

The Tools Your Father Gave You

God's gifts aren't meant to be admired—they're meant to be used

Every now and then, you run across a tool that's been sitting still so long it almost looks like it belongs on the shelf. It's still good. It's still useful. But that was never the point of it. A tool wasn't made to sit there looking respectable. It was made to be picked up and put to work. I've thought more than once that a lot of what God gives us is the same way.

When people hear the word *gift*, they often think of something large and easy to spot. They think of the kind of ability that gets noticed right away. And sure, God does give gifts like that. But He also gives the kind that don't draw much attention at first. He gives what a person needs to steady a hard moment,

carry a load, make a wise choice, or help somebody else along the way. A lot of the good He places in our hands won't ever look flashy, but that doesn't make it small.

That may be one of the easiest things to forget. We live in a world that notices what shines, what impresses, and what stands out. But much of what holds life together doesn't work that way. A great deal of good is done quietly. It is done by people who keep their word, who stay steady when things get hard, and who bring a little help or a little peace where it is needed. Those things may never get much attention, but they matter more than people think.

The Bible says in 1 Peter 4:10, "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others." I've always liked how plain that is. It doesn't say admire it.

It doesn't say wait until you feel more prepared. It says use it. That means what God gives isn't meant to sit idle. It's meant for life as it is actually lived, not life as we imagine it might be someday.

That's where this lands for most of us. God's gifts are not mainly for the big

work through things that seem plain at first glance.

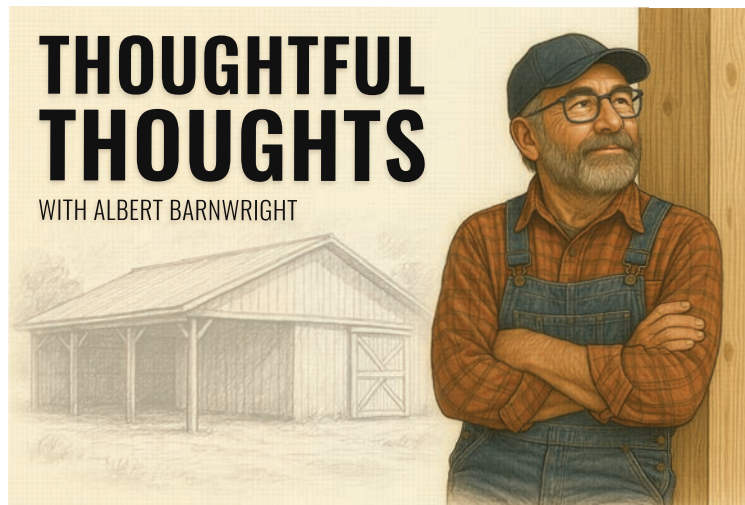
There is good news in that. God doesn't just place something in our hands and then leave us alone with it. He teaches us over time. He shapes us. He uses hard days, long waits, mistakes, and second chances to make us more useful than we were before. Some of what we carry now may not have come easily, but that doesn't make it less valuable. In fact, some of the strongest things in a person are the very things God formed slowly.

So maybe the question isn't only, "What did God give me?" Maybe the better question is, "What am I doing with it?" Am I letting it sit there, or am I bringing it into the life He's

already set in front of me? Am I putting it to work in a way that helps somebody else and honors Him?

Because that's what these gifts are for. God didn't place them in our hands so they could sit there unused. He gave them to us for the real work of life. And one good way to honor God our Father is to take what He has placed in our hands and use it well. **PB**

Albert Barnwright writes from a life shaped by both faithfulness and failure. His words come from hard lessons, honest repentance, and a faith-rooted view of work, responsibility, and stewardship. He writes to help others learn without shame, carry responsibility with care, and keep what matters most at the center of their work, faith, and daily lives.



moment. They're for the ordinary one. They're for the conversation at the end of a long day, for the choice to do what's right when no one would blame you for doing less, and for the small act of faithfulness that may not look like much from the outside. That is often where honor begins, not in being admired for what we have, but in being faithful with it.

And if we're honest, most of us have had times when we let good things sit too long. We knew better, but didn't act on it. We had a chance to help, but held back. We had words that could've done some good, but they never made it out of our mouth. That sort of thing happens to all of us. But it's worth remembering that small acts are not small just because they're common. God often does His