

“I just figured, if I’m going to be a mess, I might as well be a hot mess, right?”- Mindy Kaling

When did the world begin? Some well-meaning historians think it started way before people ever walked the earth. Other religious types say it begins with Adam and Eve in what was called *The Garden of Eden*. A few scientists think that people evolved from slime. Personally, I’m conflicted. I believe the Bible. We came from creation by God. Yet, the slime theory looks pretty accurate. They say that God is perfect. The biggest question is how does the perfect create the imperfect? Did he create slime?

I am not truly dishing on God. It does seem strange that he would create something that has trouble as it’s middle name. The Bible says we were made in his image. Other words describe “image” as an imprint or likeness. Do we look like God? Certainly, we don’t act like him. In so many ways we are the anti-God. Were not honest, holy, consistent, or powerful. Oh sure, were powerful enough to make chemical weapons and nukes, yet, clearly were not strong enough to say no to using them. We love power but were not powerful. We desire to be Gods but were not God.

Where does that leave us? I say: as a hot mess. Three good definitions of a hot mess from the Meriam Webster dictionary:

1. *something in a state of extreme disorder or disarray*

They are all good descriptions of humanity. In 1989, the Berlin wall began to fall. In the ensuing months, the Soviet authority began to crumble. Yet, in 2014, the Soviets have begun to take back some of its borders beginning in the Ukraine. They say that the Russians changed after the fall of communism. Have they really? Seems to me that they’re still a hot mess.

There is an ideology in prison circles that argues for and against punishment or rehabilitation. What side do you sit on? I thought crimes were judged? Why are judgments now a reason for free education, meals, and hope? It's the right thing to do, right? Yet, we hear stories all the time of repeat offenders. Donald Middleton has 9 convictions for drunk driving spanning 20 years. His last one led him to a life sentence. The Judge said he could not be rehabilitated. Nine times! At what point did we not see it coming? My Dad always tells me that people don't change their spots. Mr. Middleton has many spots.

You could call him a hot mess. Our judicial system is in disarray. People that do crimes are in disorder. It seems that we hope for the best from the worst. People send prayers out for the victims but have a heart for the accused. The system rewards the criminal with a second chance that the victim never gets. Our society as a whole, all around the world, is dysfunctional. Women have no rights in many, many countries. Religion is used as a reason to kill. A judicial system helps the criminal and feels sorry for the victim. Possibly, our world is a hot mess too.

2. *a disorganized, disheveled, or self-destructive person*

Donald Trump is a very successful person. People just don't realize all that he has accomplished. So many plainly hate him for no reason. Half the time they give only generic reasons. He is racist, a bigot, or too white. Yet, Donald has gone from a university grad from Queens, New York to a business leader and President of the United States. Many people on social media call him an idiot. Can an idiot graduate from college and become President? Apparently, you can according to social media.

I bring up Trump because of his person. Nobody becomes a business tycoon without being aggressive, flamboyant, and ruthless. It's the nature of big business. Yet, Donald let's his character run amuck occasionally. Fair enough, more than occasionally. It's caused his administration to divert from his good business success. I thought he would be good for America. Instead he has been both a good and a hot mess.

I am a good pastor. I am also a hot mess. My life is not the model of the perfect pastor. However, I believe I am a good one. My life is a little disorganized (love it). I can look disheveled and destructive by my own nature. Donald like, I guess. Yet, I am a good man. You could say I am a good hot mess. Some would believe Donald is a bad hot mess. This brings me to the last description.

3. *such a person who is at the same time attractive or sexy*

Oh yes, the sexy hot mess. I went through some tweets from a friend of mine. They claimed to be a hot mess. Are they attractive? Sure, and talented too. Yet, they are divorced, neurotic, and self-destructive (in a good way). Tweet after tweet painted a picture. No wonder they are divorced. I think that person would be tough to live with. Oh, wait a minute, I see myself in the way they live. An eyelash stuck to their shirt. A chip in their bra. A black eye from a door knob. A fun-loving hot mess of a disaster.

