

# DEVOTIONAL

Chaplain Phil  
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Institutional  
Ministries

When my grandson Sam was 4 or 5, he brought home a picture of his family that he'd drawn at school. It was four stick figures, and he had the teacher label them for him: Mom, Dad, Sam, and Riley. Riley is Sam's brother, who was born a couple of years before Sam and died shortly after he was born. Sam hadn't drawn a picture of his family with the sad history edited out – he drew a picture of his family.

People's history is part of who they are. God accepts and loves the real me, not an edited version of me – he has forgiveness for the guilty parts of my story, and he has comfort and healing for wounded and painful parts of my story. And he calls us to join him in showing that love to people who are hurting.

That gets uncomfortable. People have personal histories of abuse and injustice, as well as generational histories. A legacy of slavery and of being shut out from justice and opportunity, for instance, leaves a mark for generations.

Trying to brush that off by saying it's all in the past isn't going to work – that would be an attempt at editing the person we're trying to show love to. God's way is to “rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn” (Romans 12:15). God, help us to see the person you see, and love that person, unedited.

## **Prayer:**

**Jesus, you are the Good Shepherd, the God who sees my hurts, the God who cares. You see the lonely people and you put them in families. You are close to the brokenhearted and the outcasts. Help me to see where you are doing your work of love and care; help me to see the people you see. Help me to understand their hurts, and show me how you want me to join you in your work. Amen.**