

Finding the Way Back to Mayberry **Episode # 88, "The Darlings are Coming"**

Introduction:

A family of mountain musicians come to Mayberry to meet a young soldier, returning home from the service. While they are waiting, they tend to cause a few problems in town.

Lesson Points:

Self-Control – James 1:19-27, Galatians 5:22-23

Following rules – Matthew 5:17-20, Romans 3:9 and 19-20

Avoiding deception, trickery, and chaos – Philippians 4:8-9

No lying and cheating allowed - Matthew 5:8, Psalm 5:6

Maintaining cooperation and peace – Ecclesiastes 4:9-10, Psalm 37:3-4, 2 Chronicles 16:9

Commitment (Do the right thing, the right way, the right reasons) – Proverbs 16:3, Matthew 11:27

Devotion, obedience, and faithfulness – Romans 8:28, Psalm 31:5, Psalm 37:5-6

Dedication, honor, and respect – 1 Kings 8:61, Psalm 119:4-6

Responsibility, integrity, and accountability – Proverbs 16:9, Titus 3:8-9, 1 Corinthians 10:31

Courage, strength, and perseverance – Hebrews 13:6, 1 Peter 4:11, Philippians 1:6

What to Avoid When Following Rules – Proverbs 28:4-5, Ecclesiastes 12:13, Ephesians 5:1-2

Disrespect for authority – 1 Peter 2:13-17, Joshua 22:2-3, Ephesians 6:1

Selectively obeying certain rules – Philippians 2:14-16, Deuteronomy 11:13, 26-28, and 28:14

Only enforcing “your” rules – Romans 13:1-7, 2 Corinthians 5:16-21, Acts 4:19

Instilling poor values and judgment – Proverbs 22:6, Romans 6:23 and 12:1-2, Titus 2:7-8

Discussion:

1) What rules did the Darlings break concerning the horse trough, the hotel, and the vacant building? Why did they do those things? What were their actions or reactions when they were caught? For you, are there any current rules or laws that you don't think make much sense? Do you obey or break them? Are there real consequences in disobeying something or someone we find unnecessary or unimportant?

2) How did Mr. Darling behave under Mayberry rules? How did Charlene behave toward her father's rules? Did you think the two were similar? Why didn't Briscoe tell the hotel clerk the truth? Why did Charlene come to town? Did she act as though that were true? Why did she become interested in Andy? How did Briscoe react to Charlene's advances and what he thought were advances from Andy? Why was he so adamant? How do you feel when your rules aren't followed? Have you ever told a “little, white lie”? How did you justify or rationalize it to yourself? How would you have felt if the situation were reversed?

3) What were Briscoe's commitments? Why didn't he treat certain laws with the same obligation and obedience? Did Andy show the same devotion to commitment as Briscoe? If not, how was it different? How well did he execute the duties of his sworn oath? How did Dud show his commitment to Charlene? What was her reaction when she saw Dud's devotion? What are your goals and commitments? What is God's plan for you? What temptations and obstacles stand in the way? What are you doing about them?

Final Thoughts (The Wisdom of Briscoe Darling):

1) *on gossip*: News sure does travels fast, don't it?

2) *on deception*: Your words say 'no', but your eyes say 'yes.'

3) *on dedication and devotion*: Just a bed and a Bible. (note: his reply when asked if he needed anything)

4) *on commitment and relationships*: You love him with your heart and soul, and that's all that matters.

5) *on human rights and values*: A man's entitled to his opinion.

6) *on self-control and inner strength*: More pow'r to ya!

7) *on rules and obedience*: Oh, that's alright. Wouldn't want ya to get in trouble with the head Mountie.

8) *on duty*: If it's charity, we want no part of it 'cause we aim to hang on to our position in the community.

9) *on settling arguments and keeping the peace*: Natural law – tooth and claw!

10) *on cooperation*: Alright, ev'rybody back on the truck!