

Short & Sweet: Use It or Lose It, by Mary Kane



Nourishment and refreshment
for the soul.

"Your gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have heaped up treasure in the last days." James 5:3

On my earring rack hangs one lonely **silver** hoop earring. I lost it's partner three years ago during Christmas play practice. It fell out of my ear, rolled across the floor, and was crushed beyond recognition underneath the size 12 tennis shoe of a 6th grade boy. Since they were sterling **silver**, I couldn't bring myself to throw the remaining earring away. I hung the lone hoop back on the rack and forgot about it ... until the other day.

I was searching my rack for a fresh pair of *spring-like* earrings (yes, the snow has finally melted in Michigan), when I spotted a dull black earring, hanging by itself in a dark corner of the rack. *What is this?* I asked myself as I picked up the dingy earring. As I turned the earring over in my hand, I recognized my long-ago favorite hoop earring, now corroded from neglect and disuse.

All of my other **silver** earrings gleamed on the rack. What kept them shiny? Not polish, but daily use. Slowly my mind made a connection to a Bible verse from the book of James. If we do not use our **gifts** and our resources, but let them sit idly on a shelf, they will corrode. They'll turn black and dingy from disuse, and will eventually disintegrate. Ultimately, no one will benefit from our **gifts**; they will be a complete loss.

God gives us **gifts** to bless others, and we reap blessings in return. Let's dust off our **gifts** and use them today.

Action Points:

1. Are your **gifts** corroded or shiny from daily use?
2. What do you love to do, and how can you use that **gift** to serve others?
3. Find a way to use your **gifts** to bless someone today.
4. Ask God to show you your **gifts** and how to use them for His kingdom.