

## Only You Can Be You

Day 10

### FOR YOU: Embracing Your Spiritual Gifts

Erik Rees opens Day 10 by inviting us to envision a party or another celebration at your home, and a friend bringing a gift to you. It is hard to imagine NOT opening that gift! Yet it is true for many of us that we haven't opened the Spiritual Gifts that God gave us...and many are unaware that God has given each believer their very own Spiritual Gifts, in the first place.

The very thought of God, Himself, through the Holy Spirit, placing within each of us a specifically chosen unique set of Gifts of just the right measure can be incredibly mysterious, mystical, and even a bit intimidating! But when we take the time to learn and explore, and "unwrap" the Gifts, we discover that they are not all that mysterious, but readily available, practical, and ready to be put to use.

Rees tells us that Spiritual Gifts are not the same as natural abilities or talents—both are given by God, but have different purposes. Spiritual Gifts are given by God to express His love and to strengthen His church.

Spiritual Gifts are described in the Scriptures in five main passages:

- Romans 12: 6-8 New International Version (NIV)
- 1 Corinthians 12:8-10
- 1 Corinthians 12:28
- Ephesians 4: 11
- 1 Peter 4:9-10

In the passages above there are twenty Gifts described. Rees encourages us to see if we can identify the Gifts God wants us to use for Him:

Administration – Healing – Miracles – Apostleship – Helping

Pastoring – Discernment – Hospitality – Prophecy – Giving Encouragement

Interpretation – Teaching – Evangelism – Faith

Leadership – Wisdom – Knowledge – Showing Mercy

Speaking in Tongues

Rees encourages us to reflect on what you think God might want you to do with the Gifts given to you. Jot your thoughts here:

### **My Spiritual Gifts — How to Use Them**

Erik Rees also points out that Satan is jealous of what God gives, and that The Enemy will continually try to keep us from using our Gifts to His purpose. He calls Satan "The Gift Thief" and points out ways that Satan will steal our joy and our will and ability to use the Gifts God gave us, including:

- ✓ Making Someone Else's Gift Seem Better
- ✓ Fooling Us Into Thinking Others Should Be Like Us
- ✓ Tricking Us Into Refusing God's Gifts
- ✓ Misleading Us About Our Gifts

Rees goes on to say that the way to fool The Thief is to focus on God, not the Gifts. We should let Him show us what he has given each of us, and ask Him to work through us to use those Gifts for His glory.

Additionally, Rees points out that the key to discovering your Gifts is most often found out through serving. He encourages us, as we have identified our Gifts, to try something new. In the places where we may already be serving, he encourages us to compare our Gifts with the areas where we are laboring—do the Gifts and the areas line up? And are there ways where we can improve on the Gifts: seminars, classes, etc., that can strengthen and improve on the Gifts we've been given.

Finally, Erik Rees reminds us all that no matter what we do or where we serve, that we must do it with love. Interestingly, he points out that where ever the Apostle Paul talks about Spiritual Gifts in the scripture he follows it with a few words about love. This might be an interesting time to go back to your Bible, to look for the scriptures listed earlier, and look for the passages on love. Let the Word sink in deeply, or pray the scriptures aloud. Not only did God give us these Gifts, but he chiseled them in scripture as our ever-ready and unchanging promise of His love and provision for us.

As you close this devotion, pray the prayer Erik Rees offers, below, and let it fan into flames the spiritual Gifts that God has given you.

*Father, thank you for the Gifts you've given us for serving in the body of Christ. Give us a Christmas-morning enthusiasm for opening your Gifts and for putting them into use to build your kingdom. Forgive us for neglecting them, or under-using them before now. Our chief desire is to please you Lord, In the name of Jesus, we ask you to show us how. Amen.*