

## SERMON NOTES

### ADVENT: SCANDALOUS LOVE MATTHEW 13:53-58

The Kingdom of God offers us a surprising \_\_\_\_\_, subversive \_\_\_\_\_, surpassing \_\_\_\_\_ and scandalous \_\_\_\_\_.

#### UNOFFENSIVE JESUS?

Many can hear Jesus teach, see his miraculous works and still be \_\_\_\_\_. (Greek: σκανδαλίζω /English: scandalized)

Many have attempted to “\_\_\_\_\_” Jesus from his scandalous reputation. But that Jesus doesn’t

- Exist in \_\_\_\_\_.
- Change the \_\_\_\_\_.
- Change your \_\_\_\_\_.

Instead of apologizing for the offense that Jesus causes we should come to understand \_\_\_\_\_ we get so triggered.

#### THE ORIGINAL CHRISTMAS SCANDAL:

*#1. Salvation comes through an unimpressive \_\_\_\_\_.*

It may be offensive but God works through the \_\_\_\_\_.

*#2. Salvation is reserved for unworthy \_\_\_\_\_.*

It may be offensive, but God’s \_\_\_\_\_ cannot be earned.

Beyond the Christmas scandal lays a Christmas \_\_\_\_\_.  
Through faith, God \_\_\_\_\_ us the right to become his children.

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## DISCUSSION GUIDE

### ADVENT: SCANDALOUS LOVE MATTHEW 13:53-58

1. How does the idea of an 'unoffensive Jesus' contrast with the biblical and historical portrayal of Jesus? What are the implications for our own faith journey?
2. Why do you think Jesus' and his message are so offensive to many? How should we respond to this as followers of Christ?
3. In what ways does Jesus challenge the dominant ideas of our culture? What about other cultures and their dominant ideas?
4. Has the "offensiveness" of Jesus ever led to a personal transformation in your own life or someone you know. Discuss.
5. How can the ordinariness of Jesus' life and background be a source of inspiration for us? Why do you think God chooses to work through the ordinary so often?
6. Why is the concept of grace so offensive to many, and how does it differ from the salvation concepts in other religions?
7. Reflect on the idea that the Gospel is only received by those who know they're "unimpressive." How does this challenge our cultural norms about power, success, and influence?
8. Explore the concept of being 'offended by grace' as described in the sermon. How does this challenge common perceptions about earning salvation?
9. What does it mean to 'believe and receive' Christ in the context of John 1:10-13? How is this different from mere intellectual assent? How should we understand the work of God as it relates to the miracle of Christian conversion?
10. How can we apply the lesson of Jesus' rejection in his hometown to our own experiences of acceptance or rejection in sharing our faith?

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