

## **The Gold Wrapping Paper**

By Dr. Claude Shema Rutagengwa

Some time ago, a mother punished her 5-year-old daughter for wasting a roll of expensive gold wrapping paper. Money was tight and she became even more upset when the child used the gold paper to decorate a box to put under the Christmas tree. Nevertheless, the little girl brought the gift box to her mother the next morning and said "this is for you mama." The mother was embarrassed by her earlier over-reaction, but her anger flared again when she opened the box and found it was empty.

She spoke to her daughter in a harsh manner. "Don't you know, young lady, when you give someone a present, there's supposed to be something inside the package?"

The daughter had tears in her eyes and said, "Oh Mama, it's not empty! I blew kisses into it until it was full."

The mother was crushed. She fell on her knees and put her arms around her little girl, and she begged her forgiveness for her thoughtless anger.

An accident took the life of the child only a short time later, and it is told that a mother kept that gold box by her bed for all the years of her life. Whenever she was discouraged or faced difficult problems, she opened the box to take out an imaginary kiss and remember the love of the child who had put it there.

In a very real sense, each of us, human beings, have been given a golden box filled with unconditional love and kisses from our children, family and friends. There is no more precious possession anyone could hold.