



TAKE UP THY SWORD



A newsletter with hope and encouragement from the Holy Bible

For the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword... (Hebrews 4:16)

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Godly Gifts for Divine Destiny

Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God... Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace... (2 Timothy 1:6, 9).

During the Easter season, we reflect on the greatest gift of all: our salvation made available through the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ. God's unconditional love for us can never be denied because of this special sacrifice. We know that a gift is defined as something given voluntarily without expectation of payment or reciprocation. Revelation 13:8 says that "the Lamb [was] slain from the foundation of the world," so what gifts did the Father place in us before we were born? Some may be able to relate to this particular Word:

Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations... See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant (Jer 1:5, 10).

When Jesus appeared to the disciples after His resurrection, He gave them the great commission to go "into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). Several parables and teachings are about serving God and one another, and this is one of the first gifts mentioned in the Old Testament:

And I, behold, I have taken your brethren the Levites from among the children of Israel: to you they are given as a gift for the Lord, to do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation... and ye shall serve: I have given your priest's office unto you as a service of gift... (Num 18:6-7).

We were all created for a specific purpose to fulfill God's will in the earth. Jeremiah 29:11 simplifies this fact: "For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord. They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope" (NLT). So in order to complete these assignments, our Father "hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" (Eph 1:3). It took me many years and many tears to discover, accept, and successfully utilize the gifts and talents that were already inside of me. But after revelation comes manifestation:

A man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men (Prov 18:16).

First Peter 4:10 states, "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." Let us meditate on the various functions of the Body of Christ:

*For to one is given by the Spirit the *word of wisdom*; to another the *word of knowledge* by the same Spirit; To another *faith* by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of *healing* by the same Spirit; To another the *working of miracles*; to another *prophecy*; to another *discerning of spirits*; to another divers kinds of *tongues*; to another the *interpretation of tongues* (1 Cor 12:8-10).*

Jesus taught us in the fifth chapter of Matthew that we are the salt of the earth and the light of the world, so we need to embrace this declaration: "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people" (1 Pet 2:9). Some people try to deny or run from their destiny; but fear is the opposite of faith, and we cannot please God unless we believe and trust in Him. But we can find peace and confidence in this scripture:

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified (Rom 8:28-30).

According to First Timothy 4:14, we should not neglect the gift that is in us. Jesus warned the disciples against that very thing in the book of Matthew. In the parable of the talents, three servants received a certain amount "according to his several ability" (25:15). The man with five talents quickly doubled his wages, as did the man with two. But the servant with one talent just buried it because he was afraid. When their lord returned, the "unprofitable servant" (25:30) was punished, and his talent was given to the one who had acquired the most.

So rather than letting our gifts lay dormant, we will strive "to make [our] calling and election sure" (2 Pet 1:10)!

THUS SAITH THE LORD: "Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church" (1 Cor 14:12).

PRAYER: *Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy: for thou renderest to every man according to his work (Ps 62:12).*

"Be encouraged in the law of the Lord" (2 Chron 31:4):

Proverbs 17:8; Ecclesiastes 5:19; Isaiah 41:9; Matthew 7:11, 20:16; Romans 11:29; Ephesians 1:11, 3:7, 4:7-8; Philippians 1:6; 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12; James 1:17

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