



Born in a Barn: Week 1 — “Jesus’ Messy Family”

CONNECT: What’s your favorite Christmas movie? Why is it your favorite?

GROW:

1. Have you ever taken the time to explore your family tree? If so, what findings or stories surprised you the most? If not, how would you describe your family dynamics?
2. **Read Matthew 1:1-17.** When we encounter a list of names in the Bible, there’s a temptation to simply skim over them. However, Matthew opens his book by unpacking the genealogy of Jesus. Which names are the most astonishing to you? Why? What’s the significance of this genealogy?
3. **Read 2 Chronicles 33:1-13.** Manasseh is one of the names listed in the genealogy of Jesus. When we read accounts like his, why are we so quick to pass condemnation and judgment to others in light of *their* mess but want grace and mercy in light of *our* mess?
4. **Read Matthew 9:9-13, Mark 2:13-17, and Luke 5:27-32.** Tax collectors were arguably some of the most despised and reviled people in Jewish culture because they were viewed as traitors. Why would Jesus willingly choose to be associated with them? Furthermore, why would He call one of them to be His disciple?
5. **Read Romans 3:9-12 and Ephesians 2:1-10.** How would you summarize the gospel message to a non-believer based on these passages? Why is our vertical understanding of the gospel critical to our horizontal relationships? What’s a more biblical, gospel-centered perspective for viewing the dysfunction and mess of our family trees?
6. **Read 1 Chronicles 16:34, Psalm 23:6, and Psalm 34:8.** These verses highlight the goodness of God. When you reflect on your life, how has God been good to you?

PRAY: Read, pray, and meditate on **Psalm 145:4-9**. Ask God to put someone in your path this holiday season who you can share your story with and invite to church.

NEXT: As we enter the Christmas season, carve out some time this week to listen to the following songs: “How Good is He” by Vertical Worship, “Goodness of God” by CeCe Winans, and “O Come, O Come Emmanuel” by Tribl.