

# Christmas:

## IT'S ALL GOOD

### It's All Good: Leveling the Playing Field

The earliest believers in Jesus classified his life, teaching, and mission as “good news,” and so if our version of Christianity isn’t good news, we may have the wrong version. Because what transpired in Judea two thousand years ago isn’t just a good story. When we examine the accounts closely, it’s hard not to agree with the earliest followers, who realized that it is actually *good news*. And the reason this news is so good is because we are *not* all that good.

#### Start Talking

1. Did you ever get yourself into a problem you couldn’t get out of as a child? What happened? How did it resolve? (Examples: Accidentally breaking a parent’s golf club, playing with fire and lighting something up, etc...)

#### Looking Back

1. How did you put Jesus’ brand of “doing good” into tangible action this past week?
2. Were you able to remind yourself of your equal need for the good news of forgiveness this week? When were you most tempted to put yourself above others? How did you respond?
3. How did you do when it came to keeping the good news of Jesus’ actual message front of mind in a world that so often attempts to stamp Jesus’ name on all kinds of belief systems and agendas?

#### What About You?

1. Growing up, when you heard the term, “sin,” what came to mind?
2. Did Billy Graham’s response to his daughter mirror the way you were taught that God views and responds to sinners?
3. When did it first dawn on you that you needed a Savior?



4. What do you think is the difference between a sin and a mistake? Are they always the same? Always different?

### **Look It Up**

*Read the Following Passages: Luke 5:1–11, 16:16, Romans 3:23-24.*

1. What can you tell about Peter's thoughts and feelings from his words and actions in this passage?
2. Why is important to recognize that we fall short of not only our own internal standards for how other people should behave, but the glory of God?
3. Based upon these passages, how do you think God responds to sinners who turn to Him?
4. Luke says that the good news specifically pertains to, "the kingdom of God." What is the kingdom of God? What is it like? How does it relate to the good news?
5. What does it mean to be, "justified," in this context? What do you think Paul means by this term?

### **Putting It All Together**

1. What would change if we each kept our own sinfulness and dependence upon grace in the front of our minds on a daily basis? How might it affect our interactions with people? With God?
2. How can you remind yourself of your need for a savior this week?
3. What can you do to continually refresh your understanding that God responds to sinners with open arms? How will you resist the voices (internal or external) that try to associate God with fear and condemnation?
4. How can this dynamic change your approach to the way you deal with your own sin as you walk through the coming week?

