



This Beautiful Mess: Practicing the Presence of the Kingdom of God

Rick McKinley, David Kopp, Donald Miller (Foreword)

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Already Not Yet When Jesus announced, "the kingdom of God is at hand," what did He mean? Uncover the reality of the kingdom of God and what it might look like if followers of Christ practiced

This Beautiful Mess: Practicing the Presence of the Kingdom of God Details

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From Reader Review This Beautiful Mess: Practicing the Presence of the Kingdom of God for online ebook

Zach says

This Beautiful Mess by Rick McKinley looks at the tension between the Kingdom of God being present and active yet also being futuristic. It is, as the book title says, a beautiful mess. There is beauty in creation that God has created and that we are called to engage with as the Kingdom is seen all through nature. There is beauty in relationships as people cultivate a genuine love for each other. There is beauty in meeting people where their needs are, and when people willing sacrifice their talents, skills, money, and gifts. Yet this world is a mess because of the very real sin nature that is spread out through all creation. We see death, sickness, and corruption and know that something is not right here. It is a beautiful mess as the Kingdom of God continues to break through.

Rick McKinley does a great job at looking different ways to interact with the Kingdom. McKinley first talks about being able to identify the Kingdom in the beauty and in the mess. He moves then to seeing life being constantly redeemed throughout the Kingdom. By being aware of social injustices, by being a good steward of creation (along with out resources we are graciously given, and by simply just being in God instead of trying to reach the next level through our works and deeds. McKinley continues by having a section on practicing the presence of the Kingdom about how we are sing posts and how our lives should always be pointing towards Jesus. He talks about how our resources (money, time, skills, influence) all should be considered a "State of Empire" because they belong to God already.

This is a great simple read. It brings to light the healthy tension that is there with the Kingdom of God being present yet in the future. It shows our need for God and how we are in his story which due to sin is in need of redemption. Sometimes the Kingdom is evident and bursting forth like fireworks in the night sky yet a lot of times it is slowly growing like a mustard seed that slowly grows into a tree for the birds to nest in.

Nikole Hahn says

This Beautiful Mess by Rick McKinley mixes art with his purpose of changing our thinking from living as we wait for the Kingdom to living in the Kingdom. However, I left this book with mixed feelings.

The book begins very slowly. I put it down several times because I expected more meat, less dessert. It reads like many of the blogs I read online—beautiful, poetic, and Rick McKinley is quite a writer. The book is separated into parts. Some of the chapters include excerpts or what looks like poetry; an expression of worship, like dipping a banana in chocolate to make someone swallow the truth more pleasantly. What would be worship without beauty? God is, afterall, an artist, too. This Beautiful Mess gets into the truth, the meat, and my mind is satisfied, hungrily devouring every word.

This Beautiful Mess was written by an author who lives in liberal Portland. Naturally, one would expect a bit of leftist ideology in it. The author uses the word “rape” when referring to the environment in two places in the book, repeating himself.

“On the one hand, I see some evangelical communities and traditions that camp on the not-yet-end of the truth of the kingdom. They tend to look away from the disadvantaged, from issues of injustice or raping of the natural world for profit because...,” or here, “...understanding that creation was given to us to serve us. That doesn’t mean we’re free to rape... the earth...” While the author stays vague so you’re not entirely sure

how far left he thinks in regarding to environmental politics, it puts a conservative like me on alert. While I agree with taking care of the environment, I don't agree with the more extreme environmentalists. With no specific examples, there's too much room for assumption. He also has some black and white claims when comparing liberal and conservative churches.

At the 85% point of the book, he says the culture listens less because, "Jesus is not being lived out in the mess of their (conservative churches) lives. Christians are simply saying that Jesus is King without also living out His reign in the streets." I attend a conservative church. We have two very large programs that take care of the disadvantaged in our community. Our church also did a 90 Days of Blessings to encourage our congregation to reach out beyond the walls of our church. To be fair, he also touches on the liberal church in the next paragraph. He devotes a large portion of the book to emotionalism and social justice.

