

Misfit Toys

Pastor Harry Colegrove

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Sermon Audio file

Misfit Toys

I love the Christmas season!

When I was a kid one of my favorite parts about Christmas time was watching all the TV specials -

The Peanuts with the "Charlie Brown Christmas tree"

Frosty the Snowman

And of course, my all time favorite, Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer

How many of you still like to watch Rudolph?

I know it doesn't have anything to do with the real message of Christmas, but there is a section in the movie that I wanted to deal with today.

(Detail the basic story of Rudolph)

Slide

Dad - Donner

Mom and Dad were ashamed of his nose

Santa even said that if Rudolph wanted to pull his sleigh he had better grow out of his glowing nose

In an effort to make Rudolph fit in Donner covered his nose with mud, and even told Rudolph that he would "get used to it"

As Rudolph's first year progresses his family has successfully hidden his glowing nose from everyone else

The scene then changes to Santa's workshop where we see several elves building toys

The elf boss approaches Hermie the elf and asks him why he's so behind

Hermie explains that he really doesn't like making toys

A murmur arises among the other elves "Hermie doesn't like to make toys!"

When the boss asks him what he wants to do Hermie explains "I want to be a dentist"

The elf boss explained that elves make toys and that he should abandon his plans of becoming a dentist

When everyone else goes on break we hear Hermie singing “Why am I such a misfit?”

The scene flashes back to Rudolph, who’s complaining to his dad Donner that his nose covering is not comfortable

Donner tells him that self respect is more important than comfort

Rudolph then goes off and starts to sing “why am I such a misfit?”

We then see Hermie in the workshop fixing dolls teeth. His boss asks him what he’s doing and Hermie replies “I was hoping that I found a way to fit in.” His boss tells him “You’ll never fit in”

Hermie packs his stuff and runs away

We see Rudolph playing “reindeer games” and when it comes time to practice flying he’s told by a doe that he’s cute

This of course makes him fly better than anyone and everyone, including Santa, is impressed

At least until Rudolph’s nose cover falls off – Santa tells Donner that he should be ashamed of himself and Rudolph is ridiculed, called names, and banned from ever joining in the reindeer games

Rudolph runs into Hermie and they decide that since they are both misfits that they would run off together and try to find a place where they will fit in

In their journey they run into another misfit – Yukon Cornelius the prospector

Yukon joins Hermie and Rudolph

So here we have 3 individuals that are misfits

Rudolph is a misfit because of something he has no control over – he was born “different” and doesn’t look like everyone else

Hermie is a misfit because he behaves in a way that is different than societies expectations

Yukon is a misfit because he’s just plain odd

These 3 misfits are eventually chased out onto pack ice by the abominable snowman

Yukon breaks off the ice and the three of them float off to the island of Misfit Toys

Remember the Island of Misfit Toys?

That was an island full of toys that were “misfits” or not quite perfect.

The “Charlie in the box”

A train with square wheels

A bird that swam

A boat that couldn't float

King Moonraiser, the ruler of the island, roamed the world every night looking for misfit toys so he could bring them to his island, a place where they would feel loved

Rudolph, Hermie, and Yukon all go before King Moonraiser and ask his permission to stay on the island

King Moonraiser tells them that the island is just for toys so they can't stay

Yukon says, "Hmm, even among misfits, we're misfits"

My message is titled misfit toys

What exactly is a misfit?

Misfit - One who is unable to adjust to one's environment or circumstances or is considered to be disturbingly different from others.

In other words, a misfit is someone who is different, who doesn't quite fit in with the rest of the crowd

How many of you have ever felt like a misfit?

Do you ever feel like you just don't fit in?

Of course you have - all of us have

And it's no wonder either!

We live in a society that, for the most part, doesn't like people who are different

Society expects people to look a certain way, sound a certain way, and act a certain way

Anyone who is different is often bullied, ridiculed, or cast aside

It's kind of like we are the toys on an assembly line

The goal is to have toys that are, for the most part, identical

Minor differences are often tolerated, but anything with a major difference is not tolerated at all

It's a misfit - it doesn't fit in with the rest so it is cast aside in the reject pile

We like to consider ourselves an educated and enlightened society, yet we still have a pretty low tolerance at times for misfits

Why do I say that?

Take a moment and think about how often you behave a certain way, dress a certain way, and speak a certain way only because it's what is expected

You are afraid to be yourself. You are afraid to wear what you really want to wear, you are afraid to say what you really want to say all because you want to be accepted into the group

Let me pause here for a moment – I’m not saying that there isn’t inappropriate behavior, in appropriate outfits, or inappropriate language. – Far from it

God commands us to love Him with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength and to love our neighbor as our self

If my behavior, appearance, and words do not line up with these 2 commands then they are totally inappropriate

If, however, they do line up then what harm is there?

