

Every Christmas, there were a few specials I went out of my way to watch. Perhaps my favorite was Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer. The one where Rudolph ends up on the Island of Misfit Toys. You remember. Trainer, the train with square wheels. Birdfish, the bird who swims instead of flies. Spotted elephant. Charlie in the box. Misfits. Out of touch. Out of place in the world. You know the feeling. The way you felt when you lost the job or you failed the test. Perhaps the way you felt when someone close to you died or when your lover ran off and left you with your heart dangling on your sleeve, standing there in the rain like a misfit toy. Yea, you know the feeling.

Does it sometimes feel like life has dealt you a bad hand? Like nothing ever seems to go right? Like you don't quite fit in? Maybe you don't look quite right or say the right things, so you remain silent and blend in with the surroundings hoping no one will notice you. Do you ever just want to disappear or wonder why you are even alive? Do you ever feel out of place? No, I won't pretend to know what it's like to walk in your shoes. I haven't been there, but I do know how it feels to be alone, to feel like a failure, unloved and unwanted, to wonder if my life has any purpose or meaning. I know what it's like to be the outcast of the family, to be rejected, to cry myself to sleep, to lose loved ones, to feel like God Himself has left me, and more. You see, I've got a full bag of misfit stories. But you don't need to hear about my problems. You've got stories of your own. Heartaches. Hurts that linger in the back of your mind. Haunts that roll over you like waves of pain when stirred by familiar sounds. Skeletons that linger in the closet of your life, always whispering into your ear what a failure you are.

Sure, you know what it feels like to be abandoned on the Island of Misfit Toys. Maybe it's time you find refuge on the Island of Misfit Toys with David. That's right. David knows how you feel. David knows what it's like to be the loser. Sure, David has had his share of victories, but his life is also riddled with defeats. Like the time his child died. Or the time his other son

killed his brother, slept with his concubines, and tried to overtake his kingdom? Ever slip under the waves of sin? David's done that. Ever feel like the whole world is against you? David has. Ever suffer through a bad marriage? David can relate. Ever say this? "Oh, that I had wings like a dove! For then I would fly away and be at rest" (Ps. 55:6). Ever pray this? "How long, O Lord? Will You forget me forever" (Ps. 13:1)? You see, David knows. He's been there. Listen to his trail of tears. Spiritual troubles? "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me" (Ps. 22:1)? Bouts with loneliness? "I looked for someone to take pity on me, but there was none; and for comforters, but found none" (Ps. 69:20). Physical ailments? "My loins are full of inflammation, and there is no soundness in my flesh" (Ps. 38:7). Stricken with fear? "Fearfulness and trembling have come upon me, and horror has overwhelmed me" (Ps. 55:5). Sorrow and depression? "I am ready to fall, and my sorrow is continually before me" (Ps. 38:17). Plagued by guilt or sin? "Like a heavy burden they (my sins) are too heavy for me" (Ps. 38:4). Hopelessness? "As for the light of my eyes, it also has gone from me" (Ps. 38:10). Treated unfairly? "Those who hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head" (Ps. 69:4). You see, David knows how you feel. He's been there. He's suffered your pain. Felt your sorrow.

If you have ever suffered, been disappointed, or felt the sting of loneliness like some misfit toy, then maybe it's time you take refuge in David's camp. You and I know it as the Island of Misfit Toys. David knows it as the cave of Adullam. You see, when David was hiding in the land of the enemy, his enemies became a threat, so David "departed from there and escaped to the cave of Adullam" (1 Sam. 22:1). There he is, the mighty David. The same David who killed Goliath. Alone. Broken. In hiding. And notice what happens. Suddenly people start coming to him. Out of the woodworks. Through the cracks and crevices of their pain. Who are they? The rich and famous? The beautiful and powerful? The cool kids in school? Think again. As David hides

in his little cave, "everyone who was in distress, everyone who was in debt, everyone who was discontented gathered to him" (1 Sam. 22:12). Ever feel like that? In distress? In debt? Discontented with life? Things didn't turn out quite the way you thought they would? You had such big dreams. And now, as you sit and read this, you wonder how your life ended up here. No, don't run away from your problems, but do come and rest for a while. The cave of Adullam is calling.

You see, everyone who was distressed, in debt, and discontented gathered to David, and "he became captain over them" (1 Sam. 22:2). So there you are. Alone. Bruised. Frightened. Discouraged. Sometimes it feels like no one wants you. Don't know where to turn? David will take you because David's been where you've been. You see, David was the king of misfits, so they made him king over the misfits. But where, you ask, is David? Where can I find this king of the misfits? Certainly, David has long since gone. The Bible leaves us with the sad details. "David... is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day" (Acts 2:29). But don't lose hope. There is somewhere you can turn. Somewhere you can be accepted. Somewhere you can find peace, hope, and healing. No, David may not be here, but you can find hope in the Son of David. Ask the paralytic. Ask the leper. Ask the man with the epileptic son or the father whose daughter died. Ask the woman with a perpetual flow of blood or the woman tormented by demons. Cry with the blind man, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me" (Mk. 10:46).

You see, just as misfits flocked to David, misfits also flocked to the Son of David. The lame. The lonely. The fearful. The discouraged. Why? Because Jesus understands. Because Jesus was a misfit. Born in a manger. Reared in the bad part of town. Abandoned by his church. Rejected by his own people. Mistreated. "He was wounded for our transgressions" (Isa. 53:5). Lonely. Unpopular. "He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him." (John 1:11). Jesus knew sadness. "A man of sorrows and acquainted with

grief" (Isa. 53:3). Unattractive. "And when we see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him" (Isa. 53:2). The Son of David knows how it feels to suffer. And all this was done for you. That's right. Jesus came to take your river of tears. Your broken heart. Your fearfulness. Your faithlessness. He came to take your oceans of guilt and canyons of shame so that you may have peace. Jesus came for the broken. He came for the lonely. For the depressed. The discontented. The poor. The weak. The mistreated. Do you ever fit into these categories? If so, Jesus came for you. To lift you up. To "give you a future and a hope" (Jer. 29:11).

Do you ever feel hopeless? "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Mt. 5:3). Have you lost someone close to you? "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted." (Mt. 5:4). Have you been wrongly treated? "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Mt. 5:10). You see, Jesus came and took the life you (a sinner) deserved, so you could have the life that He (the King of heaven) deserves. He died so you could live. He was a man of sorrow so you could have joy. He was abandoned by God so you could have "peace" with God (Luke 2:14). Jesus is offering you a refuge from your problems. An escape. That's right. Come to the Island of Misfit Toys. Come to the Cave of Adullam. Come find rest in the Son of David. Jesus says, "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28). Jesus has a wonderful gift for you. The gift of hope, peace, and "eternal life" (Rom. 6:23). Just invite Him into your heart, get a Bible, and read the book of John, where the story continues about the real King of the misfits.

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