

## **“The Thrill of Hope”**

by  
Dave Tippett

**What** Jenny is worked up about all the Christmas details she needs to get in place, like presents and lights and a Christmas Eve bounce house. Vanessa tries to remind her that the nativity and the hope of Jesus' birth are what need to be the focus instead.

**Themes:** Christmas, Busyness, Focus, Reason for the Season, Hope, Nativity

**Who** Jenny  
Vanessa

**When** Present

**Wear** Coffee cup  
(Props) Assorted wrapped presents  
Manger/nativity

**Why** 2 Corinthians 9:15

**How** There should be a stark contrast between Jenny and Vanessa. Jenny is very high-energy and has probably had one too many lattes.

**Time** Approximately 3 minutes

*Vanessa is standing, warming herself and drinking some coffee. Jenny enters carrying a large pile of wrapped presents. She speaks her lines very fast, like she's had way too much coffee.*

**Jenny:** *(not seeing Vanessa yet)* Okay, let's see. Now that I've brought in a few presents to help decorate the tree in the foyer, I can concentrate on tonight's rehearsal. *(Puts down gifts and looks at nativity set)* This just won't do. The Bible clearly states there were three sheep in the stable, we have four. Some people just can't celebrate the holiday correctly. *(Looks up to see Vanessa enter)* Oh hi, Venessa!

**Vanessa:** *(very calm, sharp contrast to Jenny)* Hello there, Jenny. Looks like we got here pretty early for choir practice.

**Jenny:** It's good I did arrive early, I see I have to fix the church's nativity set. You'd think a church could properly display a nativity set. You can never be too accurate when you are depicting a yuletide reenactment!

**Vanessa:** Yuletide re—...oh never mind. What's with all the gifts?

**Jenny:** We need them for the foyer tree! You can't properly represent the Christmas spirit with a Christmas tree that doesn't have presents under it. And I bet no one even checked the tree for the proper PH balance. A properly maintained tree is a happy tree. This is almost as bad as not having enough wrapping paper or forgetting to start the Frosty the Snowman lawn blow-up ornament and bouncy house on Christmas Eve.

**Vanessa:** Well I don't know... *(during Jenny ramblings, Vanessa keeps trying to speak. Lots of "ah's", lift finger to interrupt etc.)*

**Jenny:** I mean it's important that everything is just perfect to properly celebrate Christmas. *(Looks off stage, points)* Ohhhh, I can see our back yard from here and it looks like a few of our lights are out on the back of the house. I gotta call Bill. If we're gonna put up 17,805 lights on our property I can't have 3 or 4 of them out. And brown out or no brown out, how can I properly glorify the Baby Jesus when our yard lights aren't all working?! What says "Merry Christmas" more than gigantic halogen light display! Imagine lights so bright that if you hold your hand up in front them you can almost see your bones! Cool, huh?

**Vanessa:** Uh, I see but—

**Jenny:** Oh, that reminds me. I hope the kids gave Ginger one of her Christmas doggie bones. Ginger was left alone all day. Tomorrow I need to take her to the groomers for her holiday trim. I need to buy those little antlers *(makes antlers with her fingers behind her head)*. Christmas can't be Christmas if Ginger isn't Rudolph! Last year they fell off right before the big family Christmas picture. Maybe I need some duct tape—

**Vanessa:** Maybe you need to just take a deep breath and slow—

**Jenny:** *(ignoring)* Oh, breath mints! Yes, I need to get some of those new holiday flavored Altoids. *(Speeds up even more)* And coffee. I've been drinking lots of coffee. Do you like coffee? I love coffee. Coffee is great, especially with flavored creamers. You can get all those holiday flavored creamers. They go great with deserts like pies and cheese cake. Do you like cheese cake? Oh, oh I almost forgot about my secret super-duper cheese cake recipe that I'm entering into a contest. Oh I love the holidays! But there is so much to do. Oh, that reminds me, one of my favorite holiday classics is on TV tonight. "Frosty 3, The Revenge!" I like to DVR all the years best movies like, "How the Grinch Stole My Credit Cards" and I can't wait to see "The Shepherd's Text the Good News". I just love this time of year... *(panting now)*.

**Vanessa:** *(gently)* Jenny.

**Jenny:** *(catching her breath)* Yes?

**Vanessa:** Listen to yourself.

**Jenny:** *(panicked)* Did I forget some other holiday necessity?

**Vanessa:** Well actually, yes. *(Points to the nativity set)*

**Jenny:** Oh, right! Fixing the nativity set! I mean we've got four sheep here and only one camel. Those wise men didn't all ride the same animal you know. This needs to be fixed. As I said earlier, Christmas isn't right without a commitment to accurate presentation.

**Vanessa:** Jenny, wait!! *(Jenny startled by Vanessa's tone)* Sorry. *(Gentler but firm now)* Look, I realize all those things you mentioned are important to you. And to a lot of other people. For me, though, it's about this *(gesturing to the manger again)*. The birth of hope. *(Recalling)* The... 'thrill of hope', like we sing. It's all about the baby... and what we do with Him in our hearts and lives. You know? That's what Christmas is all about... Charlie Brown. *(Small chuckle)* Sorry, couldn't resist. But, it's true.

**Jenny:** *(pause... then laughs nervously)* Well, of course, of course. The thrill of hope and all. Right. *(Pause, making her case)* But I just don't want us to also forget the thrill of... of like giving those gag gifts for my secret Santa at work! Do you think I should get one of those talking Christmas trees or maybe a firecracker that disguised as a potpourri candle? Ha!

**Vanessa:** *(big sigh, giving up)* Hey, look, we need to get to choir practice. *(Pause)* Think about what I said some more, okay? *(Exits)*

**Jenny:** *(looks at watch)* Look at the time, I'll have to skip out of practice tonight. *(Slowly walks over to nativity set, adjusts a blanket on Baby Jesus. Talks to Him)* Maybe...I should be more interested in You instead of the dog antlers... *(long pause)* I will. *(pause)* But FIRST! *(Looks up and yells off stage)* Bill! We need more light on those angels on the roof! We need glow! Mega glow!! *(Runs off stage)*

*Lights out.*

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