

GLIMPSE

The Giving of Gifts

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It seems to me at this distance of years, that every Christmas my older sister had a different boyfriend. It became a family ritual to be sure to be around when the young lad appeared sometime around the Christmas celebration with a gift in hand. We knew that my sister had two gifts wrapped in her room upstairs, one in red paper and the other in white.

The actual excitement for us was not his gift to her, but how she gauged his gift in terms of what gift she would ascend to retrieve. We knew as well that the red-wrapped box was of more value and she was playing evens. If the white-wrapped box came with her down the stairs, well, we knew this guy would not be around for the next Christmas. Quid pro Quo is the term for an equal this for an equal that. Gift-giving can have its tensions!

Here is how the gifting at Christmas is more than playing; it is a saying. The giver is revealing three things within the one gift. The giver is saying something, revealing something, about the giver! The giver is also saying something about the receiver and something also about the union expressed in the gift. The receiver, in receiving the gift truly, also receives what the giver is saying about the giver, the receiver and the union. The receiver cannot just receive the gift, which would be a business process. Hope that all makes Christmas sense.

The Nativity of Jesus is such a Gift. God, the Sender-Giver is saying, revealing something about God's Godliness. The Divine Gift is saying something about us who can receive Him and the Giver is revealing, stating more strongly than any Hallmark card, the permanent union the Giver extends to each and every one. Amazing!

We wrap gifts to extend the excitement, the waiting and wondering. Jesus is a Divine Mystery wrapped in flesh which allows the wondering to invite us receivers to accept or reject. One interesting element in giving gifts is the searching for the just-right gift. The more we love the person who is the recipient, the longer it takes to find it, if it ever can be found. The more perfect the love, the more imperfect the gift seems to be. Limited-love, limited-gift is the way of it.

Infinite Love has found the perfect *Gift* saying the perfect thing about the *Giver*, us as receivers, and the eternal union the *Giver* is, was and always will be. It is only a glimpse and we are the unwrapping receivers.