

# THE DIVINE ENCHANTMENT WITH MESSY PEOPLE

## AND OUR CALLING TO DO THE SAME

*Enchantment:* Webster's #4. something that charms or delights greatly.

God's great delight in humanity is evident, strong, deep, and nearly incomprehensible. Paul's sincere prayer for us is that we would comprehend the great love of Christ for us, which passeth knowledge (Eph 3:17-19). God's divine romance with me personally might not be that astonishing to me, but there are some "messy" people out there that we (and we would assume God) have a hard time appreciating. We can find it very easy to intentionally and systematically disassociate from "messy" people.

But God delights and takes pleasure in humanity, even with all the mess it brings. God didn't mind associating with Manasseh and all the messy baggage that came with him when Manasseh expressed remorse. Samson's blighted and shameful past did not stop God from claiming him as a hero of faith. Lot's troubling association with Sodom and his drunken failures afterward didn't stop God from making a good commentary about Lot (1Pe 3:6-9). What a mess the expressions of our flesh make! Untangling and straightening out all that messiness is so draining and so endless! Why get involved? But God does.

It's not just the "Manasseh's" and "Samson's" that got it messy. David's life had its own messiness with its Bathsheba debacle and the senseless counting of Israel. The repercussion just kept on coming and seemed endless! What a mess! Abraham's "misstep" with Hagar is continuing to roil the world 3000 years later! Gentile kings rebuked the shameful conduct of this "man of God." (Gen 20) We are messy!

The twelve chosen disciples weren't exactly trouble-free. They were chasing away the children whom Jesus loved; they were quarreling about who would be the greatest right up to the crucifixion; and they wanted to call fire down from heaven on the very people Jesus came to rescue. The twelve were a burden Jesus had to carry. But Jesus also went out of His way to find people with "issues." Like the woman at the well. He could have ignored or dismissed the woman at Simon's house, but instead He entered into her life needs.

Adam and Eve weren't exactly a glowing start. In a very short time, they brought the devastation of death and sorrow and pain down upon the entire world. While this was no surprise to God, it certainly was very messy. What a taxing start to such a phenomenal plan and place! Envy, anger, and murder in the very first child! It comes as no surprise when God decides to destroy them all with a flood and end all the heartache and pain. But Noah catches the Divine's attention, and the interchange between God and man continues.

We like to keep our church fellowships as "mess-free" as possible; no stress, no entangling issues, and no messy people. But ever since the fall, people have become messy, each and every one of us. I'm glad God didn't despair of the cleanup, the entanglements, the mess. I don't want to despair of the labor and toil that comes with helping needy people either. Would to God He could see in my heart a delight in ministering to the "messiest of them," whether that be a dysfunctional home, or a downtrodden soul, or an immature and wounded youth. Jesus reached out to all of them, and if we are going to be like Him, we will do the same. Our churches will be involved with healing the diseased, washing away the filth, and counseling the disenfranchised and unlearned. And if we get nailed up to a cross because of our effort, well, I guess that would be the greatest honor we could experience.

-Vernon Martin