This Beautiful Mess goes on about social justice, but, unless I missed it, I saw no change in the people who were warmed in the streets or who received free meals via many camp stoves. He praises a man who inherited \$20,000 and gave it all way on Wall Street in small bills. I wonder what could have been done with that amount to double or triple his investment to do more good than a few dollars to temporarily help someone in need? In location 1988-1990, the author quotes Mother Theresa:

"My actions will preach. 'There should be less talk; a preaching point is not a meeting point,' said Mother Teresa. 'What do you do then? Take a broom and clean someone's house. That says enough.'" This is where I disagree. We have too much of this in the world and not enough truth balancing out the action. Even the secular people do kind things for others, but what makes Christians different than the culture? People are hungry for love and for truth, even if truth hurts, and we need both. I did see change in the single parent stories. I agreed with him about repentance and how much we all need it (in and out of church). I agreed with much of his Appendix.

Normally, I don't read Appendix's, but the author's Appendix is basically a proposal to the church on how to reach a culture without compromising beliefs. The author says, "This may be the biggest stretch for many of us, because discipleship has tended to focus on matters of being part of the church while mission has been left to those going overseas." People are a wreck in and out of the church. This Beautiful Mess, while too much fluff at times, beautifully illustrated how redemption through Christ is a spiritual miracle and it must be done through relationship, not rote; through repentance. I gave this book three stars.

*Book given by publisher to review.

Cameron Rebarchek says

I honestly had never heard of this book before, and, apparently, this was the updated and revised edition. I know they say not to judge a book by its cover, but I'm guilty. Looking at this cover, I was intrigued. The book is an incredibly fun and easy read. McKinley's poetic writing makes the heavy question, "What is the Kingdom of God?" manageable. The book itself is divided into three parts (Discovering the Kingdom, Re-Visioning Life in the Kingdom, and Practicing the Presence of the Kingdom) and contain 14 short chapters. I appreciated the conclusion including discussion questions for every chapter, making this book a great candidate for any small group discussion.

While there were several aspects to the book I did not particularly care for (e.g., the numerous anecdotal stories in section three and perhaps an overuse of poetry for a novel), there were several items in this book that make it absolutely worth the read. In the fifth chapter, the distinction between advancing and embracing the kingdom of God is made quite defiantly. Then, in the sixth chapter, McKinley, with the assistance of

J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Silmarillion*, offers a beautiful image of the peace of God. Then, finally, in chapter thirteen, the hardships of Christianity are discussed transparently and honestly. These three chapters alone made the entire book worth the read.

This book would be a great introduction, and urge into further study, for anyone with the question, "What is the Kingdom of God?" And, perhaps even more importantly, it will force you to ask the question, "What effect is the Kingdom of God having on my life today?" With the inclusion of the appendices and discussion questions, this book really is a perfect fit for a small group or Bible study on the subject matter. All in all, I would give it a four of five stars.

Waterbrook Multnomah gave me a free copy of this book for my honest opinion. I was in no way pressured to give a positive review. All thoughts and opinions expressed above are my own.

Katie says

I really enjoyed this book. Gave me lots of things to think about, and ideally (if it were not a library book) I would read it over again slowly to take in some of those ideas a little more. Others have said it is too short but for me, if anything, it was just a tad longer than it should have been--the part at the end about the environment seemed kind of forced and tacked-on, like someone mentioned to McKinley that "green is in" so he'd better address that topic too. It is best read as a meditation on a few lines of the Gospel, rather than a comprehensive life philosophy book. As a meditation it is superb; organically spiralling from one topic to another, coming back in to the line of text where we started. (The kingdom is like a mustard seed. The kingdom is like yeast and salt.) McKinley is the pastor of a large, unconventional church in the city where I reside, and this book made me curious to go and hear one of his sermons.

