



Born in a Barn: Week 2 — “Jesus' Messy Home”

CONNECT: Were you ever in a Christmas pageant growing up? What part did you play? What’s a funny moment from a Christmas pageant you’ve attended?

GROW:

1. Are you spending Christmas with family this year? What aspects of that are fun and life-giving, and what aspects are challenging or painful?
2. What was “messy” or imperfect in your home life growing up? Are there any aspects of Jesus’ messy family story you can relate to? (E.g., Parents under stress, rumors or scandal surrounding people in your family, tense relationships with siblings, etc.)
3. Jon mentioned three types of parenting that many of us experienced and many of us have tendencies of ourselves: *the narcissistic parent, the victimized parent, and the controlling parent*.
 - a. Did your parents fall into any of these categories?
 - b. If you have kids, can you identify any of these tendencies in your own parenting?
4. **Read Colossians 3:13, Titus 3:10, and James 1:5.** As followers of Jesus who have been radically forgiven, we are called to extend the same grace and forgiveness to others. BUT forgiveness doesn’t mean we have to trust or continue spending time with those who consistently hurt and empty us emotionally.
 - a. Sometimes we hold tight to our “*magnifying glass*,” fixating on the hurt that others have caused, which keeps us in a constant state of anger or sadness. Are you holding onto anything that is keeping you from freedom and peace?
 - b. What does “*boundaries, not barriers*” currently look like for you? Do you need to ask Jesus for wisdom in setting boundaries with family members (or others)?
5. **Read Isaiah 43:19.** What are some generational patterns you could ask Jesus to help you break? What are some areas you need His help in loving your kids, spouse, etc. well?

PRAY: Pray for God’s help in forgiving those in our families who have wounded us, for wisdom in navigating relationships with them, and for His freedom and peace to abound in our hearts as we let go and move forward, rooted in the grace and love of Jesus.

NEXT: If there are some boundaries you need to put in place, prayerfully make a plan for what that looks like moving forward, especially over the holidays. If there is someone you need to apologize to, set a goal to do that in the next month—you won’t regret it!