



Hi, I'm Elisa Preston. You're listening to the Blue Christmas collection for the Praise Through It podcast.

Christmas is not the most wonderful time of the year for *\*everyone\**. Various life circumstances and happenings can steal the joy of the season right from us. We experience grief, hurt, faintness of heart, and messy spirits.

The good news, though? No matter the state of our hearts? Christmas with Jesus offers grace, healing, faithfulness & mercy.

We bring him grief; He gives us grace.  
We bring him hurt; He offers healing.  
We bring him faintness of heart; He remains faithful.  
We bring him our messy spirits & selves; He extends mercy.

Join me for this four-part series, each episode a snippet of hope, especially if your Christmas is more blue than it is merry & bright.

Listen in for part 3, Mess and Mercy

(soft acoustic guitar)

Joy to the world!  
The Lord is come.  
Let earth receive her King.  
Let every heart  
Prepare Him room  
And heav'n and nature sing,  
and heav'n and nature sing.

We all know that chorus.

Two rounds later, we sing: No more let sin and sorrow grow, nor thorns infest the ground. He comes to make His blessings flow, Far as the curse is found.

Then we all know the last verse: He rules the world with truth and grace. And makes the nations prove, the glories of His righteousness, and wonders of His love.

Wonders of His love.

During Christmas, we are almost forced into this huge time of reflection. We know another calendar year is coming to a close and so we are encouraged to look back. How did 2021 go for you? Can we look back and see the wonders of His love through our 2021 story? Can we look back and see the glories of His righteousness like the song calls us to do?

Well despite all the messages of gratitude and matching pajamas and dreams-come-true you'll see and hear about on social media, I promise you this: we didn't get through the mess of the last year without a whole lot of mercy, and that's something to celebrate too.

When we're in a messy season, our specific dealings with it can depend on our personality. But the principals are the same: mess in our lives incurs shame, guilt, anger, frustrations, disappointment, longing, confusion, and more. And when we get to the Christmas season and we feel pressure to be merry, we just want to say, *No. Not today. It's too messy today. I'm too messy today.*

Yes, your heart, soul, mind and body feel messy. That's real. And it's hard. It's draining. There is no easy way to move through the mess.

But there is an easy way to grab hold of the mercy. His name is Jesus.

It sounds so trite sometimes - the advice of giving it to God. Yet we know it's a good, true thing to do. We know that by lying our mess down at the cross, by lying it down at the feet of Jesus in our prayers and in our cries, we can cross that bridge from irredeemable mess to unrelenting mercy. We can receive God's daily mercies like the gift it's meant to be.

There is no need to put on a pretty face this Christmas season for the world to see if you are in a dark, heavy mess. Also, I do know that we are promised mercy upon mercy when we give our mess to Jesus. He's all in for it. He died for it. He died for you.

Joy to the World comes from Psalm 98: Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth; break forth in song, rejoice and sing praises. Isaac Watts, the author of the hymn, wanted to remind listeners that the Messiah has come to redeem us.

He has come to hold our mess so that we might deeply, deeply know -- in our hearts and in our souls -- his mercy.

So today...

May your mess be less overwhelming as you lean in to the tsunami of mercy offered to us with each new morning.

May your mess take a backseat to God's ever-renewing, ever-present mercy.

May you allow yourself to live your mess out loud as you remember that nobody has it all together anyway, so we might as well be messy together.

May you let Jesus, the savior of the world, hold your mess so that you might deeply know his mercy.

Thank you so much for joining me for part three of Blue Christmas. After next week, Praise Through It goes back to the regular rhythm of a podcast every other week and a blessing meditation for the in-between weeks starting the first week in January. If you want those right to your inbox before they're released to the world, head to [elisapreston.com](http://elisapreston.com) & you'll see the sign-up right there. Next week I'll meet you right here for Faint and Faith, as we walk the end of this year's Advent season. Don't miss it.

Wishing you a week filled with knowable mercy. I'll see you soon.