

Sermon summary from the message given by George C. Vais for Thanksgiving Sunday, October 7, 2018 at Lake Joseph community Church

Rev. George Vais, a former Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, spoke at the Thanksgiving Sunday service about five gifts which we should give to others just as we have received these gifts from our Creator. The first of these gifts is acceptance. Everyone wants to be accepted by those around us so accepting and loving others with no strings attached is a wonderful gift to give and to receive. The second gift is self-confidence by accentuating the positive things in others in order to build them up and not to put them down by dwelling on their faults. One of the gifts Jesus gave to people at His time was praise. He praised what was good in them and only then pointed out any changes that they needed to make to have life in abundance. It is a gift to those around you when you help them build their self-confidence and not dwell on their faults. The third gift is a life free of needless fears. 1 John 4:18 says "there is no fear in love; perfect love drives out all fear". Many people fear things that will never happen or remain fearful as a result of past events they could do nothing about. These are needless fears which should be pushed out of our lives and we should help others to do likewise. The fourth gift is the gift of appreciation. We can teach our children and grandchildren in particular to appreciate whatever comes their way. God uses trying experiences to teach us valuable lessons and we should thank God for each day. The fifth and final gift that you can give to those around you is faith, which Rev. Vais meant as faith in themselves. Your gift to others can be to remind them that they are created in God's image and that they are "God's beloved". At the same time, you can encourage those around you to have faith in others who are also God's children. Above all else, you can promote and practice faith in God. These five gifts of acceptance, self-confidence, life without needless fears, appreciation and faith are gifts that you can freely give away, at any time, just as each of these gifts has been freely given to each of us as a gift from a loving God.

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Each of us, as a child of God has received many gifts from a loving Creator. We, in turn, should give to those around us from this abundance. The gifts we can give are our **acceptance** of others, encouragement to build **self-confidence**, help in **dispelling needless fears**, **appreciation** for everything that life brings in our way both good and bad and **faith** in others as children of God, while promoting and practicing our faith in a loving God.