



How to Give

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It was a summer day. My mother died in the early afternoon. My father, my brother, and I had gone from the hospital to our family home, just the three of us. We fixed ourselves a snack; then we talked with visitors. It grew late, dusk fell, and I remember we still had not turned on the lights.

Dad answered the doorbell. It was Aunt Catherine and Uncle Bill. I could see that Uncle Bill was holding a bottle of cherries. I can still see the deep red, almost purple, cherries and the shiny gold cap on the jar. He said, "You might enjoy these. You probably haven't had dessert."

We hadn't. The three of us sat around the kitchen table, put some cherries in bowls, and ate them as Uncle Bill and Aunt Catherine cleared some dishes.

As nearly as I can tell, the giving and receiving of a great gift always has three parts. Here they are, illustrated by that gift of cherries.

First, I knew that Uncle Bill and Aunt Catherine had felt what I was feeling. They must have felt we'd be too tired to fix much food. They must have felt that a bowl of home-canned cherries would make us feel, for a moment, like a family again. I can't remember the taste of the cherries, but I remember that someone knew my heart and cared.

Second, I felt that the gift was free. I knew that Uncle Bill and Aunt Catherine had chosen freely to bring a gift.



President Eyring teaches us how to give the most meaningful gifts.

The gift seemed to provide them joy in the giving.

And third, there was sacrifice. I knew that Aunt Catherine had canned those cherries for her family. They must have liked cherries. But she took that possible pleasure from them and gave it to me. That's sacrifice. But I have realized since then this marvelous fact: it must have seemed to Uncle Bill and Aunt Catherine that they would have more pleasure if I had the cherries than if they did.

Great gift giving involves three things: you feel what the other feels, you give

freely, and you count the sacrifice a bargain.

God the Father gave His Son, and Jesus Christ gave us the Atonement—gifts of unfathomable depth and value for us. Jesus gave His gift freely, willingly to us all. One of the sure signs of a person who has accepted the gift of the Savior's Atonement is a willingness to give. ●

From "Giving with Joy," Ensign, Dec. 1982, 9–11.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. President Eyring liked the gift of cherries because it comforted him. What are some ways you can comfort others?

2. Have you ever received a special gift? What made it special?

3. You may not always know by your own experience how someone else feels. Can you still give good gifts to others? How?

