

Crushed or Cubed?

You can tell who has been to the refrigerator last. If it was Kathy the ice maker will be set to cubed ice. I like to



savor small pieces of ice melting in my mouth, so I use the crushed ice setting. We fold our laundry differently, and sometimes have a different way of mounting the toilet paper on the holder in the bathroom. I start the morning newspaper with the sports page while Kathy begins with the first section. I love coffee and not tea, and Kathy is the opposite. All of us could quickly rattle off different preferences than our spouse.

What we don't differ on is our commitment to our faith. For Kathy and me it was a pre-requisite in selecting each other for a life-long relationship. Four-three years later, Kathy is still putting up with the different way I do things, because in the end, most differences aren't important. But, we are unified in our faith. We worship one God, and listen to Him for direction.

God built each of us to have different skills and passions. That is so we can grow His kingdom in unique ways. Our uniqueness broadens the ministry. God needs people to do missions around the world, so Kathy shares her love with the people of Quito, Ecuador. God also needs us to serve people in our local community. My work with our YMCA and Chamber of Commerce over the past 23 years is an effort to help Kernersville to be a wholesome, Christian community. Kathy is an excellent lay reader at church. I choose other roles at church and use my God-given writing abilities to share His word locally and beyond. We each have a unique response to one faith, and one God.

What gifts has God given to you? If you have a heart for service you can help the less fortunate in countless ways – locally or beyond. If you are good with numbers you can be helpful with many functions at church, or in human service organizations in the community. Do you love sports and enjoy youthful enthusiasm? Help with church youth groups or coach sports teams at the Christian-based YMCA. Do you believe all people are a creation of God? Consider helping with ministries that include people different than you. Has God blessed you with financial security? You can support the work of volunteers with the resources to make good use of their efforts. You can serve God through the church but also out in the community.

God gave you the abilities for a reason. As an interesting exercise, write down the things you are good at and then jot down a couple of ways you can use each God-given gift to serve others. Because we each have different gifts we can help people in different ways than would be possible if we all had the same skills and interests. The verse listed below is a familiar one about different gifts God grants to each of us. *There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men. (1 Corinthians 12:4-6)*

But read one more line. Verse 7 ties us all together in a common purpose. It says, *“Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.”* We are not acting alone, but our effort – combined with that of others – is for the common good. Crushed or cubed – God made each of us unique for his common purpose.

Question: What gifts has God given to you, and how can you use them to help others?

Prayer: We thank you, Lord, for all you have given us. We pray we will be good stewards of the blessings You have given each of us, and pray we will use them to glorify You. Glorifying you centers people to worship you, not us. This is your creation. We are privileged to have the opportunity to come to know You. Amen.