

MERRY Christmas

The Best Gift Ever!

This past Thanksgiving, we gathered at my brother, Chuck's, house and my sister-in-law asked me to share the Christmas mini-bike story about my favorite Christmas. I've never shared that story with my brother there. I reached back in my memory and recanted, first, the story that my dad told us about his favorite Christmas, when he came home for a surprise visit after the War.

He'd been away fighting in WWII and then he came home, surprising his mother and father with a knock at the door. They had no idea that he was home. And that was his most memorable Christmas.

My mother's favorite Christmas was when she came home from the orphanage. For the first part of her life she was in an orphanage; her mother had to give her up for a season because her dad was an alcoholic and was out of the home. That story alone evokes all kinds of emotion and gratitude.

And now, I shared the story with my family at Thanksgiving upon the request of my sister-in-law. It was extra emotional for me to tell this story with my brother, Chuck, in the room. It felt good, though, to honor him for his generosity, even though the story is 50 years old.

I was 12 years old and there was nothing I wanted more than a mini-bike. I remember seeing that bike on the way home from school when I stopped at the motorcycle store. It was blue; it was for sale; it was \$269... a fortune back then. My heart was set on it. I didn't expect to actually receive this dream gift. When it became known to my older brother, Chuck, he also wanted the mini-bike. We both wanted blue mini-bikes. I was further convinced that I was not going to receive the mini-bike because there was no way our family could afford to buy presents for all my brothers and my sister and I knew that there was a good chance of both of us not getting a mini-bike. Unknown to me, my brother, Chuck, who knew how badly I wanted the bike, went to my dad and

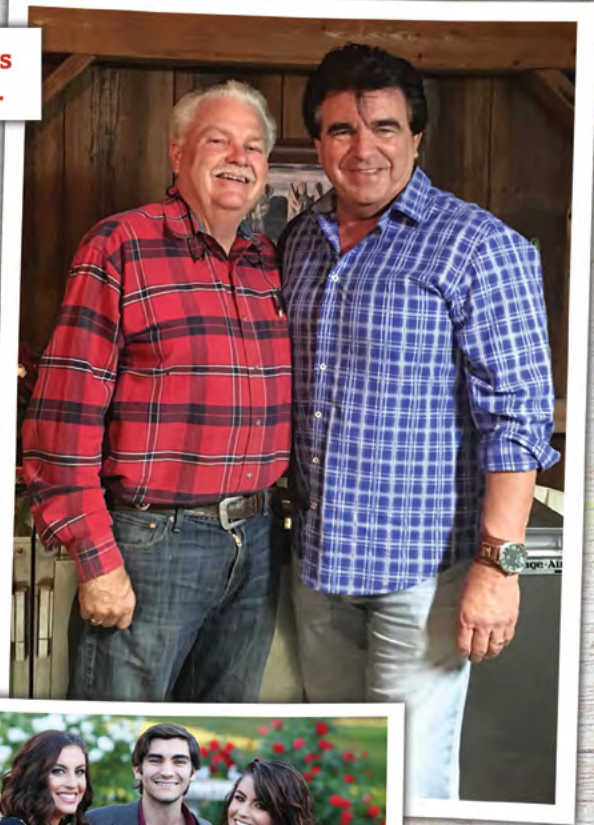


encouraged him to go ahead and get the mini-bike for me and not for him.

The weeks before Christmas passed slowly; we were seeing dad less and less as he seemed to have to work later hours. But when Christmas morning finally arrived, after the ritual of all 5 of us kids ripping through gifts and screaming with delight, Mom, Chuck and I followed my dad into the next room. I had hoped for, but not expected that mini-bike. As we anticipated, there wasn't one mini-bike, but there was two. Dad had put in late and hard hours at work that Christmas in order to grant us the desires of both my brother's and my heart.

It wasn't just the gift that moved my heart, but it was the sacrifice of my dad. The story moves me to tears when I recount it, but sharing it this Thanksgiving with my brother sitting there really caused me to tear up because I never shared it in front of him. His sacrifice by putting me first still humbles me to this day.

Donnie with his brother, Chuck.



Brooke, DJ and Anna.



I just want to express to all of our faithful friends who stand with us and sacrifice to pray for us and support us monthly.

As the year comes to a conclusion prayerfully consider an end of the year gift. Make sure your gift is dated and postmarked no later than December 31st, you will help us to start off the new year. Giving may also be done online at www.donniemooreministries.org. I want to give you big thank you and say, Merry Christmas!

We are committing this month to prayer for our ministry and we would love to pray for you as well. If you send us your prayer request to info@donniemooreministries.org. we would be honored to pray for you.
~Donnie