

“Making the List”

by
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What In this easy to stage and fun skit, a couple struggles with deciding who is worthy to receive their Christmas gifts. In the midst of it all, they then wonder if others are judging them as well.

Themes: Christmas, Advent, Marriage, Couples, Grace.

Who Sally- Adult, casually dressed
Ben- Adult, casually dressed

When Present

Costumes and Props Small table
Laptop computer
Clipboard with non-descript paper attached to it
Two chairs

Why Ephesians 2:8-9

How The table sits at center stage. Both chairs face the audience and are pulled up to the table. Sally sits in one chair, Ben in the other. On the table is the laptop and the clipboard. The laptop, which is open, is in front of Ben and the clipboard is in front of Sally.

Time Approximately 4 minutes

At curtain, we see **Sally** and **Ben** seated at the table.

Ben: Ugh, this is taking forever. Why the big hurry?

Sally: (*very anxious*) Christmas is racing towards us, and we need to get this gift list done now! All the other couples we know are doing it too! Let's go!

Ben: Come on, we still have plenty of time. Christmas is still _____ (*fill in when it'll be depending on when the skit is performed*). Piece of cake!

Sally: For you, maybe. That's why we agreed that I'm in charge of this, remember? Now, type as I talk. (*pause, adds a grudgingly*) Please.

Ben: Well, since you said it so nice.

Sally: And remember, make sure you keep saving the spreadsheet. (*pause, adds a grudgingly*) Please.

Ben: (*gentle sarcasm*) Hmm, saving stuff, now how do you do that again? (*pretends to dramatically hit random keys*) Like this?

Sally: (*ignoring him*) Now, bring up the list of candidates for gifts.

Ben: (*stops hitting keys, then focuses*) Roger. (*typing, then stops and stares at screen*) OK, here it is.

Sally: Remind me of the categories again.

Ben: (*reading off the screen*) OK, for the gift categories we've got (*air quotes for each*) "Worthy", "Semi worthy", "Worthy lite", and "Will never be worthy, like never ever ever".

Sally: Right. OK (*reviewing the clipboard paper*). Now, I'll read the name and we'll assign them a column. Well, I'll assign them a column and you type them in. Ready?

Ben: Wait, don't I get a say on which names—?

Sally: (*interrupts*) Sure. You can say that you agree with all my choices, how's that? (**Ben sighs**). OK (*referring again to the paper*). Aunt Betty. (*thinks for second*) Worthy lite.

Ben: Really? Aunt Betty?

Sally: (*pantomiming typing*) Tappity tappity tap. (**Ben sighs and types**). OK, Uncle Earl. Hmm. Gotta say the Never Ever column.

Ben: Wait, just because he sent us that...that thingy dealy last year that you didn't like, he gets the death column?

Sally: That *(make air quotes)* thingy dealy was the ugliest shower curtain I ever saw. And who gives a shower curtain for a Christmas gift anyway? Last column.

Ben: *(under his breath)* I thought it was pretty. The seashells, little fisheys, turtles.

Sally: *(looking at the paper again, distracted)* What?

Ben: Nothing, nothing. Let's continue the fun.

Sally: *(ignoring, refers to paper again)* OK, all the cousins...hmmm. Last column.

Ben: But—

Sally: You give nothing, you get nothing.

Ben: I don't know if that is the spirit of the season. *(gets another look)* Fine. *(under breath again, in cockney English accent)* You're out of luck, Tiny Tim.

Sally: *(ignoring still)* Un huh. *(referring to paper again)*. OK, my mother. *(with positive energy)* Worthy, of course!

Ben: *(makes a big sarcastic show of pretending to try to type in the name, as if it's extremely hard to do)* Trying...trying...so hard...almost there. *(Sally just stares at him. Arms crossed. He finally finishes and sits back, as if exhausted)* There. Whew, that wasn't easy.

Sally: You know, sarcasm is a sin, right?

Ben: *(with heavy sarcasm)* Oh, yeah, right, I saw that in the Bible the other day.

