

*It's a Wonderful Life*

*A Life of Sharing the truth of God's Love*

*December 7*

Intro: Have you ever heard the statement that no good deed goes unpunished? This seems to be especially true when it comes to sharing the truth of God's love this holiday season. I have a clip from one of the best family movies of all time; "IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE." Kevin can you cue up the clip.

Explain Philippians 2:5-7

Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:

6Who, being in very nature<sup>[a]</sup> God,  
did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,  
7but made himself nothing,  
taking the very nature<sup>[b]</sup> of a servant,  
being made in human likeness.

For thirty-three years he would feel everything you and I have ever felt. He felt weak. He grew weary. He was afraid of failure. He was susceptible to wooing women. He got colds, burped, and had body odor. His feelings got hurt.

To think of Jesus in such a light is—well, it seems almost irreverent, doesn't it? It's not something we like to do; it's uncomfortable. It is much easier to keep the humanity out of the incarnation. Clean the manure from around the manger. Wipe the sweat out of his eyes. Pretend he never snored or blew his nose or hit his thumb with a hammer.

He's easier to stomach that way. There is something about keeping him divine that keeps him distant, packaged, predictable.

But don't do it. For heaven's sake, don't. Let him be as human as he intended to be. Let him into the mire and muck of our world. For only if we let him in can he pull us out.

Illustrate: 2:8

And being found in appearance as a man,  
he humbled himself  
and became obedient to death—  
even death on a cross!

If our greatest need had been information, God would have sent us an educator; If our greatest

need had been technology, God would have sent us a scientist; If our greatest need had been money, God would have sent us an economist; If our greatest need had been pleasure, God would have sent us an entertainer; But our greatest need was forgiveness, so God sent us a Savior. A Savior to share God's love with all of humanity. But why is it that those who love us, we ascribe such dubious motives.

Two kids are on their way to Sunday school when one says to the other, "what do you think about this Satan stuff?" Well you remember Santa? This could turn out to be your dad too. As followers of Jesus, we should always assume the best of any person and accept the worst when sharing the truth of God's love.

Remember, the savior there was no room in the inn-so we must expect that there will be no room for us in certain circles. There was not a relative who welcomed Jesus into the world, and at times the truth of God's love will put us at odds with our family. In the end let us never forget how Jesus gave out God's Love. Like the sky give rain-freely and to all no matter if they appreciate it or not. The truth of God's love is a gift that we must freely give-what the receiver does with our precious gift is none of our business.

Romans 5:

Demonstrate: Philippians 2:

Therefore God exalted him to the highest place  
and gave him the name that is above every name,  
10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,  
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,  
11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father.

Christmas 1976 was the worst of times and the best of times for Roger age 12. When we share God's love it is not always welcomed-just like Jesus was not welcomed. My grandmother gave me a piggy bank that was a freebie for opening a bank account, right there on the back you could read Nebraska State Bank. This being the centennial year it is a statue of the Sons of Liberty. . . . I was so upset when I opened it-I did not think nice thoughts. For a boy 12 it is not what you envision for a Christmas gift. But as an adult I now know my grandmother was simply sharing

love with me. Her love for frugality and Saving-which are part of God's message of Love. Today, that Piggy Bank is one of my most prized possessions. Every time I see It, I see my grandmother. I remember her love for me. I remember her love for frugality. I remember the many ways she expressed love to me. I remember Her love for God. What was once rejected by my, has now become prized.

Jesus life and message was received during his time, about as well as 12 year old and a Piggy Bank. But after His Resurrection year after year it began to appreciate in the changed lives of those who once rejected, but now became Trophy's of God's love. Paul the Chief Hater of all things to do with Jesus, has now become the Chief Apostle.

It is a Reminder to you and I this Christmas, that the initial response we receive for sharing God's love is not important! This season our gifts of love may very well be rejected, our acts of kindness spit upon, but just like Jesus God will exalt our gifts one day! When we share God's love simply because Jesus commanded us to go and make disciples of all nations-we will be exalted!

Still Doubt me? Remember what Jesus said: in Matthew 5:11 "***Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.*** This is Jesus way of telling us that no good deed goes unpunished by man. Why? Well Great Theologians of AC/DC said; Dirty Deeds Done Dirt Cheap. Implying that human nature is enjoy darkness-to enjoy evil and part of that is being insulted-persecuted and false accusations. Christmas is the time of the year to share God's love with everyone. Yet, it is the season we trample a man to death in Wal-Mart for a Big Screen TV. It is a time for Family and the giving and receiving of Gifts yet, it is also the time the suicide rate is the highest and domestic dispute calls skyrocket! Jesus-made us so he knows how dark our soul can be-yet he gave his love anyway.

Jesus does not stop there he goes on to say. . . ***Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you. Verse 12*** Jesus is promising us that no Good Deed goes unrewarded in heaven. It's a wonderful life

because we get to go and share God's love with everyone.

Application: Philippians 2::12-14: *Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, 13for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.*

*14Do everything without complaining or arguing, 15so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe 16as you hold out<sup>[e]</sup> the word of life*

One more For Jesus

Conclusion: Christ was content with a stable when he was born so that we could have a mansion when we die. Are we the followers of Christ content with a shack so our neighbor may have mansion some day? Are we will to move heaven and earth to share God's love with one more before we die-whether we are booed or applauded? For a wonderful life there is only one ingredient needed and that is Jesus!