

Using Your Gifts in God's Service

The Bible tells us that every believer has a spiritual gift and some have multiple gifts. You can read about spiritual gifts in Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12, and Ephesians 4. You can also read about spiritual gifts in 1 Peter 4.10-11. It says, "Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen." I would like to share a few thoughts from this passage about using your gifts to the serve the Lord.

First, using your spiritual gift is an act of service. Peter says, "Each one should use whatever gift he has received to *serve* others." Some categorize the gifts as sign gifts, speaking gifts, and serving gifts. Yet, the fact is: all the gifts are serving gifts. God does not give you a gift to serve yourself or to show off your abilities; he gives you a gift to serve others in the kingdom of God. Even preaching is an act of service. As the minister studies and prepares throughout the week and then delivers his message on Sunday, the goal is to serve the word of God to the people. The goal is to minister to people so that they can be encouraged and strengthened in the faith. Whatever your gift is use it to serve others not yourself.

Secondly, using your spiritual gift requires God's strength and empowerment. Peter explains, "If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides." We cannot serve the Lord in our own strength. Jesus said, "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing" (John 15.5). If we try to serve the Lord in our strength, we will get what our strength provides which is not much. Yet, if we serve the Lord in his strength the result will be his blessing on all that we do.

Finally, using your spiritual gift results in praise to God. We serve with the strength God provides "so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ." Our goal in using our gifts is not for us to be praised and honored; our goal is for God to be glorified. 2 Corinthians 4.7 says, "But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us." Do you feel inadequate to serve the Lord? Do you feel incompetent? That's normal and even healthy. Yet,

don't let those feelings of inadequacy keep you from serving the Lord. He will provide you with the strength you need and then he will get all the glory. That's how God designed it.

*Pastor Mark
Larchmont Church of God*