

Messy Beautiful Christmas 1: Missing Something or Someone This Christmas?

Chris Fluitt – December 7, 2025

Primary Texts: Luke 2:6-7; Luke 1:26-38; Matthew 1:18-25

Big Idea: Even when you don't have what you need or who you need, Jesus fills your empty places with His presence.

Messy Beautiful Christmas BUMPER

If you need a handout please raise your hand..

Welcome to Redemption Church of Plano, Texas. Merry Christmas to everyone in the room and everyone joining online. My name is Chris Fluitt, and I am excited about the Christmas season.

Redemption Church Christmas Party

We kicked things off Friday night with our Redemption Church Christmas Party - El

Norte fajitas, a mariachi band, fun games, and Ricky Nolan rocking in a winter wonderland.

Christmas Reset eBook

Also, if you have not yet grabbed it, we put together a short Christmas Reset eBook.

If you are wondering what Christmas is really about, this little book walks through 25 promises about Jesus and how He really is the Savior of the world.

You can download it free and share it.

Today we start our Christmas series:

Messy Beautiful Christmas

I do not know how Christmas looks at your house, but mine has never measured up to a Hallmark card or what I see everyone else posting on Instagram.

The tree is perfect, the outfits match, everyone is laughing in slow motion, it is snowing but somehow nobody is cold. And then you look at your own life and think, "Yeah... no. That is not us."

There have been years where, if you snapped a picture at 3 p.m., it would look beautiful. But if you could see what happened at 2:59 p.m., you would see me threatening my kids not to hit each other, to stand still, and for Heaven's sake smile so your mom can have at least one good picture.

What is really going on is not so pretty.

And if you could see what is happening in people's hearts, you would see that for a lot of us, Christmas is not just busy - it is painful.

THE ACHE OF WHAT IS MISSING

Let's be honest. A lot of us are walking into this Christmas season with a quiet ache.

Some of you are already feeling it and it is only the beginning of December.

For some of you, it is grief: **Grief**

- Someone you love is gone
- This is the first Christmas without them
- Or the second or third, and it still hurts

For some of you, it is absence: **Absence**

- A parent who never showed up
- A child who is far from God
- A friend you are not talking to anymore
- A spouse who left

For others, it is lack: **Lack**

- A stable job
- A certain income

- A clear sense of calling
- A healthy body
- A stronger faith

And on top of that, there is a layer of guilt:

Guilt

"I should be able to handle this."

"I should be stronger than this."

"It is Christmas, I should be happier than this."

If you are really honest, you might even feel unqualified for God right now. **Unqualified**

You might think:

"If God is going to show up anywhere, it will be with people whose lives are more together than mine. Not with me. My life is too empty, too chaotic, too complicated."

But the first Christmas was not a story about people who had everything they needed.

It was a beautiful mess, full of empty places that God chose to fill.

Messy Beautiful Christmas: Missing Something or Someone This Christmas?

Let's look at the story with that lens: missing, lacking, emptiness... and a God who shows up unexpectedly.

1. No room, no space, no comfort, no support (Luke 2:6-7)

Luke 2:6-7 While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

Mary and Joseph are doing exactly what they have been told to do. They obey the government census. They obey God. Mary is full-term pregnant. They are carrying the

Son of God - and when they arrive, there is no room.

- No room at the inn.
- No space that feels dignified.
- No obvious support system.

If you and I were writing the story, this would be the easiest part to fix.

“Come on God, just reserve them a room at the Marriott. Put a little ‘Reserved for Messiah’ sign on the door.”

- Instead:
- They are away from home.
- The city is overcrowded.
- There is no room.
- The Son of God is born in a place where animals live.

From the outside, it looks like they are missing what they most obviously need: a room, a bed, a safe and quiet place.

But what they do have is the presence of God in the middle of what looks like lack.

And that is the pattern of Christmas:

Even when you do not have what you think you need, God still shows up in the empty places.

2. Mary - impossible news in imperfect conditions (Luke 1:26-38)

Luke 1 tells us the angel Gabriel shows up to a young woman in a small town, Nazareth. No status. No big platform. No perfect conditions.

Luke 1:28 The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

That sounds like everything is about to get easier, but Mary is “greatly troubled” at his words.

Then Gabriel proceeds to drop the news: you will conceive, you will give birth, you will name him Jesus, he will be great, his kingdom will never end.

From where Mary is standing, nothing about her life looks ready for this.

- She is not married yet
- She will be misunderstood
- She will face gossip and shame

She is missing the Instagram story... stability, respectability, and the neat little story we think we need for God to use us.

