

District Deputy Grand Master's Official Visit

Buchanan Lodge No. 550

Accompanying Lodge - Westmount Lodge No. 671

Hillcrest Temple

Thursday December 4, 2008

Brethren, when I was thinking about what to base my talk on tonight, my thoughts kept coming back to the month and the time of the year. December, the month of Hope is full of Christmas festivities. Just to name a few, many of us will be involved in work parties, shopping, open houses for our friends and families, and special religious gatherings. These various festivities all seem to culminate with Christmas Day. Each of us may celebrate this day differently, depending on whether there are only adults around or young children. In our house we have transitioned through the period when our kids were little and waking up early, then adults and sleeping in, and now with grandchildren, we are up early again to see the magic of Christmas morning through their young eyes. I keep telling my wife that we spend way too much at Christmas, but like many other households, that seems to have fallen on deaf ears. But I will admit my wife does use some restraint and our house is not as bad as some that we have seen. It seems even more prevalent in this time of economic uncertainty. It recalls to my mind a message that my wife and I received from a friend. The article was called the “**Spirit of Christmas**” - **Best gifts cost nothing**”, and I will share the content of the article with you.

Christmas isn't about presents. It's about family, friends, brothers and sisters and children. It's about the spirit of Christmas - something we cannot buy but is worth a

million to our loved ones. Here is a list of “gift” suggestions that were in the article, it may not be all inclusive:

- The gift of love. Make it from the heart. Forget the mistakes of family and friends; concentrate on the positive and not the negative. **The gift of not judging people.**
- Don't count the years in which you haven't seen or visited people because of busy lifestyles. Make the time you have together quality time. **The gift of time.**
- Be thankful to anyone who gives you anything, including his or her time. It is not what they give; it is the thought that counts. **The gift of acceptance.**
- Forget your hatreds and resentments. Swallow your pride; it won't give you a stomachache. **The gift of forgiveness.**
- Don't put on fancy clothes or fancy airs to impress people. Put a smile on your face, it encourages warmth and understanding. **The gift of friendship.**
- Don't spoil or stuff yourself or fall victim to self-indulgence. Think of the less fortunate and the poor and share with them. **The gift of sharing.**
- Treat everyone with decency and respect and show appreciation for people who make an effort to encourage you. **The gift of kindness.**
- Leave envy and jealousy in the closet. People that have more than you may have material wealth, but it doesn't always bring happiness. **The gift of delight.**
- Visit the old, disabled and infirmed. Some are lonely and alone and look forward to your company. **The gift of caring.**
- Keep in your hearts the memory of veterans and others who fought for our country so we can enjoy our current comforts. **The gift of remembrance.**

- Give up anger, depression, anxiety, and replace them with joy, enlightenment and cheer. **The gift of peace of mind.**
- Whatever religion inspires you to help others is the right religion. **The gift of enriching someone's life.**
- Encourage others to see the world in a different light through nature - bright, beautiful, and fascinating. **The gift of observing beauty in its' truest form.**
- Don't give your children too many material presents. They will not understand value. Gifts from the heart are more important. **The gift of a lesson in life.**
- The best thing in the world that parents can give their children is that they love each other. **The gift of parenthood.**
- Make sure animals in your life are warm in winter. They are an extension of ourselves and they teach us a lot. **A gift of unconditional love.**

Each new day is a gift. Do what you can for whom you can on a daily basis, not just for Christmas. A simple life is the best life, as long as you seek good for all and not for personal gain. The best gifts in the world are loyalty to your friends, forgiveness of others, service to people in need, kindness to your parents, and in general, being good to all people.

Thank you