

ADDRESS THE MESS

ADDRESS THE MESS, PART 1: THE MESS IN THE MIRROR

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. But there's something you need to know: there's a powerful connection between your messes and your relationship with God.

BIG IDEA: If you can see your mess, you can see God. To recognize one is to acknowledge the other.

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. Talk about a time when you fell short of your own standards. How did you feel? What did you do to try to clean up the mess you'd made?
3. *"If you can see your mess, you can see God. To recognize one is to acknowledge the other."* Respond to that statement. Do you agree? Why or why not?
4. *With your Bible or the Bible App, read Romans 3:19-20.*

Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God. Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin.

Romans 3:19-20

5. In what ways are you tempted to compare yourself to others and think of yourself as righteous based on your behavior? What, if anything, do you currently do to resist that temptation?
6. *With your Bible or the Bible App, read Romans 3:23-24.*

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

Romans 3:23-24

7. How do these verses challenge the way you think about your relationship with God? In what ways are they comforting?
8. What person or group is easy for you to judge? What can you do this week to acknowledge that you share common ground with that person or group—that you are or have been a mess? How can this group help you?

WHAT WILL YOU DO?

We each have something in common with the people or groups we most despise. We're all messes. We all fall short of our own standards. We all fall short of each other's standards. We all fall short of God's standards. When you see someone else's mess, don't judge and condemn. Instead, say to yourself, "I know a mess when I see one because I've been a mess."

CHANGING YOUR MIND

"How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye." Matthew 7:4-5