

Speaking to the soul



Spiritual gift

God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another. Do you have the gift of speaking? Then speak as though God himself were speaking through you. Do you have

the gift of helping others? Do it with all the strength and energy that God supplies. 1 Peter 4:10-11

The New Testament is absolutely clear that we each have a gift. But isn't it interesting that, so often, when we identify someone's particular gift we focus our attention on the receiver and not the giver? We talk about a gifted musician or preacher or cake maker and praise them for their gift. But if we believe that such skills and abilities are a gift from God then, surely, we should be praising him for his generosity. In these verses, Peter encouraged his readers to remember where their gifts came from, and their need to keep their eyes on God as they used them.

Peter illustrated his point in two ways. Firstly, he spoke of those who have the gift of speaking. This is a particularly interesting illustration because it is very easy for an eloquent speaker to attract all the attention to themselves. Peter reminded those with this gift that their role was to be a channel through which God himself could speak. This is a staggering responsibility and underlines the importance of preachers and teachers keeping very close to the Lord. And the same is true of those who help others. Anyone, whatever their religious views or lack of them, might be involved in helping other people, but those who have this special spiritual gift must make sure that they are availing themselves of God's strength. Helping people in our own strength is never going to be of much value. It is as we open our lives to the breath of God's Spirit that we are going to be able to truly strengthen and encourage others.

Let me speak to you personally for a moment. You have a spiritual gift. It may not be the one you would choose or one that you have had for very long. But God has given you this

gift so that others can be blessed and strengthened. I suggest that you do two things. Firstly, thank God for your gift and then, secondly, ask him to give you the strength to use it today as effectively as possible.

QUESTION

What is your gift, and how are you making use of it?

PRAYER

Lord God, thank you for the spiritual gift that you have given me. Help me to use it effectively for you. Amen

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