

PEW LAMPS VIDEO ILLUSTRATION

SCRIPTURE: 1 Peter 4:7-11

7 The end of all things is near; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer. 8 Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins. 9 Be hospitable to one another without complaint. 10 As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. 11 Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

There is an old Danish proverb which says this: “*What you are is God’s gift to you; what you do with yourself is your gift to God.*” **Are you being a trustworthy steward of what God has gifted you with? Are you being faithful? Are you being *trustworthy*? God deserves the best we can *be* and the best we can *give*. Only You can be you. If you don’t make your unique contribution to the body of Christ, guess what? It’s not going to be made. Because God made you and shaped you in a certain way that only you can supply.**

[Joni Eareckson Tada story, Church with no lights]

There is a church in England that has no lights. Many people who visit the church are shocked that the architect left out something as important as overhead lighting. But the architect had a plan. The various families who regularly attend the church are given their own pew, as well as a lamp and a book. When the family comes to church, their lamp is lit. If they are not in church, the pew is dark. What difference can one darkened pew make? Not much, you might think. But what if several pews were lacking lamps? Then the whole church would be affected. It's obvious. If all are present and in their pews, the church is alive with light. If not, the place becomes dark. What a beautiful picture of the body of Christ! If any one of us is not using the gifts God has given, there will be darkness; but as we use our gifts, the whole body will be full of light. This is how intimately we are linked one with another. He made us a light in order to shine for the sake of others.

Are you being a good manager of the gifts God has graciously given you, the light that He’s given you? Are you making the most of them for the sake of the kingdom? Humorist Erma Bombeck had a great outlook on this and maybe it should be something we should adopt. She once said, “When I stand before God at the end of my life, I would hope that I would not have a single bit of talent left, and could say, ‘I used everything you gave me.’”