

## The Christmas Blessing

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made. 4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. John 1:1-5*

*"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through Him. John 3:16-17*

*Jesus said, "Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?" John 11:40*

When Nathan came home, feeling burned out as a doctor, he wanted to find the answers to his life by returning on to the past. His dad was also feeling a restlessness, wanting to get away from the past and try something new. Nathan wanted to come home, but his dad wanted to sell the house. His dad asked, "What, it's ok for you to make a change in your life, but not me? Is that what you're saying?"

Everything we do intersects someone else's life. Do you think about others when you make decisions?

Nathan tried to hold onto all of the things of the past, wanting to buy his old home when his father planned to sell it. When he met Megan, she showed him childhood through different eyes. She said that she had never lived long enough in one house to even want to go back there. Her dream was to help young mothers and children who lived the kind of life that she grew up in.

What kind of childhood did you have? What kind of childhood do you want to make for future generations?

Charlie and his dad were drifters doing odd jobs to survive. Even though Charlie's mother died years before in a car accident his father didn't have the courage tell Charlie the truth. He made up stories about her saying she was an artist and an actress. When he found the red shoes Nathan's dad had put in the Community Care bin he gave them to Charlie and told Charlie that his mother was a dancer.

Sometimes it is difficult to tell the truth because we're afraid. Have you ever been afraid to tell the truth?

When Charlie was rushed to the hospital for his heart Megan learned that Nathan was a doctor. She was disappointed that he hadn't told her. She said to him, "Nathan, figure out what is holding you back in life and let it go." Nathan's father told him that every time he came home all he wanted to talk about was his mother. He said that as her husband it was too hard on him, that he needed to live like she was gone.

Do you have something that you are holding onto that you need to let go?

Nathan told Megan that when he lost a teenage boy on the operating table fear swept over him. He felt like he was a child again. When his mother died, he was scared that he would lose his dad, too. When his dad decided to sell the house and the garage, Nathan was overwhelmed. His father said, "You've got your whole life in front of you, I don't. Do you think that this is easy, letting go a chunk of my life. I have to."

Nathan's father knew he could never go back. What do you want for the future?

Life is filled with twists and turns. When Charlie died he was able to give Megan new life. The gift that Robert Layton gave Nathan years before, when he helped him pay for the red shoes, brought hope to Charlie, as well as having changed Robert's and Nathan's lives. The kindnesses we do and the gifts that we give keep on working even in the middle of pain and tragedy.

Has someone's gift made a difference in your life? I there someone you can help today?

*Dear Lord, we only see a small part of life, but You see the bigger picture. Use us for Your work. Show us how to reach out to others in need. Teach us how to be open to the miracles that You want to bring into our lives. Thank You for the greatest gift of all, Your Son, Jesus, born to love us and save us. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.*