



March 19, 2017

If I Told You

**READ:** Romans 5:8 (Common English Bible)

*“But God shows his love for us, because while we were still sinners Christ died for us.”*

**MEDITATE:**

In his heartfelt country ballad, *If I Told You*, Darius Rucker asks someone to love him in spite of his faults and shortcomings. Written by Ross Copperman, Jon Nite and Shane McAnally, the song’s lyrics are a plea for acceptance, for understanding, and for love, though he recognizes that it is not deserved. “What if I told you sometimes I lose my faith? I wonder why someone like you would even talk to me.” Brokenness runs deep in the words as the song fleshes out a brief narrative of a life that is lived without a father. The visual that is sketched for the listener is quite vivid and one that many people will relate to. Every life is a mixture of brokenness and wholeness, regrets and fulfillments – each with varying degrees of one and the other. Yet, in the middle of it all is the desire of every person to be loved.

Perhaps no fear grips a life quite like the fear that one is unworthy of love. The apostle Paul knows this fear in his own life. Yet, because of Jesus Christ, Paul has richly discovered a love that puzzles, even defies comprehension: “But God shows his love for us, because while we were sinners Christ died for us.” Love and acceptance is not negotiated. Love is not withheld until we clean-up the mess of our lives. God’s love is freely given to each of us in the very midst of the wreckage of our lives. And it is there that we desire it the most, as Darius Rucker sings, “If I told you the mess that I can be. When there’s no one there to see. Would you look the other way, cause you love me anyway?” The plea is urgent – in this song and in the depths of our own hearts.

A life not well lived, a life soiled by regrettable decisions and stupid things has an enormous weight that bears down upon our chest and denies life-giving breath into our lungs. Such a life, lived day by day, becomes increasingly sorrowful. Questions of self-worth well-up in the heart multiplying the pain of an already broken life. The plea of the song becomes our own, “If I told you all the stupid things I’ve done. I’d blamed on being young. But I was old enough to know, I know. If I told you the mess that I can be, when there’s no one there to see. Could you look the other way cause you love me anyway? Cause you love me anyway.” The song then ends with the plea becoming more poignant, “Could you love me anyway, *please?*”

Paul wants us to know that God loves us anyway: “while we were sinners Christ died for us.” This makes all the difference in our lives. Sorrow and brokenness is replaced with joy and gratitude. A relationship with God – once broken by our poorly lived lives – is restored. The enormous weight that pressed against us is removed by an unseen hand and we draw rapidly a fresh breath into our lungs; a breath of hope for a new beginning. That is what God does for us. God nails our old, regrettable past upon the cross and gives us a fresh start. But now we begin with new knowledge – God’s power and love abides with us, and will continue to do so even when we stumble again. That is because God loves us anyway.

**APPLY:**

1. How has this scripture or meditation spoken to you?

2. What insight can you apply to your life this week?

3. What one specific act do you intend to take, an attitude to change, a person to see, or prayer to pray?

**PRAY:**

*I come to you, O God, as I am, with my sin and brokenness, knowing that your forgiving love is an everlasting promise. Amen.*