I especially enjoyed the chapter on children. I thought it was very wise. The only thing that puzzled me is the failure so many Christian institutions have to act on these kinds of insights. McKinley says that while we are sending the kids off to "the pink room" to keep them out of our hair so we can worship quietly and in an orderly fashion, "Jesus is checking out the pink room" and we should too. OK. So why not get rid of "the pink room" and deal with children in all their messy beauty right there in the sanctuary? Why is it that every church I go to, I am told my children are welcome to stay with me and that "Jesus said to suffer the little children to come unto him" and yet at the same time pressured to enroll them in that "pink room" downstairs, and glared at warily when they so much as let loose with a 6-month-old giggle or a spontaneous 2 year old "amen"? This is a curious situation, in my opinion, and something I am going to have to think about and study some more.

Ryan says

What is the Kingdom of God? What does it mean to live in it? Jesus spent a lot of time talking about it, but we don't often today. The Kingdom of God is not about some earthly empire infused with elements of Christendom, and it's not simply another place we are whisked off to when we die. The Kingdom is both now and not yet, and it's available to us. It's subversive, radical, earthy and mysterious--and much, much more. Jesus describes it as a mustard seed, a treasure in a field, a pearl, etc. And it's within us. What? Clearly this needs some exploration.

I visited the author's church in Portland a few months ago and picked up the book a day later at Powell's. It's a short, easy read that walks through three sections: discovering the kingdom, re-envisioning life in the

kingdom and practicing presence in the kingdom. The kingdom can't be boiled down to a three-point sermon (though we try), we can only catch glimpses of it here and there. McKinley does a great job of showing us glimpses and encourages us to find them in our own context. It's NT Wright for pseudo-bohemian dummies--awesome!

The idea that stuck with me most from this book is that the kingdom (and Christianity in general) isn't about attaining new levels, it's about entering a new dimension.

Angela Barthauer says

Rick McKinley's *This Beautiful Mess* is just the book I didn't know I was looking for. What does a life of Kingdom living look like as lived out daily in our personal journey and with other believers? McKinley gives profound insight not only into how to live out a Kingdom-focused life, but raises some reasons as to why we have fallen short and are content to repeatedly do so.

Jesus said, 'Repent for the Kingdom of God is at hand.' He invited His followers to not just dream of the eternal hereafter, but to embrace what God, through His Holy Spirit is already doing in the here and now.

Drawing from examples of his faith community, *Imago Dei*, in Portland, Oregon, and presenting challenging references to other authors I hold dear (like Shane Claiborne and Randy Alcorn), McKinley's book has compelled me to no longer just ask the tough questions about how to think outside the box, but to actively look for how to participate with God in bringing His Kingdom to those who seek Him.

While the message may seem simple, I often found myself limited to reading a few pages at a time in order to digest and process through McKinley's writing. That's when I know a book has the fingerprints of God upon it.

If, like me, you are no longer content with the "American Dream" and you long for a life of Kingdom living...sit down (preferably with other Kingdom seekers), crack open your Bible, and using this book and the discussion questions as a guide, prayerfully allow the Holy Spirit to begin painting the picture of how you can participate in living out His Kingdom "on earth as it is in Heaven."

Liz Terek says

Beautiful Mess sounds like an oxymoron. Rick McKinley walks us through Jesus' explanations of the Kingdom of God & how He starts with our messes & ends with beauty.

As we revisit specific Scriptures such as the Beatitudes, we begin to see that Jesus' view of the Kingdom & religion's view don't always mesh. Seek solace in remembering that Jesus never expects us to be perfect. Thankfully, much time is spent explaining 'The Kingdom of God' in great detail.

One particularly powerful portion of this book discusses how we expect the King to bend to our kingly thoughts on life. We try to get Him to reign in our lives as we see fit instead of bending to His views. We're warned against reducing God's Kingdom & thinking it's only in Heaven. So many aspects are explained, dissected, & made plain that even long-time students of the Word will learn something new.

