

Christmas Day, 2011

Have You Opened Your Gift Yet?

When little kids see each other on the day after Christmas, they always ask, “What did you get?” and well-meaning grandmas might ask their grandkids “What did Santa bring you?”

I think sometimes as adults we get so caught up in making sure that everyone else, especially the kids, have a perfect Christmas, that we forget to open our own gifts.

Or we might open them and set them quickly aside to pick up the camera and catch the baby putting a bow on her head or Billy taking his new bike out for a trial run.

Christmas, we might think isn't really for us! It's our job to make sure the dinner is delicious, the tree is beautiful, and everyone else gets what they really wanted!

Even kids might miss open a present! There are just so many, one might get left behind, lost behind the tree or buried under a mountain of discarded gift wrap!

How many of you have already opened your gifts this morning, or last night? Raise your hands!

Did you open all of your gifts, or just a few?

When you get home, I want you to check and make sure you haven't forgotten any. Because some of you haven't opened all of your gifts yet.

I found this box behind my tree. It isn't very big and it's not particularly beautiful. I almost overlooked it.

What's inside? I don't know.

It doesn't weigh much. It doesn't make a sound when I shake it.

What could it be?

Should I open it?

Okay. Here goes!

Well, will you look at that! Huh! I have no idea what it is!

Why would someone wrap that up?

(turn it upside down)

It didn't look like much when it was wrapped, and now it doesn't look like anything at all!

Why would someone give me nothing in a box?

Only, something is different. I can't quite tell what, just that my heart feels a little warmer, I feel a little more joyful, I am not as crabby or impatient as I felt a minute ago.

The day seems a little brighter! And my mouth wants to smile a little bigger.

And I just feel more loved!

What's that about? All I did was open this empty box----

(peer inside again)

Maybe----maybe the box wasn't really empty.

Maybe what was inside is invisible---with no smell or sound----but it's real just the same.

What is it?

What could make me feel this way?

My God! Talking 'bout my God!

God's present to me is God's presence! God's love and grace!

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son, so that whoever believes in Him will not die, but live forever!

And in God's presence I find peace and joy, hope and love.

All packed away in this little box that I almost forgot to open!

Can you imagine---missing the best gift of all?

Don't miss your gift from God! It's there, waiting for you to open your heart and let Jesus come in!

Don't forget to open your gift!