

Adequate Strength

1 Peter 4:10,11 *“As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.”*

The original Greek says, *“As each one has received a gift, serve it to each another, as good stewards of the diverse grace of God.... If anyone serves let him do it as with the strength which God supplies.”*

Each believer has been entrusted with a gift from the Lord, some special function to perform as a member of the Body of Christ. These *“gifts of grace”* are a stewardship from God. The word translated “steward” in the Greek is literally ‘to arrange a house’, and the word originally referred to the manager or administrator of a house or estate. Therefore, the multifaceted gifts of grace that all believers are entrusted with are not to be used for selfish gain but for God’s glory and for the strengthening and encouragement of others.

Keep in mind, you are not meant to be a depot of God’s gift to you. Even though God purposed that His grace would be the mechanism, which commands divine power to be perfected in your weaknesses, the accompanying ‘gift’ does not end with you! His grace reaches you directly and brings His awesome power to finality in your frailties, but your individual ‘gift’ should be a channel (not a depot) through which the blessings can flow.

You are to be an effective manager/administrator of the magnificently varied grace of God. The grace of God here refers to the undeserved favour, which He offers to man so that His sovereign power might manifest through a specific gift to meet a specific need.

Even if you are a gifted teacher or preacher you must be sure that the words you speak are the very words (‘logia’) God would have you say on that particular occasion. This is what is meant by *“the oracles of God.”* It is not enough for you to simply preach from the Bible, you should also have the assurance that it’s God’s words in your mouth and not your own. When you speak to others concerning spiritual matters, be sure to present a particular message that is intended by God for that person - at that time. Any communication performed outside of God’s plans and purposes, or not in season, may have a negative effect and could change the course of a person’s life.

“As each one has received a gift, serve it to each another.... And if anyone serves through that gift let him do it as with the strength which God supplies.”

Anyone who performs any kind of service to others should do it with the humble recognition that it is God who *empowers* for ministry. When God distributes gifts He also supplies sufficient strength for each gift to go forth and accomplish His plan and purpose. When you decide to use your God-given gifts to strengthen and encourage those around you, you will find sufficient ability to complete any given task. Maybe the very reason why so many Christians are fatigued and exhausted is because they constantly use their gifts for

selfish gain. Remember, the gift did not originate by your own efforts, but was given to you from above. All service must be executed in such a way that it is God alone who will get the glory.

Remember, with each and every gift there is an ample supply of strength or ability. But not human strength or ability; divine strength and ability. The source determines the intrinsic nature of that which is being supplied, whether natural or supernatural. The apostle Paul wrote in **Ephesians 1**, *“How very great is His power at work in us who believe. The power working in us is the same as the mighty strength and ability that God used when He raised Jesus from the dead.”* Isn't that amazing? Psalm 46 tells us, *“God is our refuge and our strength, an ever present help in times of trouble.”*

Many of you fill your lives with the weight and responsibility of the world and then carry it on your own shoulders. But you have amazing resurrection power and divine ability at your disposal, so why face life on your limited resources? That is plain stupid! Understand that God is constantly at work in you, and that every time you choose to serve others with your gifts, His mighty strength and ability will operate in you and through you. In the process, you will be strengthened far beyond any expectations.

God is in the supply business! He supplies strength and ability in measures that cause the miraculous to manifest [resurrection power]. The word translated “supply” is a very interesting one. Among the ancient Greeks it meant *‘to lead a stage chorus or dance troop.’* Implying harmony, orchestration or synchronisation. Then later it's meaning became, *‘to provide the money to pay the expenses of a chorus.’* With this in mind let us now read our opening verse again... *“If anyone serves with his special gift, let him do it as with the supernatural strength and ability that God has covered the cost for (provided payment for).”*

There was a price to be paid so that your gift could operate correctly, and that cost was covered by God through Jesus Christ. Therefore, because the cost was fully covered, your gift carries supernatural power and ability. But remember, this only manifests when the gift can bring glory to God.

In the passage we've read (**1 Peter 4:10-11**), we are told that we are to be *“good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”* Now, everything belongs to God. As we read in **Deuteronomy 10:14**, *“Behold, to the Lord your God belong heaven and the highest heavens, the earth and all that is in it.”* Even though God owns all things, He entrusts us with a portion of His possessions. In His “manifold grace” He grants to us all that we have and enjoy in this life. We are stewards of what God gives to us. Peter tells us that we are to be *“good stewards”* of what God gives us. On what basis are we to be judged as ‘good’ or ‘bad’ stewards? Verse 11 tells us that we are good stewards when we use all that we are given to promote God's best interests; *“so that in all things God may be glorified.”* Never forget this! If you desire to live the supernatural life, you must do as Jesus did. In His own words... *“I do what brings glory to My Father.”*

Peter declares that each of us has been given a “special gift.” There isn't a single member of the church who has not received a “gift” from God. These special gifts enable us to ‘serve one another’. These special gifts grant us the ability to meet the needs of those people with whom we come into contact. Each gift represents a service that God calls us to perform. Therefore, it's only as we actively “employ” our “special gift” that we become *“good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”* Each of us has a different gift given by God; and

each gift is important. None are more important than any other.

Are you using our gift(s)? Are you performing the ministry that God has called you to? You will be judged by how faithful you were when using your gift(s). There is a direct correlation between faithfulness and God's supernatural strength and ability. The Spirit of God only empowers people who are faithful with the special gift(s) that God has entrusted them with.

Not many people know Eliezer of Damascus. He is not one of the most prominent of Bible characters. However, this man played a major role in the life of Abraham. In **Genesis 15:2**, Eliezer is identified as the steward of Abraham. Eliezer had quite a lot to manage for Abraham because Abraham was rich. **Genesis 13:2**, *"Now Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver and in gold."* Eliezer, himself, mentioned how great a responsibility he had as he spoke of the way in which his master, Abraham, had been blessed by God (**Genesis 24:34-35**).

So, Eliezer was responsible to oversee Abraham's flocks and herds, money, all the other servants plus the camels and donkeys. Eliezer's job was to make sure that Abraham's household and business ran smoothly and profitably. As steward, Eliezer always had the task of making sure that he was promoting Abraham's best interests. Through the years, Abraham found this man to be faithful and dependable. So much so that Abraham chose him to carry out the most important errand. Abraham, in **Genesis 24**, sent Eliezer hundreds of miles to find a wife that was spiritually suitable for Isaac. Eliezer had to find a woman who believed in the one true God. Of course, Eliezer succeeded in this task (with God's help), by finding Rebekah for Isaac.

No matter what Abraham placed into Eliezer's hands, Eliezer was found to be faithful and dependable in promoting his master's best interests. I bring Eliezer to your attention, today, because he is an ideal example for us to imitate. He was a "good steward", and he was faithful and dependable.

Observe, the result of being faithful and a good steward was that God used Him. God was able to supply him with both strength and ability to find Rebekah. He had the strength to travel hundreds of miles and then he had the ability to discern which woman was the one whom God had chosen to be Isaac's wife. No mean task! With this fresh in our minds, let's end by reading our opening verse for the last time... *"If any of you serves with his special gift, let him do it with the supernatural strength and ability which only God can supply."*