Although the book isn't incredibly long, it packs a great deal into its pages. This is one of the books that I've read recently that I wish had been published 20 years ago. True, it's a revised, second edition of the original published 7 years ago. But, had I had this in my hands in my early twenties, then I certainly would've had an

easier time understanding certain things.

I highly recommend this book to those who feel they've learned it all & to those who admit they're still learning. It's so well done & written in a genuine, loving way. It's a 5 out of 5 star novel. More info is available through the publisher www.waterbrookmultnomah.com. I received 1 print copy in exchange for an honest review. All opinions are mine.

Steven says

I know you've done it, I've done it, and we have all done it. You've been driving on your way to work, sometimes eating on a hamburger or sub sandwich, when suddenly you pass by a extremely tan, ashy-skinned homeless man sitting patiently on an overstuffed backpack with his wrinkled thumb sticking up. As you pass by, you keep your head straight on the road, never looking directly at him, acting as if you don't see him there. Further on down the road you feel sorry for the man, and think of the way you might help him, but you never do. Somewhere along the way you talk yourself out of it and try to forget he was ever there. I know you do this, because I to have done it. We all have.

This man, like every homeless man, is just a small part of the "Mess" Rick talks about in his book. Rick builds on the idea of what this mess is that we leave behind daily and the fact that the very "Mess" are the very people Jesus came to save. Rick reveals how Jesus loved these people dearly, not seeing the mess that the passer-by's see, but rather something "Beautiful."

No one knows reality in life more than a man(or woman) who has been homeless, hungry, sick, poor and/or despised and hated. I believe that is the very reason Jesus chose those such as these. Not choosing the best, or the holiest and most righteous, but instead those who understand real life struggles and pains inside and out. These people would be the ones who understand the message of Jesus fully and accepting it as a gift rather than a payment for good deeds as their oppressors were expecting. It is these people who see the real Kingdom of God and it was the very reason Jesus said they would be the first to enter the Kingdom.

There are many more examples of beautiful messes, such as a child's attempt at drawing that came out as a catastrophe of scribbled color crayons, or a father changing his newborn son's freshly soiled diaper for the first time. Finding the beauty in these events is only the first step. Seeking the kingdom through these messes is one way of practicing the presence of the kingdom. Furthermore, the kingdom is not limited to just the beautiful mess. God reveals himself in the sight of a sunset, in the sound of rain, in the thickness of clouds, in the birth of a child, in the growth of a tree, in love, happiness, kindness, tenderness, compassion, and He is never limited to any word that we can describe Him. God is everywhere and his kingdom is everything.

After reading Rick's book, it has impacted the way I look at the homeless man I pass by on the way to work and encourages me to help people such as these, and furthermore seek in them the Kingdom of God.

Jason Isaacs says

Everything is upside down in Jesus' economy. He began His Kingdom and today He is restoring all things. He does so in His time, His ways, and usually through our brokenness. The last will be first; the meek will

inherit the earth; God's strength is seen most clearly through our weakness. A holy God pursues us in love, and He chooses the foolish things of the world to shame the wise. As Rick McKinley describes "The story I see is of a God who created a universe through and for His Son, Jesus, and that this Jesus is sovereign over it and that, as a participant in the story of creation, I am invited to show forth His kingdom and tell of His glory."

As agents of His Kingdom, how do we get in line with God's redemptive purposes? This book grapples with this question. I appreciate Rick McKinley's Scriptural understanding of what Jesus came to do and is now doing in this world. It is on the horizontal front that we take different paths. As McKinley's politics get woven into his book, the more it became apparent that we represent different political and economic traditions. McKinley seems to be as passionate about his politics as he is about his faith, and I am certain he would say that his faith informs his politics. When McKinley uses words such as "revolution", "redistribution", and "co-conspirators", his tone risks overpowering the message.

The best summation of the book is found in the following, "Sometimes it seems as though we find two Gospels in the New Testament: the gospel of Jesus and the gospel about Jesus. The gospel of Jesus is usually taken to mean His announcement of the kingdom and the life He embodied in His loving actions toward the world. The gospel about Jesus refers to His atoning work on the cross and His resurrection, through which we can receive the forgiveness of sin through our faith and repentance ... I believe, however, that the two are actually one gospel. When we lose the tension that comes from holding both together, we experience an unhealthy and unbiblical pendulum swing in our faith."

