

MISFIT TOYS

Christmas Eve Service

Open: Play video clip

- Quick interview with 10 children ... What is the name of your favorite stuffed “friend”? What makes them special?
- The sewing team ... set up on stage ... “God’s repair shop” ... sewing on buttons, stitching and re-stuffing ...

* Life can knock the stuffing out of you.

- Some of our problems are the result of bad decisions.
 - √ Our past haunts us, filled with regret ... we feel stuck.
- Satan reminds us of our failures. In **Revelation 12:10** he is called the accuser of God’s children.
 - When Satan reminds you of your past, you remind him of his future.

➤ Feelings of inadequacy cause us not to accept ourselves, and sometimes we wonder if God accepts us.

- √ As parents, we may struggle with patience, being sensitive, understanding ...
- √ Some secret sin has trapped us and is dragging us toward the cliff of destruction.
- √ Unwilling to forgive, we struggle with anger and bitterness ...
- √ Sometimes our flaw is feeling self-righteous.
 - We look down on others, talk about them behind their back.
 - We think we are better than they are.

(1) God loves us flaws and all.

- None of us are too good that we don't need God's help nor too bad that He no longer loves us.
- God loves us where we are.

Romans 5:8 NLT But God showed His great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.

- √ Jesus came to free us from sin's penalty.
- √ He paid the price for our sins on the cross.
- √ He loves us – warts and all.

→ **Ephesians 1:5 NLT** God decided in advance to adopt us into His own family by bringing us to Himself through Jesus Christ.

→ To receive the Father's acceptance, you must receive Christ as your Savior.

(2) God transforms us so that we might stand tall.

- He accepts you where you are but He loves you too much to leave you there.
- Once we humbly admit our shortcomings and receive Christ as Savior, the Holy Spirit takes up residence in our hearts.

Ephesians 2:11-22 Paraphrase ... don't forget you were once outsiders ... you were living apart from Christ. You were not a part of the citizenship of Heaven. You lived in this world without God and without hope ... once you were far away from God but now you have been brought near to Him through the blood of Christ ... He has brought this good news of peace to you who were once far from Him ... Now we can come to the Father through the Holy Spirit ... You are members of God's family ... trophies of His grace.

- √ The Holy Spirit tells us:
 - We matter to God ... He loves us.
 - He invites us to enter His presence.
 - He wants to help you overcome your sin.
 - He creates in you a desire to do the Father's will.
 - The secret is to surrender to the One who loves you.

→ You are God's trophy of grace!

- In this world we get bumped, torn and dirty.
- He never stops loving us.
- He keeps on working on us.
- Misfits maybe ... but much loved.

Close: Christmas says:

- (1) He loves you flaws and all. The Father adores you.
- (2) He is busy transforming you ... stand tall ... He wants to show you off ... you're a trophy of His grace.

Message Notes
Pastor Ralph Schneck
First Baptist Church of Lexington
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