

**Thanks.**

**Here's What I Know**

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By itself, the word 'thanks' doesn't convey the full intent of the writer. I was thinking about this over the last week and came to the conclusion that words alone aren't always sufficient to express our thoughts, our ideas, our fears, our dreams or our feelings. Current technology is pushing us back to written forms of communication - I think my kids use their phones more for text messaging than they do for talking!

A little research on communication reveals that, traditionally, written language is more formal, while spoken communication is informal. Slang and vernacular is much easier to understand when spoken and very difficult to capture on the page. However, current trends in cell phone usage and online services show a very different form of written communication. I spend a fair amount of time online, and I am being forced to view writing in a completely different light. Now, switching to reading a book by the fireplace requires more effort than it used to.

When I wrote articles for our printed version of the family newsletter, I wrote differently than I do for the web site. You don't turn pages online, you scroll. The point of the article is at the top of the article instead of the end. People don't read every word online, they look for highlights, links and bullet points. Publishing schedules are also very different. Writing takes time, and so does printing and distributing the printed materials. Online publishing is almost instantaneous and can be done from anywhere. The frequency is much higher and the attention span of online readers is much shorter.

In spite of all this, the message still needs to be spread. Manners still count. Family is central to our lives. Faith in God gives us hope and purpose. Saying 'Please' and 'Thank You' makes a difference in people's lives. We used to save letters we received from loved ones. Most email gets deleted as soon as we read it, if we actually do read it (some of the junk I get is deleted even before I read it!)

Pay attention to your words and don't let them go unspoken. Find a way to express yourself and be heard. Put some life back into your words.

Thank you!