

- Who Needs Christmas? We Do. -

We reduce Christmas to forgiveness. We can't live up to God's standards, so he sent Jesus to make things right. Maybe your entire experience with God has been: *Nobody's perfect, but God forgives.* That message isn't necessarily incorrect, but it's incomplete. The message of Christmas is bigger and better than that.

Ice-Breakers:

- **What is one of your favorite Christmas memories? Why is it special to you?**

Discussion:

1. **Read Matthew 1:18-21. The name 'Jesus' is derived from the Hebrew name 'Joshua' (a military man, a warrior). How does this change your view of who the Jews anticipated Jesus, the Messiah, to be?**

2. **Read Matthew 1:21. Matthew uses the word "save" not simply "forgive." Pastor Bryan said: *"The gift of Christmas is not just forgiveness for, but freedom from, the power of sin."* Do you tend to view the story of Christmas as Jesus providing forgiveness for your sins or as Jesus setting you free from sin? What has shaped your view of the Christmas story?**

3. **Read Romans 6:23. sAccording to this verse, all sin kills things. Explain how this is true, even in everyday life (sins in your marriage, family, finances, etc.).**

4. **Read Galatians 6:7-8. Pastor Bryan said: *"Even forgiven sin kills things."* How does this passage back that truth?**

5. **Read John 10:10. Is it difficult for you to believe that Jesus wants you to have life to the full (in the here and now)? Why or why not?**

6. **Read Romans 6: 12–14.**

    - **Is it difficult for you to believe that sin doesn't have to be your master? Is it difficult to believe that Jesus has set you free? Why or why not?**
    - **What do you think it would look like for you to "offer yourself to God"? How would your daily life be different?**

Application:

- **This Christmas, ask Jesus to save you from whatever sin you struggle with the most.**