

Tear Open These Perfect Presents Jesus Is Giving You Right Now

We all love to look at presents all wrapped up in pretty paper and tied with a fancy bow.

We all love to get presents, too: the mystery of what may be inside, the knowing that someone thought enough of you to spend their time and money to bless you.

Giving gifts is equally enjoyable and sometimes more so: the anticipation of someone opening a gift, watching their reaction, seeing the joy on their faces and knowing that you hit a home run with your gift.

Gifts are meant to be opened, not kept wrapped up collecting dust. It is fun to see them at Christmas as they sit under the tree, tantalizing us with visions of what might be wrapped up in their pretty paper. But what if Christmas came and went and they never got opened?

The thoughtfulness of the giver would go unnoticed and unappreciated, and the pleasure we anticipated from the gift would never be realized.

A legend has been told of a woman who had a dream. In her dream she found herself in heaven. The beauty around her was greater than anyone had described to her, greater than anything she had ever imagined. The colors were so vibrant, the air so invigorating. She felt so alive—and yet those on earth were mourning her death.

It was curious. Jesus had met her and escorted her into the golden city. Standing at her side, He showed her all the sights of heaven.

"I can't wait to show you your mansion," He said. "I have been building it now for such a long time."

Room by room, she marveled at the individual, personal touches. Each room was the perfect color and design. Then Jesus took her to a room, and as He opened the door, she viewed hundreds of beautifully wrapped gifts lining the wall, stacked from the floor to the ceiling.

"What are all of these gifts?" she asked in wonder.

"These are the gifts I gave you while you lived on Earth," He replied. "I knew things would not be perfect for you. In fact, I knew there would be times of intense pain and hardship. I knew there would be times when you would struggle to the point of despair, and so I decided to supply you with just the right gifts to help you through the hard times."

"But these gifts are still wrapped up? Why?" she inquired

"Well, let's open each one," He said. "I think you will begin to understand. Let's start with the blue one."

As the woman opened the gift, she found a cozy, warm comforter tucked inside. She picked it up and wrapped it around her, snuggling under its warmth. Suddenly, she was overwhelmed with such a wonderful feeling of peace and well-being.

"Oh, Jesus! I just love it!" she exclaimed. "It makes me feel so warm and comforted, so peaceful. Oh, but I sure could have used something like this when I went through my time of great loss," she added, looking sad.

"That is precisely when I gave it to you," he replied, smiling.

"I don't remember you ever giving me this," she replied. "I'm sure I would have remembered."

I am sure you would have," He answered .

"I gave it, but you were so focused on what you had lost that you never noticed that I had this gift for you. I tried to get your attention, but you steadfastly refused to look my way. You were pretty angry at me during that time ... but that is the past. Say, why don't you open the red package?"

The woman picked up the red package and opened it expectantly. Inside was a beautifully framed picture of her and a woman she hardly knew.

"This is me with ... Terri, isn't it? But we never really became friends. She was a bit odd, you know? We sure seem to be having a good time, though," she added quickly. "When was this taken?"

"It wasn't." Jesus responded. "Do you remember the many times you asked me for a good friend?"

The woman hung her head.

"Yes, I do remember," she said sadly, "but she never came. I remember feeling so lonely at times that I thought I would go crazy. Why did you not answer this prayer?" she asked, the tears rimming her eyes.

"Oh, but I did," He said, smiling. "Do you remember all the times Terri reached out to you? She invited you many times to have coffee, and you always told her you were busy. The truth was that you never gave Terri a chance. She was different. All my children are different, but she, dear one, was perfect for you. Too bad you never took my gift. Those lonely times could have been filled with someone to have fun with and someone for you to share your joys and disappointments with. She was the answer to that prayer.

"Say, let's look at the gold box."

The woman picked up the gold box, this time, a little more

slowly. She cautiously opened it to view the contents. Inside was a beautiful award with her name inscribed on it.

“What is this for?” she asked.

She was truly confused this time.

“Do you recall your great feeling of insignificance, the one you constantly struggled with?” Jesus asked her.

” Oh my, yes!” she responded. “Sometimes I felt as though I was invisible to others. I would be with a room of people all talking about their jobs, their hobbies and children. I could not think of anything that I had done that stood out. I always felt so ... ordinary, and unfulfilled, as though something were missing from my life.

“Not You! ” she quickly added. “Oh, I always felt Your presence, but something still was missing.”

“You’re right.” he confirmed. “Read the inscription.”

The woman carefully picked up the delicate award and read the inscription.

“Volunteer of the Year?” she asked, more confused than ever. “I don’t remember this.”

“That is because, like the rest of these gifts, it remained unopened.” Jesus responded patiently. “Remember the many times you were asked to volunteer?”

The woman hung her head sadly. “I do remember,” she confessed. “I was so afraid that I would get in over my head and not do a good job. I didn’t want to disappoint the people who were asking me.”

“Those who asked you did not expect perfection.” he replied. “They would have been patient. Among all of the opportunities offered to you was one I had hidden. In that opportunity, you

would have found the significance you so longed for. You would have discovered a talent you did not know existed. I was truly disappointed that you did not find the courage and time to open those gifts.”

“There was so much on earth I missed out on,” she confessed. “I wish I had paid better attention.”

The woman looked at all of the remaining gifts, and her courage and joy began to melt away.

” Do I have to open all of these?” she asked. “This is depressing. I thought there would be no more tears now that I am in heaven.”

The woman began to weep, feeling the loss of so many good things she could have experienced on earth but were now useless to her. Jesus tenderly dried every tear from her eyes.

The woman awoke from her sleep only to realize it was a dream. She sat up in bed for a while, just thinking. Thinking of all of the times that she had been so focused on her losses, her faults, her wants and desires that she overlooked the Savior’s hand of provision.

Tears in heaven? The Scripture promises us He will wipe away every tear from our eyes (cf. Rev. 7:17). Those tears might well come from the room in our mansion of unopened gifts.

This woman had her own issues that kept her from acknowledging the gifts God so graciously was extending to her.

Your issues may be different, but whatever you are dealing with, please remember He will supply all your needs according to His riches in heaven (cf. Phil. 4:19).

This woman had been graciously given a second chance; now, dear ones. so have you. He is offering us gifts to meet our every need.

How many will you choose to open? {eo}

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