



Christmas: Messy or Amazing? | Shawn Johnson | 12.23.2023  
Weekly Study

## SHARE

As group members get settled, take a few minutes to check in with everyone and see how life is going. Share an exciting story from this week, your highs and lows, an answered prayer, or something you're struggling with. If someone is really struggling, rally the group around them and take a few moments to pray over them.

**What is the most meaningful gift you've ever received? Why? What about the most meaningful gift you've ever given?**

**If you could pick one Christmas to relive, which one would it be and why?**

**What is one thing you can do for yourself that your mind, body, or spirit really needs this holiday break, whether you have one day off or two weeks?**

## GROW

Merry Christmas! This week we had the honor of hearing Pastor Shawn Johnson's final message of 2023, *Christmas: Messy or Amazing*. The holiday season brings up different emotions for different people, and the lens through which we see this season can change the way we experience it. Oftentimes, the messiness of our year, our situation, or our past can take our focus away from the good news and great joy that Jesus came to give us.

As we look through the birth of Jesus - the first Christmas - Shawn encourages us to look at this season through the lens in which God sees this season and reminds us that He has come to bring good news and great joy even in the midst of our messiness if we know where to look.

**Read Luke 2:4-20**

**What are your takeaways from this passage?**

**How often does your Christmas season measure up to the expectations you had for it beforehand? What do you focus on most? What draws most of your attention and energy?**

**How have you seen God show up and bring good news and great joy in seasons of messiness?**

M O V E

**Read Romans 3:23, Romans 5:8, Romans 6:23, Romans 8:1, Romans 10:9**

One of the ways we find great joy in the hills and valleys of life that's mentioned in Luke 2:10 is by remembering the good news that brings that great joy which is the gospel of Jesus Christ. Translated from Greek, "gospel" literally means good news. Shawn shared a few verses from Romans to help us understand the good news, which is part of a tool called "The Roman Road to Salvation." It includes the five verses above.

**What is the overall story/picture that is revealed when looking at these 5 verses?**

**Does anything new stick out to you that you didn't notice before?**

**How does God's view of this time of year compare to yours? How can you switch your perspective to be more like God's?**

## P R A Y

God, we thank you so much for this year. This Christmas season, we pray that we can not only remember that you are the good news and reason we celebrate this season, but that we may also find great joy and freedom in you, regardless of our situation. As this year comes to a close and a new one begins, we pray that we can draw nearer to you and become more like you with each passing day.