



# The Wonder of Christmas

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### Week 3

#### Day 1: God Works Through Messy Stories

Reading: Genesis 38:1-30 (The Story of Tamar and Judah)

Tamar's story is uncomfortable, complicated, and messy—yet God included it in Jesus' genealogy. This reminds us that God doesn't sanitize our stories before using them. He works through broken people, dysfunctional families, and situations we'd rather hide. Your past mistakes, your family's dysfunction, and your questionable decisions don't disqualify you from God's purposes. In fact, God specializes in redeeming the unredeemable. The same God who wove Tamar's story into the lineage of the Messiah is weaving your story into His grand narrative. Stop hiding your mess and start watching for the miracle God wants to work through it.

Reflection: What part of your story are you most ashamed of? How might God want to redeem that very thing?

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### Day 2: Included in the Kingdom

Reading: Matthew 1:1-17

Matthew's genealogy reads like a who's who of biblical scandal: prostitutes, adulterers, foreigners, and wicked kings. Yet Matthew doesn't hide these names—he highlights them. Why? Because the gospel is for everyone. The marginalized, the overlooked, the despised, the failures—all have a place in God's kingdom. Jesus didn't come only for people who had it all together. He came for the broken, the messy, and the disqualified. You don't have to clean yourself up before coming to God. You come as you are, and He does the cleaning. Your checkered past isn't a barrier to God's love; it's an opportunity to display His grace.

Reflection: Do you believe you're "too far gone" for God to use? What would change if you truly believed you're already chosen?

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### Day 3: God With Us in Our Lowest Moments

Reading: Psalm 139:1-18

"Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?"

David understood a profound truth: God is present everywhere, even in our darkest valleys. We often feel God's presence on our mountaintop experiences—when we're worshiping, serving, or experiencing victory. But God promises to be with us in the depths too. In your failure, your depression, your doubt, your sin—God is there. Not to condemn, but to comfort and restore. The incarnation proves this: God literally came down to be with us in our mess. You're never too low for God to reach you. On your worst day, God is still Emmanuel—God with us.

Reflection: When have you felt furthest from God? Can you recognize His presence even in that moment now?

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### Day 4: You Already Have the Part

Reading: Ephesians 1:3-14

Before the foundation of the world, God chose you. Not because of your performance, your potential, or your perfection—but because of His love. You're not auditioning for God's acceptance; you've already been cast in His story. This truth transforms everything. Instead of striving to earn God's approval, you can rest in His already-given love. Instead of performing to prove your worth, you can serve from a place of security. The pressure is off. You don't have to hit every note perfectly. You don't have to have it all together. God has already picked you for the role. Now you can live freely, knowing you're chosen, loved, and secure in Christ.

Reflection: How would your life change if you stopped auditioning and started living as someone already chosen?

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### **Day 5: When You Forget the Mess, You Miss the Miracle**

Reading: Luke 2:1-20

Jesus was born in chaos: a government census, a long journey, no room at the inn, an animal shelter for a delivery room. The Savior of the world entered in the mess. And that's the point. God doesn't wait for perfect conditions to work miracles. He shows up in the middle of our chaos, confusion, and complications. When we sanitize the Christmas story—or our own stories—we miss the wonder of what God actually does. He doesn't remove the mess; He enters it and transforms it. Your messy circumstances aren't obstacles to God's work—they're the very places He wants to reveal His glory. Look for Him there.

Reflection: What current mess in your life might God want to transform into a miracle? How can you watch for His presence with wonder today?