

THE GREATEST GIFT

by Rachel C. Hoyer

GENRE: Drama

SYNOPSIS: Paul and Shelley demonstrate the gift of kindness by inviting a suffering couple to Christmas dinner.

TIME: Under 5 minutes

CAST BREAKDOWN: 6

TOPIC: Kindness

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: Luke 2:13-20, Acts 13:47

CHURCH YEAR SEASON: Christmas

SUGGESTED USE: Christmas Eve Service

CHARACTERS:

4 ANGELS—Members of the children's choir or four children dressed as angels

PAUL—Age 30-40; married to Shelley

SHELLEY—Age 30-40; married to Paul

PROPS: Chairs and perhaps a table to suggest a family room

COSTUMES: Angel costumes for children's choir; casual dress for Paul and Shelley

SOUND: Wireless mics for Paul and Shelley; choir mics for angels

LIGHTING: Ability to fade

SETTING: Bare stage

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www.DramaMinistry.com
ISSN 1084-5917

Publisher: **Regi Stone**

Executive Editor: **Kimberlee Crisafulli** / Assistant Editor: **Scott Crain**

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Director's Tip:

Lighting is always a powerful dramatic tool to use on stage. The script here calls for the angels to be upstage left, for lights to fade on them after they have spoken, and for the lights to rise again as they speak at the end of the piece. As a rehearsal tool or in performance, consider having the angels stand behind a translucent piece of material (in theatre terms this would be called a “sheer,” meaning a curtain that appears opaque until you shine light on it), which can then form the wall of Paul and Shelley’s house. Play with bringing up the light earlier than mentioned in the script to indicate that the angelic hosts are trying to influence Paul and Shelley to spread the gifts that the Lord has bestowed upon them. These exercises should help inform your actors as they rehearse, and you may decide to keep these dramatic elements in your final presentation.

Lights up on a choir of ANGELS upstage left.

ANGEL 2: “Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,”

ALL ANGELS: “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom His favor rests.”

ANGEL 3: “When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another,”

ANGEL 4: “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”

ANGEL 2: So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger.

Lights fade on ANGELS and come up on PAUL and SHELLEY, relaxing after a huge Christmas dinner.

PAUL: That was wonderful, honey. I don’t think I’ll eat again until next Thursday.

SHELLEY: There are still three kinds of pie cooling.

PAUL: Oh, well. If there’s pie...*(He starts to get up to head for the kitchen.)*

SHELLEY: They’re too hot to eat now—they just came out of the oven. Give your poor stomach a break.

PAUL: Okay.