



An Unexpected Christmas #2 :: An Unlikely Candidate **{Andy Stanley}**

INTRODUCTION

You might think the Bible is filled with good, godly people. And it is. But these people have their fair share of dark secrets and shadowy pasts. Judah is no exception. He's a little shady—no, he's a lot shady. So why in the world would God decide to include him in Jesus' ancestry?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What do you do with your darkest secrets? Do you have a form of confession or do you keep them hidden in fear of being found out?
2. If someone told you, "I'm not good enough for God," how would you respond?
3. From your knowledge of the Bible, which characters do you identify with the most? Why?
4. Read Genesis 38. Why would a person like Judah be included in Jesus' genealogy?
5. Have you ever thought that your actions have made you unworthy of a relationship with God? Or have you ever thought that the actions of someone else have made that person unworthy? How has the story of Judah changed your perspective?
6. Is it possible to ever escape the reach of God's grace? What areas of your life do you need to bring out from the shadows in order to experience God's forgiveness?

MOVING FORWARD

Whether we realize it or not, God is always drawing near to us. His grace is broad enough, regardless of how *completely helpless* or *totally sufficient* we might feel. For those who think they're good enough on their own . . . well, self-righteousness will only get you so far. And for the rest of us, guess what? You don't have to hesitate anymore because God's grace is available even to those who have not made themselves available to God.

CHANGING YOUR MIND

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast.

Ephesians 2:8-9