

IMPERFECT CHRISTMAS TREES

Many families this week are searching for the right tree to decorate their homes for this holiday season. Mike Royko, writing an article entitled *One More Time* and published in the University of Chicago Press, tells a compelling story about two imperfect Christmas trees.

Slats Grobnik, who sold Christmas trees, noticed one couple on the hunt for a Christmas tree. The guy was skinny with a big Adam's apple, and she was kind of pretty. Both wore clothes from the bottom of the bin of the Salvation Army store.

After bypassing trees that were too expensive, they found a Scotch pine that was okay on one side but rather bare on the other. Then they picked up another tree that was not much better – full on one side, scraggly on the other. She whispered something, and he asked if \$3 would make the sale. Slats figured both trees would not sell, so he agreed.



A few days later, Slats was walking down the street and saw a beautiful tree in the couple's apartment. It was thick and well rounded. He knocked on their door; they invited him in, and told him how they had pushed the two trees together where the branches were thin. Then they tied the trunks together. The branches overlapped and formed a tree so thick you couldn't see the wire. Slats described it as "a tiny forest of its own."

"So that's the secret," Slats asserted. "You take two trees that aren't perfect, that have flaws, that might even be homely, that maybe nobody else would want. If you put them together just right, you can come up with something really beautiful."

Don't miss the lesson in this inspirational story.

Apply it to marriage. A man and a woman – each with different strengths and weaknesses – are wed. Their personalities and gifts can be blended into a beautiful union complementing one another and proving to be a blessing to others.

Relate it to a skilled nursing facility, assisted or independent living center. Men and women come together with a single mission in mind: to provide care in a loving and compassionate environment to those entrusted to them. Each brings a particular skill set.

But the beauty of the team when those talents are pooled and working in harmony is awesome – enriching the lives of residents and families and capturing the attention of various publics.

It is, as Slats said, "something really beautiful."

Two people are better than one, because they get more done by working together
(Ecclesiastes 4:9).

– Beecher Hunter