This was an engaging and though provoking read. The discriminate reader may enjoy having his or her assumptions challenged. I was challenged to consider which aspects of my faith have been informed by my culture. The gospel is the lens through which I should understand the world, not vice versa.

I received this book from Waterbrook Multnomah Publishing Group for review.

John Walker says

I've lived in Portland all of my life. It's one of the most progressive cities in the US--a sort of European colony tossed in the middle of the Pacific Northwest.

As is the case with Europe, Portland is a proudly post-Christian society. Cheerfully deemed, "The place where churches go to die". Or, if you prefer something less morbid, "the church graveyard". Clearly, Christianity does not fair well here.

Yet, it is from this context that Rick McKinley writes an incredibly hopeful little book: *This Beautiful Mess*. Rick is the pastor of Imago Dei Community Church in SE Portland (see his page here). A church known for its connection to the popular writer Donald Miller, as well as for its commitment to rigorous social activism.

That said, Rick is the real deal. I rarely read "popular level" books anymore, especially of a "Christian life-style" variety, but I found great joy in reading *This Beautiful Mess*. Rick's marrying of reverence with candor, and exaltation with honesty, makes him quite the likable fellow. He takes his "Already, but not yet" eschatology to heart. He neither plays down the evil in the world, nor does he push off the Kingdom of God to the day of parousia. Rather, he lets the tension stand where Scripture does, calling us to live under the

reign of God amidst the suffering of the present age.

This is a thoroughly practical book. It almost functions as a collection of mini sermons--meditations on Scriptural truths along with everyday illustrations of what it looks (and has looked) like. Rick's surplus of anecdotes may be the best feature of his work. If anything is evidence of the Kingdom's presence, it is the love of God exercised through His people in the world. Rick charges us, as the Church, to hold fast to the reality of the Kingdom, and to embody it in the entirety of our lives.

I highly recommend this book for anyone interested in what it looks like to follow Jesus in the muck and mire of the everyday. McKinley provides an honest, yet profoundly hopeful paradigm for living out God's mission in the world.

I received this book for free from Blogging for Books for this review.

BONDing over BOOKS says

Have you ever asked yourself where is God in your life? Have you had that conversation while you sat in the pew on a Sunday or watched your favorite televangelist? In your search for the answer to this and many other questions, you may accidentally stumble on several resources.

The key is to ask questions, seek, understand and learn from those answers. **THIS BEAUTIFUL MESS - Practicing the Presence of the Kingdom of God** by Rick Mckinley is a book with questions and answers. It is a book about awareness, accountability and Christianity. It doesn't answer the questions, it asks them.

What does it mean to be a Christian in today's society? **THIS BEAUTIFUL MESS** reads more like a journal about the author's journey into discovering a way he would like/prefer to live life as a Christian.

He divides it into three parts:

1. Discovering the Kingdom - "Is to help us hear the words of Jesus again and begin to shift our affections toward Him and His brilliant vision."
2. Re-Visioning Life in the Kingdom - "Is to recognize the kingdom, we need to learn to see differently. To see God's present kingdom in the midst of the ordinary miracle in which we live."
3. Practicing the Presence of the Kingdom - "Is to tear down the fake walls. You are called to be a signpost along the road standing in the midst of suffering with people who are suffering and declare to them that they are loved."

The title, **THIS BEAUTIFUL MESS** implies that somewhere within the pages of the book there are paradoxical statements waiting to be found; after all, how can one find "beauty in mess?" The author stated that he chose to describe God's kingdom as messy because to "think of mess as real and apparent complexity, as absolute resistance against the tidy, easy, or manageable. For example, finding purpose and goodness in a desolate place. Christians don't like mess, not in our world and especially not in ourselves or our churches."

