

“The Ultimate Gift”
by Jim Stovall
Monday August 3, 2015

- The next “Tuesday Night Live” meeting at Corporate Offices... is August 11
- Jeff and Judy Allen: Continue to lift them up in prayer in thoughts in love; Judy is having a kidney removed this Tuesday
- Order your Transforming your Life Brochures from Mannatech TODAY – 20 for \$5.00

“A wonderful story. Needed wisdom for young and old alike. Written by one of the most extraordinary men of our era.” Steve Forbes, CEO Editor and Chief of Forbes Magazine

The Setting

- a. Red Stevens was a self made man who gave his family everything and ruined them in the process. At his death as the many greedy relatives watched the division of his many assets amongst them (although managed by others), one member is singled out for something special: Red’s great-nephew Jason.
 - b. His bequest was to come in 1 year after 12 lessons from a video with Red Stevens...Jason’s attempt to complete the tasks required to receive the “Ultimate Gift” AND if the Lawyer feels Jason’s attitude and demeanor is not good, he also will lose the ultimate gift
1. 1st assignment: Gift of Work. Jason had never learned the power of hard work. He was to go to a ranch in Texas (originally from Boston) Left to dig fence post holes.
 - 1) Came back to pick him up 1 month later...ranch manager wasn’t sure he was going to make it. Blisters, sun burn, heat exhaustion...but made it. “If you can do this kind of work with pride and quality, then you can do anything. I think you have learned your lesson.”
 - 2) On the way back to the airport, used a Cadillac instead of making Jason sit in the back of the pick up with the luggage.
 2. 2nd assignment: Gift of Money. About the value of money that Jason never learned but which Red blamed on himself. If Gus would have paid him on the ranch last month, he would have earned \$1500. The lawyer gave Jason an envelop with \$1,500. Assignment was to go out and find 5 different people who are in a situation where part of that \$1500 could make a real difference in their lives. “I want you to notice how anxiety caused by lack of money is affecting them in real ways.” Report 5 such instances. He did not know where to find these people... Report 30 days later:
 - 1) Went to car wash one night, inner city kids trying to raise money to go to jamboree and they were \$200 short. He drove his car through the wash and paid them \$200.
 - 2) At the mall looking for a parking place. Tow truck with crying woman and baby next to the car. Paid \$400 to guy in truck to pay off loan woman had on her car. Her baby had gotten sick and she missed two payments.
 - 3) In mall, saw family with 2 small boys. Mom said no presents this year

because dad lost his job. Jason handed mom \$300.

4) Older woman crying in mall; husband needed heart meds and the pharmacy in mall wouldn't take her food stamps. He gave her \$200.

5) While driving one day, a car broken down on the road so he stopped, met a young man, called for tow, when got to the shop the mechanic said engine needed to be replaced. Kid needed to get back to school, did not have the money so Jason gave the \$700.

That added up to \$1,800...Jason put \$300 of his own money.

3. 3rd Assignment: Gift of Friends. Jason showed up with bad attitude...but willing to continue. Red told the story of friends...how he needed a kidney transplant and his lawyer is the one who donated it. Task: spend 30 days observing, find what you feel to be the principles that underlie true friendship. "You will never do anything in your life that will bring more quality to your existence than growing to understand and nurture friendship."

1) When back in 30 days, described to them that "friendship involves loyalty, commitment, a process including sharing another person's life." Then described the relationship between Gus at ranch and Red (as described by Gus...where Gus branded 30 of his calves as Red's since he was afraid Red wouldn't make it).

2) Jason told the lawyer "And I hope I can be as good a friend as you were to Red Stevens."

4. 4th Assignment: The Gift of Learning...commencement exercise means you are just commencing on your real learning. "Life...when lived on your own terms...is the ultimate teacher." Jason to go to a great place of learning, and after 1 month explain to lawyer the fundamental key to all learning, education and knowledge.

1) Flew to South America. Went to a distant village and walked down a dirt street to a 1 room building "Red Stevens Library." For the next 4 weeks he was to assist the librarian...only a handful of books, mostly empty shelves.

2) At end, Jason said there was nothing to learn. The only thing he found out is that people would get up hours before daylight, walk miles to get a tattered old book... "the desire and hunger for education was the key to real learning."

5. 5th Assignment: The Gift of Problems...problems, struggles and obstacles are important in life. Next month find a child, young adult, grown adult and elderly who are dealing with a profound problem. Describe the benefit or lesson derived from each experience to the lawyer. "When we can learn from our own problems, we begin to deal with life. When we can learn from other people's problems, we begin to master life."

1) Little girl in the park...dying of cancer, her wish to have a day in the park. He met her and she played with him for hours. Exhausted, her nurse helped her in the wheel chair and told Jason she would request for him to have a day in the park.