At least they admit they are a hot mess on social media. Will they ever get married again? Possibly, if they joined a hot mess club, I would say a resounding yes! I am a mess too. My wife not so much. Yet, I think she likes me this way. It's entertaining. She hails from the Canadian Maritimes. Personally, I know a few of them. They are all a hot mess to various degrees. Possibly, I can relate to the Maritimes. They are a crazy people in a good way.

We are attracted to the hot mess. Sure, there are the extreme hot, hot messes.

Those outright crazy kinds. Why is divorce so high? How many people say their Ex is a nut? Yet, you married them. We love reckless lives. People are attracted to the bad ones.

The adventurous make us laugh, squirm and cringe just like a scary movie. Yet, we marry them. We seek them out. Were willing to ride that hot mess train or roller coaster. A hot mess is a love/hate relationship that we crave. It's somehow sexy and attractive.

I just want to give a hot mess it's due. I was told by a good friend not to marry my first wife. I was told by a good friend not to marry my second wife either. No, there is no third wife yet, I'm still married to number two. A friend called me and said I should come down to Canada Post to work. On my first day a supervisor told me to quit sorting with my left hand or I am fired. A few years later they refused to give me any time off for my first child. I have now worked there 32 years. Clearly, I have issues in many areas. I probably should have quit Canada Post and never been married. Ho hum, the life of a hot mess.

Am I a legitimate hot mess? I loved the rock group AC/DC in high school. I most defiantly was beat up and ridiculed for likening them too. These days I avoid that band. Recently I have appreciated Taylor Swift. The queen of hot mess. Some of my family and friends have bashed me for my reckless tastes in music. What is a 53-yr. old man doing being a Swiftie? I think she rocks. My music stretches through all types of genres. I went to an 80's Go Go's concert wearing my AC/DC jacket. Two girls kept asking me why I was there. A hot mess in the making.

Here is my thing. I think many people who are in management are missing life. They are too politically correct. They love playing it too close to the line. What line? The line between

boring and a hot mess. These people are slow to anger. It's James 1:19 I guess. "*My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.*" The hot mess does not play ball that way. It too boring just being marginal. I couldn't be the normal politically correct type. I fuel my hot mess far too often. Unfortunately, I like it that way. My boss not so much.

Some coaches in the professional ranks are a hot mess. We see this played out all the time. These intense athletes were great players in their youth. Once they finish their playing career, some of them delved into coaching. Sport is riddled with past athletes being fired as a coach. Why? Most owners don't think like them. Marginal players can't see it their way. It's because these special players play a different game in their mind. It looks like a hot mess when they try and lead.

The mentality of a crazy good player might not translate into management. They make reckless decisions and say crazy things. What makes them special is that they think the game on a different level. It's not marginal to them. They play a reckless, almost hot mess type of a game. I love that about them. They love it too. Professionally, they dance on a line between leadership and crazy. That is not a good mix in coaching.

Then there are those who listen, are prudent speakers, and patient with anger. I know God wants those types of leaders. I am just not a fan of the stick in the mud types. Boring! Hence: I am not a pastor in a church. No place for a hot mess there. Some players get fired as a coach. No place for a hot mess there either. Management and great leaders probably know how to control themselves better than most of us. I still say it's boring.

In Hollywood and the music industry we love the hot mess. The bad boys and girls. Maybe we think they are nuts. I know we mock them. Yet, we keep on watching and listening to the lives they lead. I think their music is fueled by a hot mess. Certainly, Taylor Swift and Carrie Underwood have made millions from a reckless life. We are attracted to their looks and their talent. Beyond that, we are attracted to their messy lives. We are a bug to their bright reckless light.

I believe that a hot mess is a bright life. These people live vibrant colorful lives. They stand out. We are somehow attracted to them and the way they live, think, and thrive. So many messes should crash and burn. Are we just sitting there watching for the eventual disaster? Do I live a reckless life just hoping for a hot mess? How often have I wondered if I love the hot mess that I am. Sure, I say I despise it, but deep down do I? Na, I love it.

Way deep down inside, in the places we hate to look at, there is a burning desire for the reckless life. Even the calm ones get a little frisky. They smile as they do something uncommon. We all love it just a little. It stresses the normal people, but the hot mess feeds off of it. I suppose it's the introvert/extrovert thing. An introvert tends to be drained around people. My extrovert nature burns with passion around people. I crave disaster. Why stay at Canada Post that long? Clearly, it's because they are a hot mess too. Partners in crime.

