

StewardLife LESSON 19



STORY:

Paul eagerly unwrapped the present from Grandpa. He was sure it was going to be the new sports jersey he had talked to Grandpa about.

They enjoyed going to games together, cheering, whistling, even booing once in a while. The excitement of pro sports, the stands, the crowds, the hot dogs and, especially, being there with Grandpa, made going to each game a special treat for Paul.

Yes! There it was! Grandpa hadn't failed! A real pro jersey, just like the team wore!

Paul's thank-yous were many and sincere. He hugged Grandpa and dashed off into his room. In a few minutes he returned wearing the jersey.

"It looked so great in the box when I opened it," Paul told Grandpa, "but it looks even neater when I wear it. A gift like this is only really useful when you put it on."

STORY:

Every day, Jerry had success. He looked forward to going to the classroom and being with that second grade class. And the kids loved him. His humor, his pathos, his caring and helping. "He's the best student aide we've ever had," the principal told the college supervisor. "He will make a great teacher and addition to the staff at any school that hires him."

That was then. This is now. Jerry struggles in to work every day. As unit manager he makes a good salary, but the stress is getting to him. "Maybe I should have gone into teaching," he thinks. Jerry only took those two education classes as free electives. His goal was business administration, not teaching.

Jerry logs on to his terminal and settles down to read the incoming e-mail....

INSIGHT OUT:

What gifts of God do you have that you don't want anyone else—maybe not even yourself—to know about? Or are there gifts you intentionally hide? Or does someone else see a gift in you that they have tried to bring out but you resisted so hard that they gave up? Or have you seen glimmers of gifts within yourself that you ignored, didn't pursue or develop? What is going on?

As Paul said in our opening story, "Gifts like this are useful only when you put them on."

God has worked in your life to make you who you are today—and who you will yet be tomorrow. God's grace in giving you gifts helps you make daily choices about how you will serve Him. Because you will be sharing gifts that come from God's never-ending supply, you can commit to use them without fear of using them up.

EXERCISE:

What does it mean to "put on" the gifts God gives us? See 1 Corinthians 1:7 and 7:7. Scripture, especially 1 Corinthians chapters 12 to 14, views gifts of the Spirit as activities of ours that increase the unity of the church. The StewardLife is all about using all the gifts God has given you. They are there for a purpose. Examine your life: Accept the affirmation of others as they see and encourage you to use a gift. Evaluate your gift/use ratio. Are you struggling to accomplish things that are hard when a better use of your gifts would make life easier, more satisfying and rewarding?

This site is maintained through The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Foundation, Stewardship Ministry Services. Contact Rev. Ronald E. Nelson, Associate for Stewardship Ministry, at ronald.nelson@lcms.org

The resources on this web site are © The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod Foundation. Permission is granted to copy and reproduce for personal and local use when copyright notice below is included.

All other reproduction and publication rights are reserved.

“© The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod Foundation. Used by permission.”

StewardLife® brand is a registered trademark of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod for stewardship resources. Stewards for LifeSM is a registered service mark of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod for stewardship services.