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The Broken Gift

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The following drama was originally used for an advent service. The scripture text was Isaiah 42:3

One person (1) is sitting in a chair. Another person (2), carrying a gift, comes to the door, knocks, and is greeted by #1.

1: Hello. What a surprise. I wasn't expecting you.

2: I like to make unannounced visits. May I come in?

1: (Hesitantly) Ah, I don't really have much room and the place is a mess. I'm not prepared for any company. Might there be another time? (Both are still outside the door)

2: I have a gift for you. I would like for you to open it.

1: Wow, what a surprise. I didn't see this coming. What have I done to deserve a gift?

2: Nothing

1: Pardon me?

2: You've done nothing to deserve this gift, but I would like for you to have it.

1: I don't understand. If I don't deserve your gift, why are you giving it to me?

2: Because your destiny is tied to this gift.

1: Wait a minute, you are talking in mysteries.

2: I know.

1: Are you saying my future is connected to my acceptance of this gift?

2: Exactly.

1: How?

2: The answer is in the gift.

1: So, by opening this gift, I'll understand what this is all about?

2: That is possible. Will you open it?

1: Something tells me that if I don't, I will regret it. Here goes nothing or maybe I should say here goes everything. (begins opening gift) What is the wrapping around the gift?

2: Your gift is wrapped in reed.

1: Well, this reed stuff looks pretty fragile. Does it break easily?

2: Yes, reeds may break if they are not supported.

1: (Takes the box cover off) Here we are. Looks like there is more than one gift. (Takes out first gift) This is odd, what is it?

2: Read the heading at the top of the page. (The following three situations can be adapted to reflect what is happening in your situation. We received permission from the people to use their name in the drama. The names listed here are pseudonyms.)

1: It says, "Chemotherapy and Radiation Treatment Plan for Sue Smith (get permission to use a person in your congregation." You mean this is the treatment plan for Sue's breast cancer? Why are you giving me this?

2: You will see. Open the next gift.

1: These are the emails that Tom and Lynn sent describing the horrific car accident involving their daughter-in-law and their granddaughter. Here is the email asking for prayers for the memorial service of their granddaughter. These are not gifts. This is the ugliness of life.

2: I agree. Life can be extremely painful. Please open what is next (takes out pictures of the ministry center).

1: These are pictures of the Ministry Center. Here's one of Matt talking with a person from the neighborhood. Here is another one of Bob handing out a bag of food. These are nice pictures, but it would have been nice to have a frame for them.

2: The frame is still in the box. Why don't you take that out next? (Takes out the last gift- it is a cross which the person takes out slowly and carefully and holds it up.)

1: The cross at Christmas. Is this the frame for these gifts? How does the cross make any of this better?

2: The cross is a reminder of your destiny. Without the cross, you have no hope or future.

1: But the cross doesn't change any of the first gifts. People still get cancer, people still deal with grief that is overwhelms them, and people still struggle to find their way in a world that threatens to snuff them out.

2: But they now carry the gift of the one who died on the cross for them. The brokenness in Sue, Tom and Lynn, Matt and Bob is given over to the one who will support them in whatever situation they face, and he will ultimately make them whole.

1: I would have never thought to ask for such a gift at Christmas.

2: And that is why this gift is so full of grace.