

The Gift

A gift by definition is a present freely given;
no strings attached, no hidden cost, no return expectation.
a gift can be a tangible thing with size that can be measured,
but size alone will not determine how it will be treasured.
A gift may be a service; an expression of love and concern,
but since it's a gift, we must take note, it's not something that we can earn.
The cost of a gift must be considered to determine the value thereof;
No, not of dollars and cents do I speak, but was it purchased with love.
For a true gift you see finds its worth in the motive and heart of the giver,
and the one who receives this Gift of love knows its value because
they know the Giver.

The gift of God's creation can be clearly seen
in towering rocks and rushing rivers and forests of trees evergreen;
in flowers and birds of numerous kinds;
in the human body and the human mind.
Nothing on earth got here just by chance,
but it's God who controls each circumstance.
Cosmic explosions, evolution and such
are for crippled minds who need a crutch
because they don't believe it was God's plan
to create this world and then entrust it to man.

When God created man, He gave him life
and as a lifelong companion, He gave him a wife.
the whole of creation is centered on giving;
a Godly principle for holy living.
God gave us life and each other to love
and said to pray for His will on earth as it is in heaven above.
So we are to live as God designed us to live.
We must indeed learn that it's more blessed to give.
It's fun to receive; it gives us a lift,
but nothing compares with the joy of giving a gift.

Tithing is a way of giving that we should all know;
ten percent off the top helps make our faith grow.
In normal mathematics it may not seem right,
but any tither will tell you that they've seen the light.
When we give in obedience to God's holy command,
we have His firm promise upon which to stand.
Ninety percent goes further than our total paycheck
if we give God the tithe and do not neglect
to thank Him and praise Him for His bountiful supply;
I know it's true, so I'll tithe and give more till I die.

Serving is a way we can give unto others;
great examples of this are seen in Godly mothers.
Proverbs thirty-one expounds on this testimony
and families that have one, thank God for matrimony.
She gives and she gives; her "to do" list has no end;
preparing food, cleaning houses, looking for things she needs to mend,
washing clothes, checking homework, and kissing hurt away;
she gives of herself to her family and others in need day by day.
And perhaps on top of everything, she has a job in public life
and she's active in her church; thank God for the gift of a Godly wife.

With humble hearts we bow before our Heavenly Father in prayer
and intercede for those in need, knowing that He is there
ready and willing our burdens to lift
if we've confessed our sins and received His Gift;
the gift of salvation - eternal and free,
available to all because Christ willingly
gave His own life on the cross of Calvary
to save sinful people just like you and me.
but come join with me as we take another look
at this glorious Gift in God's Holy Book.

Amid the splendors of heaven before time began;
before He spoke at creation, God had a plan.
From His eternal perspective, He instituted time
and I imagine throughout our history, at certain events His clock would chime.
Surely it chimed at creation as God spoke and the world came to be;
every item in every way designed and brought forth perfectly.
Perhaps it chimed a sour note in the Garden that fateful day,
when man and woman sinned and Satan laughed and innocence was given away.
I believe it broke His heart, though He knew that's how it would be,
but as I said, He had a plan to give life eternal and abundantly.

I'm sure it must have chimed when He flooded the earth
to punish sinful man finding only Noah of any worth.
And so in an ark built by this obedient man
according to the dimensions of God's special plan,
Noah and his wife and their three sons and their wives
and a host of animals found safety for their lives.
All others perished because they rejected
God and His love which cannot be neglected
if we are to reside forever in heaven above,
we must repent of our sins and receive God's Gift of love.

And God's clock kept on chiming down through the halls of time
and true to His nature He kept reminding men of His Gift sublime.

The Messiah was coming to pay for their sin,
but they would have to receive Him and let Him enter in;
a gift is in vain if not freely received;
and by listening to Satan, many have been deceived.
They trusted in false gods and before idols did bow.
It's a practice that continues even till now.
Perhaps even among us gathered here on this day
there are those who have not listened and from Christ have turned away.

Oh, I beg you to hear me, listen closely while I proclaim
that God's Gift indeed was given and Jesus is His name.
In a lowly cattle feeding trough the newborn Child was lain;
Who would have thought that this Perfect Lamb would one day for
sinners be slain.
But that was God's plan. It was the only way
to redeem fallen man and our sin debt to pay.
A host of angels told the good news to some shepherds that night
who were awed by the sight and fell down with fright.
But when they had journeyed to Bethlehem,
they found the stable and worshipped Him.

But wait! There is more to this story of old.
Don't forget those simple shepherds became messengers bold.
They glorified God and told everything they knew;
as it had been told to them they too shared with not a few,
but with many, for the Word says that they made "it widely known";
all their fears and hopelessness had suddenly flown.
Flown away because they knew that God's Gift had been given;
that mankind could now have their sins forgiven.
They still knew not the how, but they worshipped with devotion;
they had seen the Messiah and knew God's plan was in motion.

For God so loved the world that He, listen to this, He gave
His only Begotten Son and how the world did rave.
Some like the shepherds, rejoiced in praise and glee,
while others railed on Him all the way to Calvary.
Some became disciples; they daily learned from Him.
Others sought to find a way to make Him more like them.
They joined together with Satan's clan
to bring Him down and ruin God's plan.
But Jesus was committed to do His Father's will,
so He suffered death in our place, but hang on, there's more still.

Beaten, humiliated, and crucified was He,
and from His cross atop Mount Calvary,
the voice of the Savior rang clear and loud,

"It is finished," He cried above the mocking crowd.
My sin debt was canceled; paid in full, oh praise His Name!
I've been reconciled to God and it's all because He came
to give Himself unselfishly to redeem my sinful soul.
In Christ I have been made complete! In Him I now am whole.
And listen to some more Good News. 'Twas not for me alone
that He came and freely gave Himself, but for all sin to atone.

That's right, my friend, He died was buried, and bodily rose from the grave
as the Gift Supreme; the one and only Way, your sinful soul to save.
But if you reject His gift of grace,
hear me well, one day, face to face
you'll hear Him say despite your plea,
"I never knew you. Depart from Me."
So while He is offering, oh please don't wait!
Tomorrow's not promised. It could be too late.
Tell Him you're sorry. Receive His Gift. It's free!
but let's never forget the price He paid to give the Gift to you and me.

- by James T. Lochridge, Jr.

(Scripture References - Romans 6:23; John 3:16; Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 5:12-17)