What is the "me-ism" of Christianity?... My desires, my hopes, my future, my agenda, etc. The author talks about being careful when "studying God expertly in His parts [because you can] miss Him entirely in His Being." In the Bible, it says that you can't serve two masters. You can't serve God and still be in control of your life. The book says God wants you to be a part of His agenda, and not you "trying to get God to endorse your agenda."

If you think you've read or heard this before, you have! Rick Mckinley believes that in order to be a part of

the kingdom you must repent. Repent... the author defines repent as to "stop what you're doing, to turnaround and do the opposite." He believes that God wants you to release the "smugly held beliefs, especially the so-called enlightened ones that convince us we have no need to repent."

THOUGHTS for your SOUL:

- "If you start with the church, you might end with the church. If you end with the church, you may never get to the kingdom. But if you start with the kingdom, you will always get the church."
- "When is my giving, no matter how generous, more about me than someone else?"..."Americans tend to assume that we know what the people in the rest of the world actually need."
- "What you look to for freedom and security can actually enslave you."

What does any author or good book strive to do? What does any good book accomplish? According to bestselling author, Malcolm Gladwell, "Good writing does not succeed or fail on the strength of its ability to persuade. It succeeds or fails on the strength of its ability to engage you, to make you think, to give you a glimpse into someone else's head." After reading THIS BEAUTIFUL MESS, it's normal to reflect on what you've read and ask yourself "Would I be the same person today if I never read this book?"

Disclaimer: Let's BOND over Books received this book free of charge from the Waterbrook Multnomah Publishing Group for this review.

Dean says

Every Christian needs to read this book, not because it's so revolutionary (although it is), but because it's so easy to read and understand. Every Christian needs to read this book because every Christian needs to understand in plain, simple language that the "kingdom of heaven" is not a divine blessing on the American church! Period. End of discussion. Nothing else to talk about. Done.

I read this book and marveled at how what an amazing grasp of the obvious message of the gospels it portrayed. And yet, in pulpits all over this country are preachers who are NOT preaching this message simply because it's too challenging! instead, they're talking about healthy families, good stewardship, stress management and a dozen other innocuous subjects, masquerading as the gospel. They're not preaching the gospel because, given the diet of spiritual "fast food" they have been feeding folks, the gospel would just chase them out the door. Church doors would close, elaborate ministries would end, and Christianity as we know it in America would change forever. It would be a spiritual recession (or even Depression), but the end result would be a robust era for the American church.

That's why this book and all the others that speak this truth will be read, commented on and immediately dismissed. Too bad...it sounds a lot like Jesus. And we really need Jesus right now. We really do.

Virginia Garrett says

This Beautiful Mess, Practicing the Presence of the Kingdom of God by Rick McKinley is a very timely book. It is a lot like Radical by David Platt, God's At War by Kyle Idleman. All excellent books.

How do we practice the presence of the kingdom of God? Can we truly practice and experience this presence?

Mr. McKinley maintains it is possible. But it will take a radical type of obedience and view of the kingdom.

What happens when we view our lives (and ourselves!) through the lens of God's kingdom? What happens when we radically choose to obey the voice of God?

Lives are changed. We are changed. We start seeing Him, His handiwork, and His work all around us.

We begin to yearn for a deeper commitment, a deeper relationship with Him. We long to see His kingdom advance. We long for Him to increase and for us to decrease.

In short, we live radical lives because His kingdom is a radical thing!

“Somewhere along the line, we have embraced a picture of a Jesus who would turn us into perfect people unpolluted by the world or our own sin. But He didn't. In Him we are new creations; in ourselves we are dump dwellers.”

“You can study God expertly in His parts and miss Him entirely in His Being.”

I don't want that to be true of me.

Living a radical life requires radical obedience.

This book is well-written and timely. It comes with a discussion guide so it would work well for a Sunday School class, Bible study or book club. If you want to be radically sold out to Jesus, if you want to see His work in and through you, if you want to radically see the world changed for HIM and His glory, this is a great book to read!

