained-glass windows were used to teach an illiterate population about God. When light shone through the glass, the individual pieces of colored glass captured the light, telling stories about God's people who had lived long before. The Gospel message was displayed in deep reds, rich blues, brilliant greens, and sparkling golds.

Some stained glass has been around for centuries, and even aged glass remains beautiful. As long as light gleams through the finely cut shapes, the colors never lose their luster. They continue to awe and delight.

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Scripture taken from the King James Version of the Bible.



Getting to the Heart

Senior adults who love the Lord are a little like stained glass. It isn't the light from the sun overhead that makes you special. Rather, it's the Son-light of Jesus Christ shining into your lives, creating living works of art in response to his love.

Like Christians of all ages, you have looked at God's perfect Law and realized you couldn't keep even one of his commands. Through faith you've trusted in Jesus' sinless death on the cross; a death that made us right again with God. You know and believe three important things:

- ✦ God will keep his promise to give you the gift of life with him in heaven when life here on this earth ends. (See *Jude 1:20–21*.) Because of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, your lives shine with the red of the blood of Christ, who died to win that life for you.
- ✦ God will not only keep his promise of life in heaven—he has kept his promises for this life too. Your Lord has been there for you in good times and bad, never abandoning you. (See *Psalms 59:16; Hebrews 13:5; Matthew 28:20*.) The bright green hues of God's faithfulness to you permeate your life.
- ✦ No one can go it alone. As an insider to tragedy, life's inequities, and loss, you've learned—sometimes the hard way—that when Christ isn't part of the equation, your life becomes dark and colorless. But when the Lord's presence radiates through you, the golds and blues of peace light up each difficult challenge.

See? Like stained glass windows, you are filled with Son-light and have a brilliant story to tell. In the Old Testament, God commanded the elders to teach the young. (See *Deuteronomy 4:9*.) You have that same joyous responsibility. You have experienced God's grace in your life. You still do! So make the Gospel message known to those around you!

But where to start? Start with those closest to you. Many of you are grandparents or have nieces, nephews, or neighbors within your sphere of influence. Many of you enjoy seeing and interacting with the children right here in our church. Children are vessels built by God to collect the wisdom you have to share. The bright colors of your love and caring will capture their attention. It will model Jesus' own love and caring for them. Your life will serve as an example they will emulate when they themselves are parents and grandparents.

What can you share? You can share insights about life, the beauty of a speckled rock, the glory of a sunset, the dubious humor of a knock-knock joke, even stories from your own childhood—the ancient days of long ago before the wireless Internet and iPhones! In other words, you can share almost anything. Most importantly, you can shine out with the brilliant love of Jesus. Your words can radiate the vivid hues of the Gospel story of God's love for his children.

We live in confusing times. Where everyone used to see clearly between right and wrong, many people now detect many shades of gray. The “truths” the world proclaims often conflict with God's Word. You have the joy and responsibility to explain that God's ways are best. Your own life experiences can serve as examples, pointing children to a loving God who blesses those who honor him and forgives us in the cross of his Son when we fail.

Taking It Home

(Use this version if you're celebrating Grandparents Day.)

Today I'm giving you (*name the gift you're distributing*) to remind you of the importance of your role as a grandparent. May this gift also remind you that God's light shines through you, making your life vibrant and attractive—a masterpiece! Through you, the beauty of the Word is passed on and revered; through you, a godly heritage is preserved. We praise our Savior for you!