

As I sit here on the last Wednesday night in Lent, I can't help but be reflective. Lent can be such a healing time as we journey through Christ's ministry and realize all the incredible things that He did for us. But here's the deal...the bottom line. Christ loved us such an incredible amount that He was willing to die for us. He gave His life for us all those years ago. And through His death and sacrifice, We are redeemed.

"This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters.

If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or a sister in need

but has no pity for them, how can the love of God be in that person?

Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth."

- 1 John 3:16-18

Because He gave up His life as a *gift* for us, we now get to let our lives be a *gift* to others.

I don't often feel like my life is a gift, but it is. In more ways that I can even imagine.

A new baby is a gift. To parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, siblings, and friends. So 33 years ago, I was a gift in a tiny package.

A child is a gift. To my family, teachers, and others that I don't even know, I was a gift as I grew up right before their very eyes.

A friend is a gift. So even on my lowest days, I could be brightening someone else's.

A teacher is a gift. So even though I don't realize the impact I might be making, I have hope that I am.

To be perfectly honest, it's really hard to see myself that way. But that's the way God sees me. Two different friends recently told me that they loved me, and to my recollection, it was the first time I had heard it from them. What a gift that was! And today, I was thanked for sending some mail to a friend. For me, I just like writing and sending mail. But in a way, isn't that being a gift? As we approach Easter and remember the greatest sacrifice ever made for us, I encourage you to find a way to use your life as a gift. Make it an Easter to remember!