

Stewardship is receiving gifts, not presents.

Very often, people equate the words “gift” and “present”. To some degree they are the same thing. To some degree they are two different things. The following is meant to help narrow the definitions of these words in order to better understand the difference between the gifts that God has to give and the presents we often exchange with one another

Christmastime is a special time. It is a time for exchanging presents as we celebrate the one true gift, the greatest gift of all, the gift of God’s Son to humankind. Did you hear what that last statement said? It stated that a present is something that is exchanged. I give you a present and you give me a present. That is what a present is, something that is exchanged with someone else.

Did you hear the second part of the above statement? There is one true gift, the greatest gift of all, the gift of God’s Son to humankind. There was no exchange involved. God gives and we are given to (receive), that is a gift. A gift is a giving and a being given to (receiving), particularly, God’s giving and our being given to (receiving).

God does not give us presents, He gives us gifts. The gifts He gives us, He gives through means, the *means of grace*, the Word (Bible) and the Sacraments (Holy Baptism and the Lord’s Supper). Through these means of grace (**God’s Riches At Christ’s Expense**), God gives us the gifts of faith, strengthening of faith, forgiveness of sins, eternal life, salvation, and the list goes on. God gives His gifts, all of His gifts, and He gives us even more of His gifts. And they are gifts, because they are given without our presenting anything back to Him. We may exchange presents, but God gives gifts. To God be the glory!