

Your Gifts Make Room for You

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A man's gift makes room for him and brings him into the presence of great men. Prov. 18:16¹

As we enter a season of gift-giving and exchanges of cards and greetings, of family visits and sharings of food, fellowship and general celebration, it may be good to think for a minute about gifts, their importance and proper place in our social interactions.

Of course, in this Christmas season, our first thought is God's sacrificial gift to us—Jesus the Christ. His birth, death and resurrection made room for us in Heaven. His sacrifice on that tree makes it possible for us to be seated with Him in heavenly places.

Beyond that central truth of scripture, what else is there to consider when we think of gift-giving? What principles does God want us to understand . . . not only as Christians, but as politically-minded citizens?

First, I'd like to explore a few examples of how our gifts make room for us in the lives of others:

- When a man and woman exchange rings and when they give themselves to one another in marriage, those sacred gifts make room for them in each other's lives, in the home they will share together, in the lives of the children that are born. Those gifts are enduring and meaningful. Prior to marriage, even in courtship, often there are gifts given—large or small—that tell the other person that he or she is valued. Those gifts make room for them in the heart of their beloved.
- When we give gifts to children, we are expressing love. At a very young age, their focus may be on the gift, but as they mature, they become more aware of the love that gift represents, and the relationship is strengthened.
- When financial donors give to large projects—a hospital perhaps or a school—often the name of the donor is engraved on a plate, honouring him or her for the gift that has made the building possible. The gift makes room for them in the eyes of all who enter.
- When one gives to a charity or a political party, that gift makes room for the contributor in his or her taxable earnings.
- When the "wise men from the East" brought incense, gold and myrrh to the Christ-child, they found themselves in the presence of the King of Kings and the Saviour of mankind.

Of course, motives are extremely important. We don't give gifts to curry favour or to manipulate others. We give gifts out of love and appreciation. The natural result is gratitude and favour. That's one aspect of how gifts make room for us. I'd like to shine a light on another aspect of this verse that I think we ought to consider.

Each of us who knows the Lord has been given gifts by God Himself. It may be a skill, a talent, a calling. One may be given a gift of creativity in writing or music. One may be a gifted woodworker, seamstress or baker. One may have a tremendous gift of hospitality or of charity. One may be gifted to lead or to organize. One may manage accounts well or have a gift for design. One may be able to teach. One may be able to understand the intricacies of law or the science of medicine or agriculture or politics. One may have a gift for training and nurturing children. Whatever you find yourself gifted to do, you are exhorted to “do it with all your might.”²

These gifts from God, distributed among men and women—often clearly identified as individual giftings even at a young age—are a sacred trust from God to us. He places within us both the ability and the desire “to will and to do of His good pleasure.” In the movie, *Chariots of Fire*, the Olympic runner, Eric Liddell³, says “God made me fast and when I run, I feel His pleasure.” He went on to die as a missionary in China, but not before God had brought him “into the presence of great men.” He had a gift from God and he used it well.

Each of us is entrusted with certain gifts and talents; we are expected to use them. In the parable of the talents, Jesus showed the stark contrast between those who use the talents they’ve been given and prosper . . . and those who fail to apply themselves, who hide their talents and end up with nothing.

I have personally experienced the blessing of being “in the presence of great men [and women].” God has granted me the privilege of meeting tremendous people across this country, some people of public distinction, many who are not publicly known but whom God has called to greatness. They live lives worthy of honour and will receive recognition in God’s time. I thank God for His grace in allowing me to meet so many great people, each of them using the gifts God has given them.

Among the readers of this column are men and women who have served as CHP candidates in the past, who have raised the banner of Life, Family and Freedom and who will do so again. I’m sure there are many others who have not yet recognized that gift in themselves, who may think the calling of a candidate is beyond their reach. I want to tell you that you have gifts you must “stir up.” The Apostle Paul told his protégé Timothy, “stir up the gift of God that is in you . . .”⁴ Ask God what it is He has for you to do. He will give you everything you need to do it. When you apply yourself and exercise the gifts that are within you, He will cause those gifts to prosper and grow, He will make you fruitful in every good work and He will bring you “into the presence of great men.”

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Footnotes

¹ www.bible.com/bible/1/pro.18.16

² www.bible.com/bible/1/ECC.9.10.KJV

³ www.britannica.com/biography/Eric-Liddell

⁴ www.bible.com/bible/1/2ti.1.6

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