But God is not apologizing for the timing. He is not waiting for better conditions. He is simply saying, “The Lord is with you.”

At the same time Mary's life gets more complicated, God gets closer.

If your life is getting more complicated, it might not be proof that God left. It might be a sign that he is moving closer.

3. Joseph - disappointment, confusion, disrupted plans (Matthew 1:18-25)

Matthew 1 says Mary "was found to be pregnant." That is a nice, gentle way of saying Joseph's world just fell apart.

He knows the baby is not his.

As a righteous man, he decides to quietly end the engagement instead of publicly shaming her - or worse. In that culture, some could even be put to death for unfaithfulness.

Joseph thought he knew how his story was going to go:

- Plan the wedding

- Build a home
- Start a family

Now he is missing:

- Trust
- Clarity
- The future he planned

His heart is broken. His plans are wrecked.
He is getting ready to walk away.

Matthew 1:20 But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.

Then God gives purpose to the mess:

Matthew 1:21 She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”

From Joseph's point of view, he is losing everything he thought he had.

From God's point of view, Joseph is being invited into the center of the greatest story in history.

What looked like a disaster was actually a doorway.

4. The truth: God fills empty places with his presence

Put it together:

- No room in the inn
- No perfect conditions for Mary
- No clear plan for Joseph

Lack.

Confusion.

Disappointment.

Empty places everywhere.

And in the middle of all that, God is not absent. God is right there.

Christmas is not a story about people who had everything together.

Christmas is a story about people who did not have what they needed, did not understand what was happening, and God stepped in anyway.

That is the big idea for today:

Even when you don't have what you need or who you need, God still shows up in the places that feel empty.

You know who best exemplifies this truth? Jesus does!

Everywhere he goes, people are lacking something.

- A crowd with not enough food.
- A wedding with not enough wine.
- Disciples with no way through the storm.

- Sick and broken people with no power to fix themselves.

They do not have what they need - but they do have Jesus.

And because Jesus is there, everything changes.

- Five loaves and two fish become more than enough.
- Water becomes wine when the party has already run out.
- The storm goes silent at his word.
- Bodies are healed, sins are forgiven, the dead are raised.

His presence in the middle of lack is the answer.

This is the Jesus Pattern!

So why are we so surprised when our lives look the same?

Why are we shocked when we find

ourselves in situations where we clearly do not have enough, but Jesus is inviting us to trust that his presence is still enough?

Christmas is not God saying, "Fix what is missing and then come to me."

Christmas is God saying, "Come to me with what is missing, and watch what my presence can do."

So let's bring this into your life.

Where do you feel the ache of what is missing this Christmas?

1. **Where do you feel like Mary?**

You are facing impossible news in imperfect conditions, and you are thinking, "I do not have what it takes for this."

2. **Where do you feel like Joseph?**

You are staring at disappointment, and

the future you planned just got disrupted.

3. **Where do you feel like there is "no room" in your life?**

No support in your life?

No room in your schedule, budget, relationships, emotional energy...

The Hallmark Instagram pattern is to fix everything yourself... fake it 'til you make it... None of that has worked for us.

Let's try something different!

Musicians

Bring your lack to God and trust His presence to meet you there.

Not when it is fixed. Not when it is neater. Right now.

- For some of you, this is about faith & salvation.

Bring your lack of certainty and watch God's presence change you.

- For some of you, this is about time and energy.

Bring your lack of margin and watch God's presence give you rest.

- For some of you, this is about money. Bring your lack of resources and watch God's presence provide, guide, and calm your fear.

- For some of you, this is about grief. Bring the ache of that empty chair and watch God's presence comfort you in the middle of it.

- For some of you, this is about direction. Bring your lack of clarity and watch God's presence lead you one step at a time.

Whatever your lack is, bring it to Jesus.

Do not wait for the perfect moment.

This is the moment.

Bring your lack to God and trust His presence to meet you here.

Call to Action: PRACTICE HIS PRESENCE

I do not want this to be a nice idea you forget by Tuesday. I want you to actually **practice His presence** in the middle of your mess.

1. Turn your lack into daily conversation

Stop hiding what you are missing. Talk to Jesus about it every day.

“Jesus, here is what I am missing today. I invite your presence into this.”

2. Create one “presence moment” in your normal week.

Pick one ordinary moment - a walk, a meal, a few quiet minutes - and turn it into a presence moment.

“Jesus, I invite Your presence right here. Fill this space.”

3. Right now: Practice His presence through worship and prayer.

This is not the wrap-up of the service - this is your moment.

If you need salvation, if you are carrying grief or fear, if you need direction or provision, bring your lack to God and trust His presence to meet you here as we worship.