***January 6, 2019***

***Today’s Lesson: God’s Story***

**From Mike:**

 We had a late Christmas with two of our kids and their families in Nashville this past Wednesday. Christmas has never really been a date for us, but more a matter of when we can get together. We had eight of our ten grandchildren there and it was so much fun to see their excitement and joy as they opened their gifts from Nana and Papa. It’s fun to see those you love happy! They were very appreciative and gave us lots of hugs. They’re no dummies! There will be another Christmas here before you know it and they’re planning ahead. Watching them enjoy their gifts reminded me of how much God showers us with gifts. Not just one day a year, but multiple times each day—all year! I couldn’t help but wonder if He enjoys seeing us happy about our gifts from Him as we were about giving gifts to our grandchildren? You know He is! I just wonder how He feels when we take His gifts for granted and ignore the Giver and the love behind it? Are we TOO blessed? Have we been given SO MANY GIFTS that we lost our sense of gratitude and the thrill of being loved so much and so often?

 We are looking at a familiar passage today where Jesus tells us about His loving, caring, and giving Father. He reminds us that whether it’s a gift, a blessing, or simply the return of something we lost–it’s all something to give thanks about and rejoice over. Here’s something to think about. In your understanding of God, can you imagine Him laughing and clapping with joy over something good happening to you? I can. I have a sneaky suspicion that God and Jesus both openly rejoice when we make right choices and head down the right path. If you can’t imagine God doing such a thing, maybe that’s an indication that you need to broaden your understanding of God. Have you tried much to understand Him?

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