

GIFTS

Scripture reference: 1 Timothy 4:14-15 New International Version (NIV)

¹⁴Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through prophecy when the body of elders laid their hands on you.

¹⁵Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress.

With us right in the middle of the holiday season, everyone is preoccupied with gifts. For children, it is wondering what Santa will bring them. With parents, it may be wondering how they can afford all of the gifts that their children want. As individuals shop for people on their lists, they can't help but wonder if the other person will really like the gift. Some people brag that they finished their shopping before the month of December even hits and others are still racing around on Christmas Eve.

The New Testament refers several times to gifts also. Paul often writes about the different spiritual gifts that God has given to us and reminds us that we need to be using them. Many times people don't think they have any gifts to do God's work because they are not trained to be preachers or missionaries. But God can use all kinds of gifts.

People who have construction skills can help after a weather-related crisis, like floods or a hurricane. They can also help during normal times when an occasion arises that would help someone improve their standard of living. People can help by donating warm clothing during the winter season. If you have extra clothes or money to purchase some for those less fortunate, then that is your gift. Sometimes your gift might be the ability to spend some time with those suffering from loneliness. Your gift may be fundraising and it would allow you to raise money to help support a cause, such as homelessness or hunger. Your gift might even be basketball and you could take the time to teach someone younger to play. We all have gifts of some kind or another.

In our focal passage, Paul is reminding Timothy to not neglect his gifts. Timothy had worried about his abilities and his age but Paul had said these gifts he had were from God. He had told him to be diligent and to entirely give himself to the utilization of these gifts. The final part of verse 15 states that so everyone can see the progress he is making on his gifts. I think it could also be said that so everyone could see he was using his gifts. The important part is that we all need to realize we have some gifts and we need to use them.