Let me give you an example using appropriate and inappropriate appearance

Would it be illegal for me to wear a t-shirt that had a swastika on it with the words “Hail Hitler”?

No, I have every right to wear that t-shirt

Would it be appropriate?

Not at all. There are many people in the world today that would find that incredibly offensive

I could not say that I was loving my neighbor while intentionally trying to offend them

Example 2 – Church clothing “I want to look my best for God”

Back on track here –

As I said, all of us have felt like misfits from time to time

Maybe the reason is like Rudolph – a facet of ourselves that we have no control over does not match up with what society deems as acceptable

Maybe the reason is like Hermie the Elf – we behave differently than what society deems as acceptable

Maybe it’s like Yukon Cornelius – in our natural form we’re just, “odd”

The list of reasons could go on and on

To fit in people often go to great lengths

Buying overpriced clothing, shoes, and other things just because society says it’s the latest fashion

Fad diets to make sure that we are the ideal weight

(just remember – fat people are harder to kidnap so for your own personal safety stay big!)

Some go so far as to get plastic surgery to adjust what they feel are their deficiencies

Ever wonder who it is that sets these unrealistic standards?

I’d love to figure that out!

We spend so much time and effort sometimes trying to fit in that we forget who we are

Who God made us to be

Wouldn't it be great if there were an island just for misfits today?

You know, with a king that went around the world collecting all the misfits and bringing them all to a place where they could feel love and acceptance?

A place where we could take off our masks and just be our self

Where we would be loved because of our uniqueness?

Well, there's no actual "Island of Misfit Toys" but there is a King who loves misfits!
His name is Jesus, and He has more in common with you than you might be aware of!

"What do you mean Harry?"

Let's take a look at what Scripture says

Isaiah 53:1-5 Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? 2 He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.

In other words, He was just an ordinary looking, possibly even slightly unattractive, man

3 He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Men rejected Him, He didn't fit in with the crowd - in other words, Jesus was a misfit.

4 Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. 5 But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.

Jesus even appeared to people to be "stricken by God" - yet He was simply following the mission that God had for Him

You might be thinking that you are a misfit because of your family
If you look at the family history of Jesus you will find several "questionable characters"

Rahab the prostitute

Amon - one of the most morally depraved kings of Judah

You might think you're a misfit because of your social standing
Jesus was born in a barn

Joseph, His earthly father, was a common laborer

Mary, His mother, was an unknown woman from a little "hole in the wall" town

Jesus Himself worked as a common laborer for many years before He started His ministry

He never had a fancy house or fancy clothes

In fact Jesus said "foxes have holes, birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay His head"

In other words, Jesus was homeless

You may think that you're a misfit because of the way people treat you

Mark 3:21 - His family thought He was crazy

Mark 3:22 - The religious leaders accused Jesus of being demon possessed

Matt 27:39, 41 - They mocked Jesus and hurled insults at Him as He was dying

Jesus understands what it is like to feel like a misfit

Remember this: God made you the way you are for a reason. He never meant for you to be a clone of someone else!

Ps. 139:14 I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works

In other words - God doesn't make junk, so you aren't junk!

Let me shake things up just a little bit more

God never intended believers to "fit in"

Romans 12:2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Colossians 3:2 Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

James 4:4 You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.

And my all-time favorite passage of Scripture when it comes to not fitting in is this:

1 Corinthians 1:20-31 20 Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? 21 For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe. 22 Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom, 23 but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, 24 but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. 25 For the foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man's strength. 26 Brothers, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. 27 But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. 28 He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things--and the things that are not--to nullify the things that are, 29 so that no one may boast before him. 30 It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God--that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. 31 Therefore, as it is written: "Let him who boasts boast in the Lord."

You may feel like a misfit, but remember this –

Jesus, the being that created the universe, loves you so much that He chose to leave His home in heaven, the perfect place, to come to earth, an imperfect world, to die for your sins!

Did you hear me?

Jesus loves you so much that He willingly gave His own life for yours.

Since that's what He did for us, who cares if we fit in to the world's mold or not?

In fact, I'm proud of the fact that I do not!

Did you ever consider that the things that make you feel like a misfit may be the tools that God wants you to use to accomplish His purposes?

I'm proud to be a misfit and proud to be a follower of the King of misfits!