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**“Finding Hope (Like a Ten Dollar Bill When You Need It)”**

by  
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**What** Deni lost his job and spends his days searching job boards and YouTube. He’s feeling hopeless about his prospects. But when Grandma’s Christmas card arrives in the mail with a \$10 bill inside, her small act of kindness jolts him with a small revelation that changes his outlook.

Themes: Christmas, Advent, Hope, Monologue, Reader’s Theatre, Humor, Job, Money, Debt, Unemployment, Google, Job Search, You Tube

**Who** Actor- male or female mid 20’s or 30’s

**When** Present

**Wear  
(Props)** Candle  
Candle lighter

**Why** Luke 2:19

**How** If you are acting the monologue on stage, be imaginative and use the space to re-enact the actor’s experience, like searching the internet, walking to the mailbox and opening up the card.

If you are reading for Zoom, read it with passion and emotion, and don’t be afraid to take your time. Look in at the audience or into the computer camera. Ensure all your notifications are turned off and emails are closed and have the PDF on screen near the camera.

If you read the script from the pulpit, be familiar enough with your lines so that your head isn’t down in the script the entire time. Look audience members in the eye. Take time to pause and breathe. Embrace the awe and mystery of the scripture.

**Time** Approximately 3 minutes

*Actor enters and addresses the audience.*

**Actor:** So, I attended one of those financial seminars that they offer to teach you about the importance of a 401K.

I've had so much time to kill at home lately. Ever since my job got furloughed, I've been searching every jobs board I can find and for any tip I can get on how to make money and how to save it.

I went down one of those rabbit trails on Google—you know what I'm talking about—where I searched "how to pay off mountains of debt" and, after watching more than 30 minutes of YouTube videos, I ended up signing up for a seminar.

They were talking about compound interest and how you can build wealth over time, just by squirrelling a little bit of money away every month. Apparently, the Italians thought it up in the 17th century and then Wall Street perfected it in our own times, and everyone should take advantage of it.

I like the thought. Say you deposit \$200 a month into an account at a certain percent. That money collects interest. And then the interest collects on the interest.

Don't worry—I'm not here to sell you a mutual fund. I mean, I don't even have one myself. I have four years of student loans to pay off and my car payment, so I'm definitely no financial whiz.

But the concept is appealing. So, say you deposit \$200 into the mutual fund at a decent rate of return. And you do that every month for 30 years. Voila! You're a millionaire.

Awesome idea, right? Guess how I felt, though, after the sales pitch? Here I am without a job, with a big pile of debt, and wishing that before I'd leased a car someone had taught me about money in high school and had told me to put the car payment into a mutual fund instead.

As you can imagine, I started to feel a bit discouraged. There's nothing like having a lot of time on your hands, a search engine on your smartphone, and aimlessly surfing the internet.

I've never really done this before, but I was feeling so down that I decided to type four letters into the search bar. Can you guess what they were?

H-O-P-E.

"Where can I find hope?"

It's kind of embarrassing, because I know where *(point up at the sky)*.

I didn't find hope in my Google search, I can tell you that. But as I walked to the verge of self-condemnation and regret, wishing I had a job, and that I'd been smarter with my money, I stopped my little pity party and walked out the door for some fresh air.

I found myself at the mailbox. To my surprise, the Christmas card from my Grandma had arrived. Just like every other year: a sweet little note with ten dollars in it. And the front of the card said, "Hope of the World."

When I turned it over, on the inside was a drawing of Mary holding the little baby Jesus and that verse from Luke: "But Mary treasured up all these words, pondering in her heart what they might mean."

And I stood there, in the snow, without a jacket on, holding the card and the envelope in one hand with the ten dollar bill in the other, I looked up at the sky and had to laugh.

Snow was falling all around me in those fat flakes that are as big as dove feathers. And I suddenly felt like the richest person in the world.

Right then and there I repented and asked God to forgive me for getting so discouraged about my circumstances when his Son and his Spirit live right inside me.

What a treasure there is here in this little heart of mine!

Mary treasured up all the things that God was doing in her circumstances, in her heart. This miracle of a story, that God sent his only Son into the world, born of a woman, born as a baby, to live a perfect life and set us free from sin and despair. Wow!

This miracle of a story has been treasured in hearts like Mary's ever since the day Jesus was born. And since Luke wrote down his gospel and the words were passed along through the centuries. Just think of the compound interest that's accumulated in the hearts of believers!

Oh the riches of the glory of God. In all of us! In this world!

As I stood in the snow—and believe me, I was really starting to get cold—I had this desire to just store it up, to let the truth of God multiply and grow so that my whole heart becomes a reservoir of hope. Let it compound and accumulate.

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But friends, I have to tell you, I felt something else so deeply. Like my Grandma, who by the world's standards has very little but gives so much, so that her ten-dollar gift each year feels to me like ten thousand, we must not just hoard all this hope to ourselves.

Spend it! Give it away! The world needs it. If you and I—believers in God—get discouraged in these days, how much more do those who don't yet know Him need hope?

Go tell it on the mountains. Shout it from your rooftop! Ponder the wonder of God's truth and, as the wealth and riches build up inside of you, give that hope away!

*The Actor/Reader picks up a candle and lights it with a candle lighter.*

Today, I choose to light the candle of Advent because Christ has made me rich and the news of his birth is so good that I must proclaim it.

Today I share the riches of Hope!

*Lights out.*

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