

Uncover Your Gift From God

It's not that Ellie doesn't have a regular bedtime or a regular bedtime routine. It's not that she doesn't have enough hours available to her for sleep. It's just that sometimes she doesn't sleep well, and she winds up going through the next day tired.

We were discussing exactly this on the way home from church yesterday afternoon. "Kenny's the one who's good at sleeping," Ellie said, referring to the fact that her brother never has trouble falling asleep or staying asleep.

"Yes, but when he was a baby, he was a terrible sleeper," I said.

"Yeah, but not anymore," Ellie said. "He makes sleeping look easy."

I have to admit that I chuckled out loud. *Sleeping is easy*, I thought to myself. But then I realized Ellie doesn't experience it that way at all. Sleeping, though easy for Kenny, is not easy for her. That doesn't mean Ellie should stop trying to sleep.

In a similar vein, I have friends who are great at things like cooking or making stuff you see on Pinterest. I'm not. I'm simply not that talented in those areas. What's easy for them is not easy for me. That doesn't mean I have to stop making my kids' birthday cakes (which I enjoy) just because there are people who are better at that kind of thing than I am.

God, in His infinite wisdom, has made us all different. We all have different skills and abilities, strengths and weaknesses. He has portioned these out to each of us as He determined best and necessary for His perfect plans. Yet too often we spend our time wishing we had gifts someone else had instead of developing the ones we do have or giving up in one area just

because there's someone in the world who can do better.

But we are not to despise the gifts God has given us. Instead, we are commanded to make use of them. He has given them to us for a reason, and that reason is in accordance with the plans He has for us. We will never fully be who God wants us to be if we spend our time comparing ourselves to others and becoming either prideful or discouraged.

You see, God doesn't count one gift better than another. He doesn't love one mom more just because she can sing solos in church and you can't. He doesn't prefer one mom over another because she throws picture-perfect birthday parties and I don't. After all, He was the One who gave our gifts to us, and God doesn't give substandard gifts. In other words, He gave us the gifts we have because they are valuable to Him and He wants us to use them for His kingdom.

When we don't use our gifts—when we decide not to use them because someone has a greater gift or because we didn't get the gift we wanted—God is not pleased. He wants *our* gifts used *by us*. That's why He gave them to us. So just because another mom is better at something than you are or just because another mom has a gift you don't, that's no reason you shouldn't be content with your gifts and develop them to the fullest. After all, God is pleased with them, so you should be too.

“Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them” (Rom. 12:6, ESV).

*Adapted from **Megan Breedlove's** blog, *Manna for Moms*. Megan is the author of *Well Done, Good and Faithful Mommy* and *Manna for Moms: God's Provision for Your Hair-Raising, Miracle-Filled Mothering Adventure*. She is also a blogger and a stay-at-home mom with five children.*