

Introduction:

Christmas time most people give and receive gifts. Not all gifts are the same. Some will never be used, some will be taken back and exchanged for money or something else, some will be “regifted”. While others will be kept and used for many years. This got me to thinking of what makes “GIFTS” special.

I) Gifts

A) Practical

1. There are certain gifts that just aren't useful, we know we will never use it.
2. Some we wear out- clothing, tools, things which makes our lives easier.

B) Shows forethought

1. What was he/she thinking? Or the spur of the moment gift is usually not going to be treasured.
2. Some have to be ordered or prepared in advance. A book case or other piece of furniture, etc.

C) Sacrifice

1. May be financial, may be personal effort required.
2. Handmade quilt, or something which is relatively expensive.

D) Show love- emotional attachment.

1. Special ornaments- handmade, ones our children bought us.
2. Other things given to us and we treasure for the rest of our lives.

II) God's Gifts to Us

A) Practical

1. The Bible

Ephesians 3:1 For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles-- **2** if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you, **3** how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, **4** by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ),

a. It is timeless

1 Peter 1:23 having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever,

b. Tells us how to live on a daily basis- Proverbs

c. Warns us of dangers – sexual sins

Proverbs 6:27 Can a man take fire to his bosom, And his clothes not be burned? **28** Can one walk on hot coals, And his feet not be seared? **29** So is he who goes in to his neighbor's wife; Whoever touches her shall not be innocent.

d. Tells us how to be saved

Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

2. Prayer – the avenue of talking to God.

1 Thessalonians 5:17 pray without ceasing,

B) Shows forethought

1. God's eternal plan of salvation.

Ephesians 3:8 To me, who am less than the least of all the

saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, 9 and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; 10 to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, 11 according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, 12 in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him.

- a. See this in the Garden of Eden

Genesis 3:14 *So the LORD God said to the serpent: "Because you have done this, You are cursed more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you shall go, And you shall eat dust All the days of your life. 15 And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel."*

- b. Includes the lineage of Jesus, place of birth, time of birth, manner of birth, His life, betrayal, death, and resurrection.

Acts 2:29 *"Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. 30 "Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne,*

2. God making man a spiritual being. **Genesis 3:26-27**
3. Made it possible for us to have "eternal life" used 32 times in the N.T.

1 Corinthians 15:51 *Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall*

not all sleep, but we shall all be changed-- 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

C) Sacrifice

1. Jesus' death on the cross.

***Ephesians 5:1** Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. **2** And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.*

2. Have you ever thought about the extent of His love.
3. To allow us to be a part of His household.

***1 John 3:1a** Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.*

4. All is tied together with Jesus' sacrifice for us.

D) Shows Love

***John 3:15-**"that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. **16** "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*

1. To love those who were doing what He hated.

***1 John 4:9** In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. **10** In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*

2. To extend mercy and forgiveness.

Ephesians 2:4 But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,

3. The more we love someone the more we want to forgive them.
4. God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in Christ.

James 1:17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.

III) What Gift Can We Give to God?

A) Practical

Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

B) Shows forethought

2 Corinthians 9:7 So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.

1. What have you done lately in service to God which shows forethought?

C) Sacrifice

1. What have you done which required a sacrifice? Time, talents, passed up opportunities in order to serve God.

D) Shows love

1 John 5:1 Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him. ***2*** By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments.

Conclusion:

The more of these qualities the gift has, the more it is treasured. Let us not take God's gifts for granted. ***Proverbs 21:21*** NKJV ***21*** He who follows righteousness and mercy Finds life, righteousness and honor.