

USING GOD'S GIFTS

It has occurred to me that we receive beautiful gifts from God. That is easy to see. We have life, health, saved souls, food, clothing, housing, and so many other things. Sometimes, in the midst of these, God is so moved as to bestow upon us special gifts of His Spirit in the forms of healing, teaching, prophesy, or the ability to do a work. It is these gifts to which I refer.

We thank the Lord and praise Him for His wonderful grace and "moving". Inside ourselves, we rejoice that our God has so seen fit to bestow these gifts upon us. Then, we do nothing.

We take these special gifts, or anointings, and set them upon the shelf of our pride and admire them. They become trophies on our mantel of contentment. We look forward to the time when God will again so generously give of Himself to us. We highlight these occasions in our minds as being the times when God was really real and manifested Himself. We so quickly forget those daily moments when we are also aware of God's presence with us.

Like hard-earned, or maybe even deserved, trophies, we line them up on our mantel of contentment. We admire them from afar, searching the Bible for their purpose, and gratefully acknowledge that God has certainly placed these particular gifts in the right place. That is where we leave them to gather dust, wondering if ever again the conditions will be right for us to be so honored.

The gifts of the Spirit are to be used, like the woman in I Kings 17:13-16, whose oil and meal never ran out as she used them. In the same way, no gift from God will ever show signs of decay if it is used.

Consider gifts from a friend. If it is food, we eat it. Can you imagine just leaving it on the table? If it is a car, we drive it. Imagine watching it rust as it sits in the driveway! Money is spent on what is needed. Even the gift of love is consumed now, not put on a shelf just to be admired while gathering dust.

Why do we suppose that these gifts are presented to us? Are we so unlearned, or still in such a baby stage in our Christian growth, as to accept these gifts without ever using them?

Each of you has been in a gathering of believers, or in your private prayer closet, when God has been bestowing His gifts upon you and others. What have you done with your gift? Is it still on your mantel of contentment?

--Penny S. Hession