

CHRISTMAS: IT'S COMPLICATED

Small Group Questions: Complicated Family

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Read

Matthew 1:18-25, 5:9 and 27:37-40, and Romans 12:18

Reflect

Christmas is often a time spent with family. Have you ever had a specific moment when you realized that your family was complicated? In Matthew 1:18-25, we see that God's family had drama—a lot of drama. Obviously, our all-powerful God chose it to be this way, since Jesus could have easily come from a long line of calm, peaceable saints. Why do you think God chose to do it that way?

Pastor Josh Surratt identified five common ingredients of family drama:

1. Confusion: Sometimes, we don't understand the family dynamics around us. Our Christmas gatherings and experiences, growing up, might have been very different from what we're experiencing now.
2. Complexity: If you look around the room at a family gathering, you're likely to spot someone on top of the world, and someone just trying to make it through the day.
3. Change: Adding someone new to the family get-together can change the dynamic significantly.
4. Conflict: Sometimes, traditions that are supposed to be fun—like decorating the tree and getting together with extended family—can actually heighten the tension.
5. Connection: Family ties can be difficult sometimes, but we're still connected, despite our quirks and issues.

Which ingredient(s) of family drama have affected you the most? Think of a situation where you experienced some major drama? How did you handle it? How might you have handled it better?

Pastor Josh also gave three positive roles you might choose to play in your family drama:

1. I can play the role of a peacemaker instead of a drama queen.
 - a. What do you need to do this Christmas to be a peacemaker? Forgive someone? Ask for forgiveness? Establish boundaries?
2. I can play the role of hope peddler instead of Debbie Downer.
 - a. What if you chose to be an encourager...a voice of more? Who do you need to speak encouragement to this Christmas?
3. I can play the role of love giver instead of hater.
 - a. Have you accepted God's love?
 - b. Has receiving God's love helped you give love to others? How?

What roles have you played so far this Christmas season? What roles do you WANT to play? How can you follow Christ's example and become the person who shares peace, hope and love throughout the Christmas season?

Respond

- What do you feel like God is asking you to do in response to the weekend message? What is your next step?
- How can your Small Group support you and hold you accountable in this?