



**Let us give thanks all the time to God through Jesus Christ.
Our gift to Him is to give thanks. Our lips should always give thanks to His name. Hebrews 13 : 15**

As we come into December many of us will be racking our brains to decide what presents to give to people around us. It is a challenge to come up with something new, appropriate, and likely to be appreciated. And perhaps 'appreciated' is key. We want to give people something they will like and appreciate.

One Christmas, a parent stated that she was no longer going to nag her teenage children to write their thank-you notes to those who had given them presents as they were old enough to do it themselves. As a result their grandma never received acknowledgments of the generous cheques she had given to each of them.

The next year things were different, however. Grandma told her friend triumphantly, "This year each of the children came over in person to thank me,"

"How wonderful!" the friend exclaimed. "What do you think caused the change in behaviour?"

"Oh, that's easy," the grandmother replied. "This year I didn't sign the cheques."

One of the key elements of December and Christmas is surely to say thank you – and mean it ! We do put a great deal of thought and resource into gift planning and giving – but I am reminded that the most important thing we can do when we receive gifts is summed up by Brigham Young –

"Love the giver more than the gift."

And surely that is the whole basis of Christmas. The story of the stable and baby is the story of God loving us so much that He allowed His Son to become one of us in order to change and save us.

God's love for us is awesome !

Surely this December/Christmas is the ideal opportunity to talk about 'the giver' and to thank him for all he has done ? Do speak to us, share your thoughts, and come along to our churches as we celebrate Advent and Christmas and all that they mean.

With thoughts and prayers

Clive Sedgewick