My point of this book was to take an honest look at relationships. Why are we attracted to the hot mess? Why do we divorce if we made a vow of forever? Why do we get angry? Why do we become so destructive? How is it that blood relatives act so differently? Hate between family members is real. Picking bad friends is real too. Were fueled by relationships. I feel that even those who are introverts and avoid people do so for a reason. Were they shunned? Are some

misdiagnosed? People do treat relationships horribly bad at times. Why would we do that to fellow humans? No wonder some of us avoid people. No wonder that some of us turn into a hot mess too.

Let's travel down this road. It's muddy. Our wheels might get stuck. Yet, we must. People tend to pick certain types. People love to be warned and then push head long into disaster. The Darwin awards are given to those who died in stupid ways. Usually they were warned. I know a person with kidney problems since their youth: they love to drink. I was warned twice about marrying. My Ex said I am not relationship material. Maybe it's true, who knows? I love the reckless life. Maybe she despised it. However, I am not alone. Relationships are forged by reckless love and reckless passion. We do leap first and then look second far too often. Somehow, that seems so human.

A hot mess is fun. They are the life of a party. They make us read the newspaper. We hate them in sports and cheer for them as they do things we wouldn't dare to try. For some reason we are attracted to them. We might not have a reckless life, but we dream about it. If you had a million dollars what would change? Oh, yes you have thought about it. I bet you would travel. Buy something you always dreamed off. Countless people have gained wealth and fame, only to turn their lives into a hot mess. How many of us would turn down a chance to try a million dollars?

Sometimes life takes a turn. It becomes a wrecking ball of chaos. Within that chaos it looks like were a hot mess in the eyes of others. Most people I have read about are trying to embrace the hot mess that they are. They are always trying to understand why. God also says that

he gave us unique talents and gifts. What if you were born to look like a hot mess to some. Can you live with that?

What if this hot mess thing has a reason behind it? Look at the traits they possess. A hot mess is born because they dare to defy. They are so busy thinking of the next thing that will be a disaster. I suppose they leap before they look. I tend to write and talk before, I think. I'm just that way. It gets me in hot messy water sometimes. Yet, it's me. It's also my mom in me. I'm born that way. Wasn't Freud's relationships a mess? Benjamin Franklin experimented with lightning. Coke began with cocaine. Our life was invented by those who looked like a hot mess. Yet, we need their strange mind and ways to make life better.

I wonder if those we deem to be a hot mess are just in-between people. They appear normal much of the time. Yet, in those special moments they become a hot mess or reckless. Is it their nature or just a disaster of a human being? Over the years I can confidently say I am who I am. I can't change. I think different. I act different. Equally I love and hate my reckless nature. When I first saw the words hot mess I giggled. Oh, that's me I said.

Every Christmas I pray for a roller coaster life. My wife asks why? Why do that to yourself and our family. This year began with a plan. Let's go to Carrie Underwood in May. How about Shawn Mendes in June? Def Leppard in July. Grey Cup game in November and Australia in December. What a life! Then I got injured for a month. Cancer struck my wife and within a month she is in surgery. Praying for a rollercoaster life is dangerous.

I know that looking before you leap is a good idea. Maybe I planned too much without knowing how life would go. It's just not how I roll. The best inventors just leap. They lead reckless lives of experimentation and adventure. Doctor Who is always just making it up as he



goes. Maybe the hot mess does not have a plan, but they do have vision. Maybe these types of people are needed because a little recklessness is good for the soul. Possibly, I believe, we were made for a little reckless abandon in our lives.

I want to explore the hot mess just a little deeper. Is my praying reckless? Are those who look like a hot mess just reckless people looking for a disaster? I don't know. Yet, I feel we need excitement. We need spice. I know, on the road, some people drive without law it seems. People blush and fear. Yet, we all love to laugh and be scared. It's human. Isn't that just reckless traits and experiences we all encounter? Let's go deeper and leap into the next chapter of the reckless life.