Intro: This morning I want to finish our Christmas series that we have called: Christ-mess. What we have said...

- We want and Imagine the perfect Norman Rockwell Christmas
- What many of us GET is a Charlie Brown Christ-Mess!
- And, that’s OK: Because God can take our Christ-mess and turn it into a real Christmas!

He does that in a couple of different ways:

~ He is PRESENT with us in our mess: We aren’t alone! We don’t have to despair. If we reach out...He will be with us
~ He WORKS in unexpected ways: If we are paying attention, and looking...and trusting...We will see His hand at work

He REDEEMS our mess: That’s what I want to talk about with you today:

1. God Has A Purpose In Pain Of Our Mess

Mt 1:18-24

It has been said... “God never wastes a hurt!” He uses it to accomplish something of worthwhile significance.

Joseph was HURT: From his point of view his fiancé has been unfaithful

Can you imagine the pain that he must have felt.

Evidently he loved her...because he didn’t want to make a spectacle, risk stoning, OT Law. Quietly set her aside

How must it have felt to him, as he is lying awake at night, trying to determine the right direction, right response.

- Joseph was upset: Vs 19: To ponder, to be perplexed, to turn something over in your mind
- Joseph was afraid: Vs 20: To be fearful, apprehensive, afraid: That she had betrayed him, might would again

Yet: Here is what I want you to see. God had a purpose in his pain. He allowed it...because He was doing something bigger than Joseph! He allowed Joseph to walk through the pain, struggle, uncertainty of thinking Mary was unfaithful. PURPOSE

- Vs 22: Because He will save His people from their sin!
- From the very beginning of this story God had a purpose!
- Every step along the way, every tear, every sleepless night, every step of the journey, every doubt and with every fear
- God KNEW where He was headed. He had a PURPOSE IN THE PAIN!

Applic: And, He has a purpose in your pain as well! If you will trust Him with it, if you will place it in His hands

If you will come to Him, and ask Him to walk with you through it...He can Redeem your mess and accomplish His purpose! Whatever you are going through, it isn’t random, it isn’t arbitrary, God can redeem and restore! USE IT!

2. God Delivers Us THROUGH Our Mess!

Mt 2:13-15

~Notice Through...not always FROM!
~What we want is for God to take it away
~What we often GET is GOD walking through it with us...making us stronger...helping us have victory!

- We see that happen with Joseph and Mary that first Christmas

Mt 2:13-15

The Story: Run for Egypt!
~REALLY? We haven’t gone through ENOUGH! Baby, Trip, No Room, Angels, Misunderstanding: STOP!
~Yet...God was still at work! He was delivering them from the wrath of Herod
~He COULD have simply changed Herod’s heart, right? “Prov: “Heart of the king is in the hands of the Lord~”
~Yet, God chose to deliver in a very different way. He sent them down to Egypt!

~There was a reason for God working that way: Hosea 11:1 “Out of Egypt I called my Son!”

Applic: Here is what you have to see. IT HAD to be this way. Could God have changed Herod’s heart? Yes

But in order to fulfill OT prophecy, God used the wrath and ugliness of Herod to accomplish His purpose.

Applic: If you will let Him...God will do that in your MESS as well! It’s not random, It’s not arbitrary, God is at work

You may not see it right now, you may not understand it right now. You may not like it NOW...or EVER

But God's purpose is being worked out in your life. He doesn’t HATE you, not IGNORING you, not CARELESS

He loves you with an undying love...enough to send His Son. And He has a purpose and meaning...if you will seek it!

“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him who have been called according to his purpose.”
4 Steps To Having God Redeem Your Mess

1. **People:** People Help: You don’t have to go it alone: Mary…Had Elizabeth! God will provide if you look
2. **Time:** Time provides perspective. Maybe not today…or Tomorrow…But time helps. It was 3 years before Mothers
   Of the slain baby boys saw the fulfillment of what God was doing and teaching through their pain.
3. **Purpose:** Softens the pain. Doesn’t make it go away. Doesn’t always heal it. But it helps. Redeems. Restores
4. **Faith:** Learn to trust…even when you don’t “get it” Joseph “He will save his people from their sins”
   From our perspective…We see it, we understand it…We get it. Joseph had to wait in faith…and believe it
   BEFORE he ever saw it. God wants that same faith from you.

Here is the Good News. God can Redeem our mess. If you will bring Him what you have…He can find purpose in the pain
Here is MORE Good News. God takes our mess where it is…and works with what we bring him. We often say to ourselves…I’ll wait. I’ll get things in better shape. I’ll get this right and that fixed, and the other in place…THEN I will come to God. Don’t fall into that trap.

God takes the gift of our life…kind of like my Christmas presents…Not very nicely wrapped…paper torn…corners a mess, crooked and all messed up…and makes it what it should be.

**TAKES YOUR CHRIST-MESS….JUST AS IT IS…AND TURNS IT INTO A BEAUTIFUL CHRISTMAS!**