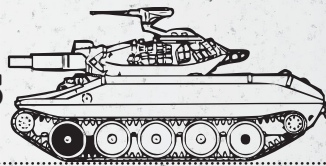


GIVING AND RECEIVING GIFTS



WARM UP

We tend to have times when we give gifts - birthdays, anniversaries, Christmas and special occasions. How powerful then is a gift we give that just says "I love you"? Gifts that last create memories. How wonderful for the one you love to see on a daily basis a gift that communicates your love. I have a watch that I wear, and each day when I put it on it reminds me of that person's love for me. I have an unusual gift of a wooden carving of a hand holding an egg. When I saw it I was disappointed, but then the giver explained that in his culture the carving meant "life is like an egg, be careful how you treat it". It now has a cherished spot in my home and I treat my life carefully.

BACKGROUND

God is a gift-giver. He gave us His Son. He gave us life. He gives us good gifts. We need to be proficient gift givers, but also gift receivers. I can recall very clearly an incident with my elderly aunt. She wanted to bless my wife and me with a washing machine, but I would not let her give it to me. She gave me a good telling off! She told me my problem was that I was good at giving, but needed to learn to receive. My aunt said that she was being obedient to the Lord and giving me something that we needed, and as a result she would be blessed. She told me that I was robbing her of her blessing by not receiving the gift. It was a valuable lesson that has stayed with me to this day. We need to receive humbly and gratefully.



READ James 1:17; John 14:27



QUESTIONS

1. What is one gift you have received that was memorable to you? Why?

2. What is one gift you have given, and why was it significant?

3. What are some gifts that you could give that would show those you love how much you love them?

4. The Bible talks about the gifts that God gives to us and the gifts that we can give to Him. What are some of these gifts?

CONSIDER THIS

Fortunately for us it is not the cost of the gift that counts, but it really is the thought that counts. So the key is that we need to always be thinking about how we can give to others. I always teach my congregation that we have been blessed to be a blessing. I would love you to pray a prayer that God would cause you to be a generous and giving person. Remember that one of the best gifts you can give is yourself.

WRAP UP

Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Acts 20:35

How has this been evident in your life?



IT'S TIME FOR PRAYER

MY RESPONSE AS A PROMISE KEEPER

With God's help I will be a proficient giver and receiver of gifts. I choose this week to give a gift every day for five days. Let me be generous.

