Day 128 - May 7

Pneumatology: Spiritual Gifts

**1 Peter 4:10-11**

We have biblical basis for the belief that each person receives at least one spiritual gift at conversion but we still have to answer why God has given us these gifts. To be sure, there have been many conflicts in the history of the church over the utilization of spiritual gifts. In fact, one of the prominent themes in 1 Corinthians relates to the incorrect use of gifts for personal glory and fulfillment. Unfortunately, due to the very present vestiges of sin in the lives of every believer, good and honorable spiritual gifts can often be leveraged in dishonorable ways.

In order to combat our propensity to utilize gifts in an unworthy manner, Peter reminds us that each gift has been given not for our own glory but for the glory of God alone. Peter strikes at the very heart of the matter when he teaches us that we have been given these gifts in order that God may receive the glory. The fundamental motivation for our service should be God’s glory and recognition alone!

Notice here that Peter mentions both the “public” gifts like teaching and the more “behind the scenes” gifts like service. The point he is making is quite clear, all of us can use the gifts we’ve been given for God’s glory regardless of whether or not it is noticed or celebrated by our fellow believers. Make no mistake folks, if you are serving, God is gaining glory even if it doesn’t seem like a big deal to you!

Putting This Together

This has many ramifications, but let me hit on two of the most important. First, if we are to use our gifts in service to God for His glory then we must ensure that the message and heart behind every act of service is oriented to God’s renown alone. Brother and sister, many of the problems that plague the church are grounded in the unfortunate reality that so many of us want our own recognition. We might be willing to serve but if no one “notices” or if we are not publicly congratulated or thanked, we sometimes feel as if our service was for naught. This is, unfortunately, a betrayal of the condition of our hearts! If we serve for God’s glory alone, we can rest in knowing that our gifts are serving His ultimate plan. This provides freedom and joy in all means of service.

Second, we need to make sure that we use the gifts God has given us in the way that He has prescribed. It is very possible, if not probable, that sinful men can profit from these gifts in an unwholesome manner. Now, I do not mean that you cannot utilize your gifts for God’s glory in the secular sphere, nor does the Bible teach that it is categorically wrong to use your gifts as a means of sustaining yourself but when the gift becomes a means to our own selfish ends instead of a means to make much of the Father we are careening down a destructive path. Each and every time we use the gifts we’ve been given; we must ensure that we are evaluating whether or not our utilization of the gift furthers the point which is God’s glory.