2) Middle aged man doing odd jobs in the neighborhood. He and his wife had both lost their jobs and with three young children at home he was doing what he could to make ends meet. He told Jason how much he and his wife were learning. He felt he was the luckiest man on the earth...and wouldn't trade places with anyone.

3) Cemetery...old man near grave. Huge procession had already left. The old man said yes a celebrity, he lived with her for 60 years. After saying sorry, the old man laughed...life will be different but no one had a bad day with her in their life.

4) Young person: himself. He had lived his whole life selfish, self centered.

Never realized real people have real problems. Meeting these people. Joy comes not from avoiding problems, rather overcoming them or simply learning to live with them.

6. 6th Assignment: The Gift of Family. “Families give us our roots, our heritage, and our past. They also give us the springboard to our future. Nothing in this world is stronger than the bond that can be formed by a family.” If you are left without family, you need to go and create it (like Jason). Go on ventures with lawyer to meet people who seem to have no family...

- 1) They went to Maine, the Red Stevens Home for Boys, where Jason became a substitute houseparent for the next month. 36 boys 6 to 16. When arrived, they all hugged him.
- 2) When he left, “not one of those boys has a family but each of them knew more about family than I do...it is not about blood, rather relating through love.”

7. 7th Assignment: The Gift of Laughter. It’s about you being able to look at your life, yourself, your problems and just laugh. You can laugh in the face of adversity. The assignment was to find one person facing a lot of adversity but who is able to laugh.

- 1) Jason met David on a commuter train. He sat on a magazine...due to the chairs being dirty. When someone asked about whether he was reading it, he would stand up turn the page then sit back down and say “Yes sir, but I’ll be done before long.”
- 2) David lost his sight early in his life, went through many struggles, hardships and determined it is choice whether to laugh or cry.

8. 8th Assignment: The Gift of Dreams. “Dreams are the essence of life...not as it is but as it can be.” Your dreams must be yours and they must grow and expand. Spend the month listing all the things you would like to do, be, have in your life. Then prioritize and pick the ones that create the greatest passion in you.

- 1) He decided he wanted to help deprived young people live a good life...do what his great uncle is doing for him right now in learning the power and passion and the values to make their life worth living.

9. 9th Assignment: The Gift of Giving. Jason’s countenance was incredibly different from day 1. Paradoxical: the more you give the more you will have! Abundance creates the ability to give, and giving creates more abundance. One key principle of giving is the gift must be yours to give...maybe something simply a part of yourself. Assignment is to give a gift every day for thirty days.

- 1) Nothing could be from his great uncle and yet everything he had was from his great uncle. Gave someone a parking space, shared umbrella in the rain, take neighbor’s kids to school, jump started a guy’s car, allowed foreign exchange student to stay in his house, worked on Habit for Humanity...

10. 10th Assignment: The Gift of Gratitude. Jason had no gratitude in his life. His great uncle had met a man who told him of the legacy of the Golden List: every night write down 10 things he is especially thankful for.

- 1) health, youth, home, friends, education, travel, car, family, money, and all the steps leading up to the ultimate gift (including the lawyer and his sect. helping this process)

11. 11th Assignment: The Gift of a Day. At some point in life we will have one last day

left. How would you spend that last day, what would you do? If you get that picture in your mind of maximizing one day you will have mastered the essence of living...life is only made up of a series of days. Assignment: come up with the plan on how you would live the last day of your life. Why should we wait until the last day of our life to begin living the maximum day?

1) The younger you are when you begin this exercise the more quality you will have in life.

2) His last day: spend with all the people who are special to him, tell them how much he appreciated them, call all his relatives, enjoy the things I like most like walking in the park, etc. banquet celebrating all these incredible principles videotaped to share with many after I am gone.

12. 12th Assignment: The Gift of Love. It encompasses all the other gifts as well as everything good you will ever do, have, know in your life...the gift of love. Assignment is to explore how love is involved in all the other gifts.

1) "I am not the same person I was 12 months ago." Gus loved me enough to make sure I learned the lesson of work. A certain amount of love comes from doing a job well. Loving money brings emptiness. You can love friends like never before and it takes emphasis off you. People who love learning are really quite wealthy.

Obstacles are merely challenges, and looking at problems through a spirit of love you realize the problem makes you a better person. Families are present when love is present without blood lines needed. In order to love life, you have to enjoy it (laughter is critical). Our passion and goals are the outward manifestations of the love we feel. When you give out of love both the giver and the receiver have more than they started with. Gratitude comes from experience of love remembering all the wonderful things we have been given. The gift of a day reveals choosing to experience as much love as possible and pass it on as well.

"My great uncle's love for me in giving me the ultimate gift forever changed my life and who I am."

The ultimate gift of these experiences...was not all Jason got. His great uncle put him in charge of the Charitable Trust he had formed with over \$1 billion in it to support the Library, boys club, etc.

"In the end, life lived to its fullest is its own ultimate gift!"