# Receive

My wife is an exceptional gift giver. Each year we settle in on Christmas morning to do our exchange and conservatively the open ratio is at least 5 to 1 in my favor. Not only am I outnumbered in quantity but I am also completely outdone in creativity. She just has a knack for finding little accents and accessories to complete the ensemble of the staple gifts.

As I found myself chest deep in discarded wrapping paper this Christmas morning, I began once again to voice my objections. It’s just too much and I really struggle with accepting it all! But then I saw the look on her face. A look of sheer joy and excitement! She truly loves to spoil me with gifts and show off her exceptional talent in picking them out. How much am I stealing that joy and hurting her heart by not freely receiving what she is all too happy to give?

What is it within that causes me to have such a hard time receiving? Is it because I don’t think I’ve given a comparable amount? Am I trying to “earn” what I’ve been given? Do I feel inadequate because I lack an equal amount of creativity?

If I’m being honest, I recognize it stems from my own insecurities. I don’t feel that I deserve such generosity. And so I push back against the gift giver. All my wife wants in return is for me to be as excited about receiving the gifts as she is about giving them. It isn’t about what she gets in exchange.

I know I’ve taken this same attitude when it comes to the Father. How many times has my closed heart robbed Him of the joy of giving? How many times have I acted like the prodigal feeling unworthy to be called son but hoping to “earn my keep” as a hired hand?

***“But when he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired men have more than enough bread, but I am dying here with hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired men.”  Luke 15:17-19***

The Father doesn’t give from expectation. He gives because I am His son. He gives with the hopes I will simply receive.