

Moment for Mission – Time and Talents - 10/27/19 – Vicki Leighton

This week our stewardship emphasis is on time and talents. In Living God's Mission: A Lifetime of Stewardship we are not exploring new concepts. Caring for what God has given us has been our call since we were created. Using what we have wisely, using what we have to glorify God, using what we have to bring His love and grace to the world is our daily challenge.

There is rarely enough time in the day to accomplish all the tasks on our to-do lists. Life seems to be increasingly more complicated ...full of distractions and drains on our time. Yet we each have 24 hours in every day. When people say, 'I don't have time.', it often has more to do with how we choose to spend our limited time. Recognizing that everybody has different responsibilities and different life situations, I think we can agree that we all are busy living and need to make hard choices about how we spend our minutes and hours.

The message here is not that all your time needs to be spent at church. However, since your time is a gift from God, it should be used in a way that is pleasing to Him. In the song, Do Everything, we are told that everything we do matters, so we should do it all to God's glory. To me that means striving to do everything with integrity, kindness, patience, humility, and gratitude. And certainly, your time is welcome and necessary in the vibrant, vital, active ministries that allow God's love and grace to flow through Bethlehem to those who need to see and feel it.

While time is allocated to each of us in days of equal length, talents are distributed ever so differently; and it often appears unfairly. Some people seem to have it all and be able to do it all. It is so easy to compare your gifts to those of another and discount what you can do. I am here to tell you that you don't have to be the best at something or be able to do something that nobody else can do. What you must do is act on your gratitude to your creator.

One of the difficult things about using your talents or gifts, is identifying what exactly your specific gifts are. There are lots of surveys out there that help identify spiritual gifts or particular passions that might direct you to where you could best serve, but one of the best ways is to speak with a trusted friend who will help point out your strengths. And it is important to listen to what God is leading you to do. If you are doing it right, you will continue to grow until the day you are called home. So, your gifts and your calling may change as time passes.

Have you ever felt God pulling at you to do something you never thought you would do? It has happened to me ever since I joined this church. And while trying new things is always challenging, there is not a safer place to do it than here at Bethlehem.

Erma Bombeck was an author, newspaper columnist, and American humorist who wrote about suburban home life. A funny lady, she was also open about her faith. One of her quotes, and the one that speaks to me most, goes like this....

"When I stand before God at the end of my life, I would hope that I would have not a single bit of talent left and could say, 'I used everything you gave me.' "

I pray I can say it as well.