

Dan's Devotion: God Loves His Messed Up Family

I watched a movie recently about a family who came home for Christmas. It was a big family who had all kinds of problems. You name it, they probably had it: marital problems, problems with the law, financial issues, secret marriages, siblings who disliked each other, bitterness etc... By the end of the movie though, after all of the chaos, their love for one another was evident. They gathered around the table for their Christmas meal and one of them said, "I hope that every Christmas is as wonderful as this one." They were able to get past all of the junk going on in their lives and come together as a family and show their love to one another.

I think God is a lot like that. He looks down at all of the hurt and pain and sin that is going on in the world and it hurts Him. It truly does. However, God still loves us no matter what. Sometimes, I'm not sure why he loves us, but he does. He showed that in a remarkable way by sending his son, Jesus, into the world. Really that is what Christmas is about: unconditional love. Yes, we remember the birth of Jesus, but Jesus came because God loves his messed up children so much. John 3:17 describes God's love so well when it says, "*For God did not send his son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.*" I am so thankful for God's unconditional love.

Maybe at Christmas time, you look at your family and wish you could be more normal. You know what? I'm not sure there is such a thing as a normal family. I think every family has issues, because every family is made up of people and people are imperfect. God says, "I love you anyway, issues and all." Let's follow God's example and show those around us that same kind of unconditional love that God shows us. Keep in mind too, that you're not perfect either and you may be the one that is hard for somebody else to love.

Merry Christmas.

Dan