Sally: OK. OK. *(pauses, collects herself, with a genuine tone now)* Hang on. I'm, uh, sorry. This whole thing is a pressure cooker for me. I, I just want to get this right. *(sighs)* Let's just get this over with. *(referring to her paper again, a little more energy)* Now, all your family—

Ben: Careful now.

Sally: They're pretty much second column.

Ben: What? Semi-worthy?!

Sally: Well, correct me if I'm wrong.

Ben: *(defensive, lots of energy)* Hey, they're definitely worthy! Remember last Christmas, when we were all together? It was great! My brothers and, and all their kids. *(admitting)* Yes, kind of unruly, rude, made a mess, fought a lot, but the kids were fine. And my sister and, her um, biker dude guy. *(losing energy now)* His tattoo of the flaming Grinch really made the holiday, um special, and, and, Mom and Dad's dogs, and that cute one with the wet hacking cough, and, and... *(trails off)*.

Sally: *(quick pause, then)* Worthy lite?

Ben: If that. *(types)*

Sally: OK, we're making progress. Now—

Ben: Wait. Hang on.

Sally: *(pleading)* We already decided on their column.

Ben: No, can we slow down? I was just thinking. *(referring to the laptop)* About this whole thing.

Sally: I told you, it has to be done.

Ben: *(gently)* Listen. Have you ever wondered if, well, if others might be doing something similar? You know, deciding who's worthy of a gift?

Sally: Huh?

Ben: *(continuing)* And they come to our name, and well, I wonder what column we'd be in?

Sally: *(letting it sink in)* Well, um, in the, um, worthy column. *(pause, with genuine emotion)* I hope. *(looks at her paper)*. I hope. *(changing gears)*. No, of course we'd be in the worthy column!

Ben: Really. What have we done to earn that?

Sally: What do you mean?

Ben: We rarely, if ever, see a lot of these people anymore. We forget birthdays, anniversaries. We're hardly ever at small group these days. And it feels like Christmas has just become this *(refers to screen)* mad rush to judgement, then we feel good because we toss in the mail a fist full of bargain bin Christmas cards covered with badly glued sparkles, and

hope that, when they open them, they won't be buried alive in a sparkle avalanche.

Sally: *(a bit defensive)* I like those cards.

Ben: My point is, well, I think...I think we can do better.

Sally: *(arms crossed, not wanting to admit he's right. Then, with a genuine sigh, admits)* Yeah. I, I see that.

Sally thinks some more, looks at the paper she's been reading from, makes a decision. She pulls the paper from the clipboard and starts to toss it...but it never leaves her hand. She comically tries several more times to let go and still can't. Ben takes her hand as if he is prying the paper away and it drops to the floor. They both stare at it for a beat, then...

Wow. That, uh, kind of felt good.

Ben: The first step is always the biggest. *(he turns his attention to the laptop, then hits a few keys on it, and closes it)*

Sally: *(in a panic, not quite giving up yet, referring to the laptop)* Is it saved?!

Ben: *(trying to be a bit funny bit with a hint of seriousness)* Maybe we need to ask ourselves the same thing.

Sally: *(getting it, relaxes).* Yeah. Saved from all this, this judging. Pressure. Stress. *(pause, sighs)* Sparkles.

Ben: Let's start a new tradition. How about giving everyone the gift of grace. You know, like what we've all received? I think that's a good fit for Christmas, no? A place to start? Grace?

Sally: *(pondering, then takes the laptop, opens it, does a quick search, and then starts hitting a key repeatedly while saying)* Worthy, worthy, worthy, worthy.

Sally stops, hesitates. Ben looks over at the screen.

Ben: Yes, even Uncle Earl and his shower curtain.

Sally: *(sighs, hits a key)* Pretty much worthy. *(Ben gives her a look)* Hey, I'm trying, you know?

Ben: *(being funny)* Merry Christmas and *(in cockney English accent again),* God bless us, everyone!

Lights out.