

## A Gift to God



I gave the first gift to my mother when I was in kindergarten. It was a small porcelain vase, and it is still displayed in my parent's house after so many years.

Once my mum handed me some money to give to my teacher at nursery school. A few days later the teacher distributed parcels to all the children in class, and she told us to give them to our mothers.

Mum was happy with my gift. I now realize, of course, that she herself had paid for the present that I gave her.

Sometimes we speak of 'giving' our time, praise or service to God. But can I really give anything to the Creator and Lord of all? What can I give him other than that which he himself has given me in the first place? Even as the Scriptures say, 'Who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid? For from him and through him and to him are all things' (Romans 11:35, 36). We are completely dependent on God for our existence, life and every breath we take. 'In him we live and move and have our being' (Acts 17:28).

God is unlike us. He exists in and of himself, without beginning or end, and he is not in need of anyone or anything. He does not need angels or humans. He is perfectly happy in himself as he was eternally blessed before he made the universe. We cannot add anything to him who possesses all things. 'Nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything' (Acts 17:25).

There was a time when I thought that I could earn my salvation by living a good life, praying, attending church, and work hard enough to deserve his favour. After all that's how things go, let's say, my employer is obliged to pay me for the work and service I give him.

But how can I even imagine that Almighty God could ever be indebted to his tiny creature? I needed to hear the Bible's gentle rebuke, 'Who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?'

If I'm perfectly obedient to the Lord, well, that is what I ought to do. That is my duty. Nothing special about that. Moreover I have often disobeyed his will; so if anything, I justly deserve his disapproval and punishment.

Amazingly, instead he gave me what I do not merit - God freely forgave my sins and received me in his loving arms. When he found me unworthy and guilty, he gave me the best Gift of all, his Son Jesus Christ to die on the cross for me.

What gift can I give to God? I can offer nothing but the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving for all his goodness and kindness towards me – for creating and keeping me alive, for my parents, friends, and for my wife and children who give me so much joy, but most of all, I thank him forever and ever for Jesus, my wonderful Saviour.

I realize that my gift – my own heart – he himself has purchased with the blood of his Son. Yet just as my mother rejoiced with 'my' little present, God also rejoices with the love of his children.