



ADDRESS THE CHRIST- MESS

ADDRESS THE CHRIST-MESS, PART 1:

Whether we're religious or not, we all have at least one thing in common; we've all made some messes in our lives. You've said things like, "I messed that up," "I made a mess of that," or, "My life is a mess." We've all been in, are in, or are only one decision away from a mess. Fortunately, Christmas reminds us that Christianity is not for *religious people* but for *messy people*, just like us.

BIG IDEA: God includes—not excludes messy people from His story.


DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How do you usually respond to other people's messes? Do you go into fix-it mode, listen mode, or judgment mode?
2. Think about your family genealogy. Do you have any famous ancestors? Do you have any family members that you *conveniently* forget to mention?
3. *With your Bible or YouVersion, read Matthew 1:1-6.*

A record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ the son of David, the son of Abraham: Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac the father of Jacob, Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, Judah the father of Perez and Zerah, whose mother was Tamar, Perez the father of Hezron, Hezron the father of Ram, Ram the father of Amminadab, Amminadab the father of Nahshon, Nahshon the father of Salmon, Salmon the father of Boaz, whose mother was Rahab, Boaz the father of Obed, whose mother was Ruth, Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of King David. David was the father of Solomon, whose mother had been Uriah's wife...
Matthew 1:1-6 (NIV)

4. What do you know about Jesus' genealogy? What surprises you about his ancestry?
5. Who are the most despised characters in modern society? Which ones do you think Jesus would *not* spend time with?
6. *With your Bible or YouVersion, read Matthew 9:9-13.*

As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him. While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and "sinners" came and ate with him and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and 'sinners'?" On hearing this, Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."
Matthew 9:9-13 (NIV)

7. Jesus seems to be okay with mixing it up with sinners. How does Jesus model living a godly life without removing yourself from the company of sinners?
 8. Jesus makes a statement about the healthy and the sick. Would you consider yourself more "healthy" or "sickly"?
 9. What can you do this week to focus on what Jesus has done for you rather than your own attempts at piety?
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MOVING FORWARD

Jesus' lineage is filled with shady characters, people with less than stellar pasts, none of whom could have come to God on their own merits. But a relationship with God has never been based on our own goodness. So if you feel like the things you've done (or haven't done) are keeping you from God? Well, you can throw that thinking out the door. Conversely, if you feel like the things you've done are responsible for your relationship with God? Well, you can throw that thinking out too. If there's anything that the Christmas season reminds us of it's that we're *all* in need of help—help that Jesus is willing and able to give.

CHANGING YOUR MIND

On hearing this, Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

Matthew 9:12-13

