

## The Shack – Reflection (1)

Quiet yourself and become aware of God's presence at this very moment ... Listen to the words of this song as if God is speaking directly to you through its lyrics ...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4MUNywhsZPU>

Now ask God for the grace to feel His infinite love for you as you are struggling with your daily life ...

**From the book *'The Shack'* by W. M. Paul Young:**

"Yes! God is to blame!" The accusation fell in the room as the gavel fell in his heart.

"Then," she said with finality, "if you are able to judge God so easily, then you can certainly judge the world." Again she spoke without emotion, "You must choose two of your children to spend eternity in God's new heavens and new earth, but only two."

"What?" he erupted, turning to her in disbelief.

"And you must choose three of your children to spend eternity in hell,"

Mack couldn't believe what he was hearing and started to panic.

"Mackenzie." Her voice now came as calm and wonderful as first he heard it. "I am only asking you to do something that you believe God does. He knows every person ever conceived, and he knows them so much deeper and clearer than you will ever know your own children. He loves each one according to his knowledge of the being of that son or daughter. You believe he will condemn most to an eternity of torment, away from His presence and apart from His love. Is that not true?"

"I suppose I do, I just never thought of it like this." He was stumbling over his words in his shock. "I just assumed that somehow God could do that. Talking about hell was always sort of an abstract conversation, not about anyone that I truly..." Mack hesitated, realizing that what he was about to say would sound ugly, "not about anyone that I truly cared about."

"So you suppose, then, that God does this easily, but you cannot? Come now, Mackenzie. Which three of your children will you sentence to hell? Katie is struggling with you the most right now. She treats you badly and has said hurtful things to you. Perhaps she is the first and most logical choice. What about her? You are the judge, Mackenzie, and you must choose."

"I don't want to be the judge," he said, standing up. Mack's mind was racing. This couldn't be real. How could God ask him to choose among his own children? There was no way he could sentence Katie, or any of his children, to an eternity in hell just because they had sinned against him. Even if Katie or Josh or John or Tyler committed some heinous crime, he

still wouldn't do it. He couldn't! For him it wasn't about their performance, it was about his love for them.

"I can't do this," he said softly.

"You must," she replied.

"I can't do this," he said louder and more vehemently.

"You must," she said again, her voice softer.

"I can't, I can't, I won't" he screamed, and now the words and emotions came tumbling out. The woman just stood watching and waiting. Finally he looked at her, pleading with his eyes. "Could I go instead? If you need someone to torture for eternity, I'll go in their place. Would that work? Could I do that?" He fell at her feet, crying and begging now. "Please let me go for my children, please, I would be so happy to...Please I am begging you. Please...Please..."

"Mackenzie, Mackenzie," she whispered, and her words came like a splash of cool water on a brutally hot day. Her hands gently touched his cheeks as she lifted him to his feet. Looking at her through blurring tears, he could see that her smile was radiant. "Now you sound like Jesus. You have judged well, Mackenzie. I am so proud of you!"

"But I haven't judged anything," Mack offered in confusion.

"Oh, but you have. You judged them worthy of love. Even if it cost you everything. That is how Jesus loves." When he heard the words, he thought of his new friend waiting by the lake. "And now you know Papa's heart," she added, "who loves all his children perfectly."

### **From the Scriptures:**

So he got up and went to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him. (Luke 15:20)

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. (John 3:16-17)

### **Conversation with God:**

Let God speak to you with the excerpt from *'The Shack'* and also with these verses from the Holy Scriptures. What is He saying to you? ... Now speak to Him about what's in your heart at this very moment and let him love you.

*If you would like to share a thought / prayer, do so by clicking on the COMMENT's button hereunder.*