

Sermon Outline - Sun, December 11, 2022
Jesus is Jubilee – There's A Miracle in the Mess
Matthew 1:18-25; Isaiah 7:10-14

Overview of Month – At the end of Nov we started a series called Jesus is Jubilee examining the Christmas story through the lens of Jubilee. The first principle of Jubilee is Relate so In Week 1 we looked at the lineage of Jesus recognizing how the Bible clearly establishes Jesus in the context of his kin. Not just his parents but those who went before him. Last week we moved to Matthew 2:1-12 looking at the gifts that the Three Kings bring to Jesus and we were invited to radical gift giving that

Exegesis

- Every year I probably sound like a broken record as I encourage us to put aside the beautiful clean manger scene to recognize that Jesus was born into a hot mess situation
- Mary is a teen mom; Joseph knows the baby is not his but instead of taking her on the ancient Maury show he tries to be a good dude and walk away quietly
- She has to go to her cousin's house to escape the gossipmongers
- The nursery is not all set up, they don't have the resources to get a real hotel room
- Things are good for a little bit – the shepherds and the Wise Men
- But then a homicidal leader tries to kill their son – worse than being separated at the border – So they have to migrate to a foreign land to stay safe
- In this season my challenge to us all is to embrace that – There's a Miracle in the Mess

Key Points –

1. The Mess of Jesus' life is an invitation to **RELEASE** and KEEP IT REAL? – Jesus says in John 8:31 - "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples,³² and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."
 - a. Fakeness - is oppressive to so many and causes real trauma
 - b. Wastes energy on fluff that could be spent on transformational living
 - c. Keepin it real invites us to love each other for who we really are
2. The Drama is a reminder that God isn't looking for perfect people but does their best work in the midst of mess. Let go of the idea that you must get everything together for God to use you. God can **RESTORE** you in the midst of the mess.
3. This story is an invitation to **RELY** on God and to trust that the miracle can emerge from the mess in ways we cannot imagine.

The fact that Jesus and his family made it through each of these dramas is a miracle. The scripture keeps it high level but I am sure they were living all kinds of dramas – the loss of family members, the disappointment of someone in their family who wondered what kind of bad decisions they were making, the tension of having more mouths to feed with a dwindling paycheck. There was plenty of mess – and yet there was also ample miracle. That is not just what God did for Jesus, but also what God wants to do for us.

Reflection Questions -

Acknowledging the mess of Jesus' life gives us permission to acknowledge the mess in our lives and in the lives of our blood and chosen kin.

1. Is there a person or situation you can release over this holiday? Not because everything is fixed but because you choose to accept that it is in process and you release the anger/fear, etc. that is gripping you?
2. Where can you stop keeping up appearances and lean into keeping it real and being vulnerable as a necessary spiritual practice in this season?
3. If you are in the midst of some disruptive drama, how can you recognize that reality while also relying on God and making space for miracles that God is sending you in the midst of your drama?