Maybe Your Gift Is …
Devotion

[Please provide: copies of the devotion for attendees.]

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 glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.
(1 Peter 4:10-11).

Since the devotion focuses on this Bible verse, let’s read 1 Peter 4:10-11 again, but before we do, let’s put all of this into context by remembering that the overarching gift of God that all Christians are given is faith in our crucified and risen Savior, Jesus Christ. This gift is given to each of us as Christ’s name is placed on each of us in Holy Baptism and we become the children of God who have been called to be stewards of His manifold gifts. Through our Christian witness and the use of the gifts and talents with which our Father has blessed us, we are blessed to bring Christ to a world that is dead in sin so that many may come to saving faith in Jesus Christ. (Reread 1 Peter 4:10-11.)

We all think that when someone gives us a gift it is for our own use, right? What if someday you receive a beautifully wrapped box and, upon opening it, you found a gift inside for you as well as another gift with someone else’s name on it? What would you do? Does that seem strange to you? Well, that is exactly how God’s gifts work for us. He gives gifts for giving. We receive a wrapped box and inside we find that the purpose of our gift is to share it with others for the profit of all (1 Corinthians 12:7 NKJV).

Examine the beginning of our Bible verse. It starts with the phrase each one. Each one should use whatever gift he has received. No one can say, “I don’t have any gifts, I have nothing to offer, or I am not important.” Nor can they say that they are more important than another believer because of the gift they have received from God. Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 12:1, Now about spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be ignorant. To be ignorant is to not understand or know about something. Open your gift. Discover, with joy, that another gift is inside with someone else’s name on it.

Maybe your gift is the ability to show love and patience to small children, or you can bring order out of messes. Maybe your gift is telling others about Christ, or you are an encourager. Maybe your gift is music, or you like to help around the church. Maybe your gift is expressing truth in writing, or you are able to explain the Scriptures so others are able to understand. Maybe your gift is to have great compassion, or you feel comfortable explaining to others how to apply Biblical truth to their lives. Maybe you love to give generously, or you find it easy to help people complete projects or ideas they have for the good of the kingdom.
Go back to the Bible verse. Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others. The New King James Version says to “minister it one to another,” while the Revised Standard Version says to “employ it for one another.” These gifts are unique and are to be used for a purpose. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them (Romans 12:6).

We continue with the Bible verse. Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others. God’s agenda is to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up (Ephesians 4:12).

The verse continues, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms. Martin Luther once said in a sermon based on 1 Peter 4:7-11 that: “they are under obligation to serve God with their gifts; and God is served when they employ them for the advantage and service of the people—reforming them, bringing them to a knowledge of God, and thus building up, strengthening and perpetuating the Church” (Martin Luther, “Sunday After Ascension Day,” Sermons of Martin Luther, John Nicholas Lenker, ed. and trans., et al. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1983, VII:323).

The verse concludes,
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.

Look back to the thought of receiving a beautifully wrapped box and opening it. The first gift you see in the box is the gift Christ has given you; the second gift with someone else’s name on it is what you give to them as it was first given to you.

**Prayer:** Dear gracious Father, thank You for Your magnificent gifts that You have so graciously given us in our Baptism, the greatest of which that gives all the rest of them their value is our saving faith in Jesus Christ. We thank and praise You that You have blessed us with the privilege of being Your instruments on earth. As we discover those gifts, help us to employ them for Your kingdom of grace. Guide each moment of the day that we may recognize and engage in those opportunities as You wish us to serve You and all people. Help us to remember that You not only have given us gifts but also the strength to use them to Your glory. As Saint Peter tells us, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.

Scripture references are from the NIV unless otherwise noted.