



November 21, 2023

Dear Leverage friends and supporters,

Recently, I was talking with one of our Breakfast Club students, and I'd like to share our conversation.

Aden asked, "Pastor Scott, why do you like Christmas so much? You start talking about it in October and you don't stop until January. If you had gone through what I have gone through at Christmastime, you would see things differently. During Christmastime a couple of years ago, my dad was deported back to Mexico, and my mom was sentenced to prison. So why I should like Christmas so much? I guess I like Christmas a little bit, but just not nearly as much as you do."

I looked at the student sympathetically and asked him if I could share my own story.

I said, "A number of years ago, a couple days before Christmas, my mother-in-law was in a serious car accident. She underwent multiple surgeries, spent Christmas in the hospital, and died a few days after Christmas. A couple years later, right before Christmas, my dad passed away. Two days later, my wife's dad passed away. That same year, in January, one of our ministry staff member's father passed away—a friend of mine. So the way I see it, I am ahead four bad times at Christmas to your two."

He looked at me in disbelief. "REALLY?? Then would you please tell me why you like Christmas so much? It seems like you have had nothing but death and disappointment. At least my dad and mom are still living."

"Aden, you asked me why I love Christmas so much," I said. "It's because of what the Bible says in Luke 2:11: 'For unto you—you, Aden, and me, Scott—is born this day in the city of David a Savior.' Christmas is about our Savior being born so He could die and take away my sins and yours. Because of Christmas I will be able to see my mother-in-law, my father-in-law, and my dad and Joe's dad too. This is because each of them trusted Christ. They will enjoy each Christmas in Heaven with Jesus, and that is where I will also enjoy Christmas after I pass from this earth."

"Wow," he said. "I really thought nothing bad ever happened to you. I thought bad stuff only happens to us. You know, Pastor Scott, we really are not that different."

Friends, would you please continue to pray for Aden and the many other youth like him as we share the true meaning of Christmas them in the upcoming weeks? Pray they would be open to the gospel and will trust Jesus as their Savior this Christmas.

Would you also be willing to include Leverage Ministries in your year-end giving so we can continue to reach the abused, abandoned and arrested youth of Central Florida? You can give a gift online at [www.leverageministries.org/donate](http://www.leverageministries.org/donate) or send a check in the envelope provided.

From our family to yours, we wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

In His Service,

Scott Hirdes