

# IN FOCUS: Share your best gift this Christmas

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What is the best Christmas gift you ever got? I remember the Christmas I was in the sixth grade I got a Schwinn bicycle. It was a beauty. I rode it for years, even taking it to Baylor with me. It was a good gift. There have been a lot of good Christmases and Christmas gifts. Donna and I have an ongoing discussion about Christmas gifts. She always wants to give me what I need for Christmas. I am more interested in getting something out of the ordinary. Last year, Donna gave me Lincoln Logs. I don't have enough to build Fort Apache—a reference no one under 45 will get—but I can build houses and a railroad. The truth be known, most of us have trouble remembering much of what we have received for Christmas even last year.

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Another question is: What is the best Christmas present you ever gave? I remember one Christmas looking all over Texas for a My Pretty Pony Castle. Then there were the Cabbage Patch Doll years, or the right Nintendo game that had to be found, or we had to find the Millennium Falcon. Those highly desired and much-prized items later transformed into garage-sale material.

As we enter the Advent season in preparation for Christmas, it seems we already have gotten the best Christmas gift we could ever want. He came wrapped up in swaddling clothes and was not found at WalMart, but in a manger in Bethlehem.

What did we get? In Jesus, we have a Savior who gives us life. The hope he brings to us is eternal. It is to be treasured, lived and shared.

The Apostle Paul describes how that gift keeps giving and growing when he

writes about the fruit of the Spirit. The first three named are directed specifically to each believer. They are love, joy and peace.

Love is the John 3:16 Christmas story. God so loved each of us that he gave his Son. The announcement in Luke 2 presented good tidings of great joy to all people, for born in Bethlehem was the Savior. That was accompanied by the heavenly choir singing glory to God in the highest and peace to all people.

Those are the amazing gifts that are ours from the Savior. They are not forgotten a week after Christmas or put in the garage sale in the summer. They are not on a shelf somewhere, waiting for the next white elephant Christmas gift exchange. They are treasured gifts that grow in our lives.

These received gifts must be shared.

Let me make a suggestion. This December, as you rush through parties, programs, meals and shopping, gift all those you see with what already is growing in you. Share with them the love of the Savior. Demonstrate the joy that lives in you because the Spirit lives there. Show them the peace that passes understanding because of the unshakeable peace that comes from the child of Bethlehem.

Those gifts and that hope are the gifts our world needs.

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