

Reflecting the Lord's Bountiful Love

I opened
the front door and came face to face with a rather large gift
basket wrapped in
clear cellophane with a gigantic velvet orange and brown bow.
It was so big that
it blocked the face of the deliveryman.

The sight of such a gift was too
wonderful for words! As a young married couple, Terry and I
were going through
hard times, with little money for extras, much less the
basics!

The
arrival of this surprise basket of goodies was not only
timely, but a miracle!

Just who was behind this?

Terry and I carefully grabbed
the gift basket from the deliveryman and raced to the dining
room table to dig
in. We tore away the cellophane and bright velvet ribbon to
discover, to our
amazement, treasures galore!

We uncovered each piece—first there was a
canned ham, then a fancy tin of imported sardines (with
mustard accompanying it,
both of them tied together in a festive plaid ribbon). Out
came two giant links
of brown sausage, followed by chunks of rich yellow cheddar

and two imported
cheeses, and fresh apples, pears, oranges, three boxes of
crackers, two tins of
cookies, Belgium chocolates, hot cocoa mix in an exotic tin,
even a red bag of
ground coffee, tea bags and hard candies! In special boxes
were two coffee mugs
trimmed in blue, two soft cream-colored cloth napkins and a
small teapot that
matched the mugs. What a feast!

To our surprise, the card read: "May the
good Lord bless you abundantly this Thanksgiving, love Pearl
and
William."

Pearl and William? Love? Pearl was an older lady
who worked in the gifts department of the large bookstore
where Terry worked.
Terry, in fact, hardly saw Pearl except when her retired
husband, William,
stopped by every other week to take her to lunch. The only
thing Terry knew
about them, in fact, was that they were Christians.

My eye went to the
phrase "May the good Lord bless you abundantly this
Thanksgiving." It was in
that moment when it became obvious to me that the Lord truly
loved
us—loved us enough to have two near-strangers give something
so precious to us
in our time of great need.

Isn't that just like the Lord to love us so

much and to use others to show His love? God's Word reveals this powerful truth in 1 John 4:7-8: "God is love," (NKJV) and in James 1:17, where it states: "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above." His Word also shows how He gives to us: "Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us" (Eph. 3:20).

It further reveals to us that we are "ambassadors for Christ" (2 Cor.5:20). As ambassadors for Christ, shouldn't you and I be called, especially in this Thanksgiving season, to show His love through our generous giving to others? As your sister in the Lord, I invite you to join me in doing it Jesus' way—exceedingly abundantly.

This Thanksgiving perhaps you can give a warmer smile of encouragement from your heart, more of your time to a friend or family member, or give your time as a volunteer at a local soup kitchen, or give your time as a volunteer through your church to a hospital, prison or women's shelter. Be open to giving a bountiful gift basket to someone, reflecting the Lord's bountiful love for her! Invite someone who has nowhere to go to your home this Thanksgiving. Who knows how much they might need that.

The seeds

given to others in this Thanksgiving season can reap a powerful harvest, not only in our own lives, but also in the lives of others as they come face to face with the loving Lord of the harvest.