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An rfour.org Children's Time Message

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Written for January 31, 2021

Fourth Sunday After Epiphany

Lectionary Year B

**Scripture:** [Mark 1:21-28](#) [Summary: *Jesus Isn't Afraid Of Our Messes* ]

**Supplies Needed:** You will need to assemble a mess. Pack a bag that might include some of the following: mismatched socks, a rumpled shirt or two, scraps of papers, writing utensils, an old cell phone, books/magazines, an empty snack of some kind (like a Wheat Thins box or empty candy wrappers), a couple of movie/jewel cases, remote control, maybe an old slipper, etc.

**ASK** (a.k.a. [The On-Ramp](#))

- Good morning!
- Has your room at home ever been messy?
- And then, did you have to clean up that messiness?
- Yeah? What kinds of things do you usually have to clean up? (books, toys, clothes, headphones, stuffed animals, other things)
- I have messes at home, too. They usually look like this...*[open up your prepared bag and pour out your assembled mess]*
- So what do you think – these messes we have at home, do you ever see those type of messes here in the sanctuary?
- No, not so much -- it looks pretty clean just about all the time, doesn't it? Which makes this mess look especially messy and out-of-place, right?
- So – I should probably clean this up, don't you think? Can you help me clean up my mess? *[pick up things and put them back in the bag]*

**TELL** (a.k.a. [The Freeway](#))

- Just like we have messes in our rooms, we can also have messes inside of us.
- And a lot of times, we think we're supposed to clean those inside messes up on our own.

- We might even think that we need to clean up our messes before we can come here to worship.
- Or – maybe we think we need to *hide* our messes when we come here – because it looks so clean, right, and it wouldn't be good to make it messy?
- But in today's scripture story, we see someone in Jesus' faith community who decides to spill their inside mess right in the middle of the worship service.
- The story calls that mess "an unclean spirit."
- But did you notice how Jesus responded to this person's mess?
- Jesus didn't get mad or upset with the person.
- Instead, Jesus helped the person clean up his mess, right then and there.

## **SHARE the Good News** (a.k.a. *The Destination*)

- Although this sanctuary is almost always clean, that doesn't mean that we have to have everything cleaned up in our own lives to be here.
- In fact, our faith community can actually help us, with God's guidance and love, clean up our messes just like Jesus did in today's scripture story.
- For example, when we started this time together, I made a mess.
- But then – you helped me clean it up, right?
- And that's how it's supposed to work!
- Not only do we **not** need to be all cleaned up to be part of the church, we can invite others in the faith community to know about our messes.
- Then, together and with God's help, we can work together to clean up our messes.
- That's the good news for today. Let's pray...

### **CLOSING Prayer**

**Dear God,**

Dear God,

**Thank you for Jesus...**

Thank you for Jesus...

**...who shows us...**

...who shows us...

**...how to receive and share...**

...how to receive and share...

**...your healing love...**

...your healing love...

**...even when things are messy.**

...even when things are messy.

**Thank you and amen.**