

Useful Gifts talk outline: 15 minutes

This talk outline was developed by one of our state staff for their own use in preparing for church services. As an outline, it is designed to provide stepping stones through the content of the presentation, and not a presentation to be read word-for-word. Please feel free to add your own examples and stories. The basic structure outline in the left-hand column should last for 15 minutes. The additional notes in the right-hand column will help to expand the length if required.

1. Useless gifts

Have you ever been given a useless gift?

- Clothes that don't fit
- Diary, but already have one
- A book that you've never opened

Some useless gifts might be useful to someone else but never for you.

Other useless gifts are pointless.

- Like a hot-dog maker – it works OK but so does your saucepan or microwave.
- Advertisers con us to buy things we do not need.

“Advertising convinces us to buy things we don't need, with money we don't have, to impress people we don't like.”

2. God gives good gifts

God is a generous God.

He is the great giver. He gives good gifts.

- Matthew 7:11 “How much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him.”
- James 1:17 “Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father.”
- Ephesians 2:8 Salvation is described as “the gift of God”.

Every good gift ultimately has God at its source.

- More gifts of God could be added. A key word or concordance search of ‘gifts/giving’ will yield fruit.

You could add a comment on each of the gifts already listed above. Draw one aspect out of each verse. E.g. (Matt) God wants to give good gifts more than we do. (James) Every good gift ultimately has its source in the goodness of God. (Eph) God gives to the point of self-sacrifice.

3. God wants us to give

One of the ways God wants us is to be like God is to be generous. God wants us to be people who give.

Many passages in the OT and NT refer to giving. Let me quote a passage now...

Paul wrote to the Corinthians to encourage giving to the poor. This refers to their particular situation but the principles are timeless.

2 Corinthians 8:7-9, 13-14 (NIV)

7 But since you excel in everything – in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have kindled in you – see that you also excel in this grace of giving.

8 I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others. 9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.

13 Our desire is not that others might be relieved while you are hard pressed, but that there might be equality. 14 At the present time your plenty will supply what they need, so that in turn their plenty will supply what you need. The goal is equality, 15 as it is written: "The one who gathered much did not have too much, and the one who gathered little did not have too little."

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2 Corinthians 9: 6-8 (NIV)

6 Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. 7 Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. 8 And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.

Giving benefits both the receiver and the giver. I will show you a DVD soon with a story of how receivers benefit but givers also benefit from giving.

- Giving is satisfying. (Give a personal example)
- Giving promotes good character.
- Giving promotes generosity.
- Giving defeats selfishness.
- Giving disempowers the false gods in our lives.

4. TEAR's Useful Gifts

These gifts are:

- useful
- necessary
- practical
- life changing
- make a difference
- extensive range
- gifts for every budget.

How does the gift catalogue work? **Watch this DVD.**

What a great idea! Your loved ones get something useful.

People in poor communities get something they really need that changes their lives.

What difference does it make to the poor?

The best gift is Gift-a-Month: explain the concept.

Take a Gift Catalogue. Read it.

It will give you an insight into what happens, development projects and the needs of the poor.

Think about what you could give. You can be a useful gift giver.

Checklist

- Useful Gifts Promotional and Resources DVD 2013-14.
- Data projector, computer, speaker, etc.
- Gift Catalogues.

Possessions and money easily become false gods and we cast down these false gods when we give away our money and possessions. Instead of owning our possessions, they can easily begin to own us. When we give, we break the chains of materialism and are freed from our false gods to serve the true and living God. (See Zacchaeus and the rich young man for positive and negative examples.)

Play Useful Gifts Promotional and Resources DVD 2013-14

Track: How Useful Gifts work. (2.14 min)

Play Useful Gifts Promotional and Resources DVD 2013-14

Play track: 2013 Gift Cat 4 min. (4.00 min)