I received a free copy of this book from the publisher for the purpose of review. All opinions are my own. I was not required to give a positive review.

Beyond the Pages says

This Beautiful Mess by Rick McKinley is a noteworthy read. It is simple, clear and direct in its communication of how to practice the presence of the kingdom of God.

What attracted me to this book, in all frankness, was first and foremost the title. The words drew me. I could immediately relate to the strange wording. It made me think about the peculiar stance that one must take in the disordered (or possibly ordered) chaos that goes along with living in the world, while striving not to be a part of the world. The artistry of the cover illustration cemented this thinking further.

The voice and writing style of the author was firm, passionate and pointed. He demonstrated a strong sense of commitment to his theme. His expressions were basic in parts. Familiar in parts. Still, on the whole, it worked. Giving a "new" take on the very simple considerations of the Bible, Mr. McKinley conveyed a purposeful message.

If I had to pinpoint what I specifically took away from the book, it would be this...

- The kingdom message is not about any one man, rather it is about the King.
- We need to be mindful of having a repentant heart.
- Discipleship and missions are paramount regarding the kingdom.

- The Gospel must be shared.

Scripture references were shared throughout this book, but they were presented in a way that flowed versus in a way that was static or preachy. I particularly liked how it seemed to be so personal and poetic at the same time. It made it easier to appreciate. Also, the examples of real life kingdom living and work were rich and meaningful.

This book was encouraging and inspiring. I would definitely recommend it to others.

Stacie Wyatt says

I read This Beautiful Mess: Practicing the Presence of the Kingdom of God in exchange for honest review from Blogging for Books.

The book discusses looking at our lives through the kingdom of God. Jesus has a vision for the church (his followers), but his followers did not immediately follow the vision (p. 1).

McKinley discusses on Page 27, how the Jews were expecting a king to save them from oppression and bring freedom. Yet, Jesus came as a baby to a virgin. He did not start his ministry right away. Jesus was the King of Kings, but no one was expecting him to come as a newborn.

He did not practice his ministry until he was old enough, then he died for our sins, only to rise again. Jesus also said he would come back and reclaim his kingdom and his bride (followers).

I loved the title of the book. It sounded similar to Perfect Chaos, my blog (<http://sdwperfectchaos.blogspot.com/2...>). In the midst of my trials and troubles. In the the midst of meltdowns, temper tantrums, and therapist appointments. I can still laugh. I can still breathe. I am still alive. My life is perfectly imperfect. Today, I had two assignments due for class, in addition to two product reviews for Tomoson. I got home from church, did some cleaning and cooking, and tried to get to work. I could not get started until after 6 pm. The kids, great-niece, and nephew kept bothering me. From invading my camera space when I tried to do a video review to crawling over me when I was trying to type up my notes into my assignment. I still got my work done and turned in on time, but it took some creativity.

The pastor at church, talked about following instructions and proper planning. The sunday school lesson discussed financial management and once again, planning. My mess could have been a little different if I planned more in advance versus on the day of. Some days are better than others, but it's now 12:30 am. All the kids are sleep. I finally got some peace to work.

God's kingdom is messy, yet beautiful. Even though people are not perfect, even though people are doing their own thing, God is still in control of our messes. Even though, we want to rule our own kingdoms, God is still here waiting for us to get things right. One day, we will be perfect, but we can't get there on our own (p. 5).

I love how the book is set up. The author presents stories and poems, instead of theology. The book is easy to read and easy to understand.

The book teaches us that God accepts us in our brokenness (p. 17). He forgives us of our sins (p. 17). Jesus will never bow down to you or adapt himself to your beliefs (p. 21).

Finally, the book discussed how to follow God's vision. The first step is to repent (p. 28). Repenting does not happen once, but multiple times in our lifetimes. We also have to be Kingdom people. We need to be like God. Live for God. Live for Christ. Simply be in God's kingdom. We don't live for us--We should live for God.
