

ADDRESS THE MESS

PART 3: Inside Out

INTRODUCTION

We've all made messes in our lives. In fact, we know a mess when we see one because we are messes. It's something we all have in common. One misconception is that the Christian life is all about avoiding messes. But that's not true. If you dumb Christianity down to being about avoiding trouble, then your faith will be all about you—the foundation of another mess. Following Christ isn't about *avoiding* something; it's about *becoming* something.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Talk about a time when you narrowly avoided a mess in your life. What helped you avoid it?
2. To what extent is your faith currently defined by the idea that Christianity is about repeatedly making messes and getting in trouble, and repeatedly being forgiven? How do you think that influences the way you view your heavenly Father?
3. *"Jesus loves the messes of the world and loves us too much to leave us that way."* Is it difficult to believe that Jesus loves you, messes and all? Why or why not?
4. Read Philippians 1:3-11. What might it look like for your love to "abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight"? What do you think it requires to pursue that kind of faith?
5. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being "it couldn't be worse," and 10 being "it couldn't be better," how would you rate your current prayer life? What, if anything, can you do to change your prayers from requests for behavior modification to requests for transformation of your heart and mind?
6. What is one thing you can do this week to begin to attune your heart to what God is doing in you? How can this group support you and hold you accountable?

MOVING FORWARD

Ask God to complete what he has begun in you. This will attune your heart to what God is up to in you. Jesus loves you . . . even if you're a mess. But he loves you too much to leave you that way.

CHANGING YOUR MIND

In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

Philippians 1:4-6