

An Unprecedented Family Tree - Matthew 1:1-17 **Notes, Family Worship, Bible Reading**

Notes from the Sermon

If you are going to be a writer (or a preacher) one of the things you will have to learn is that the first words are super-important. You have about a minute to catch the reader's attention if you desire to keep him or her engaged. We learn that the way an author introduces material tells us quite a bit about what comes after. So, let's say, you were going to write a biographical work about the life of Jesus, how would you begin? So many options. Maybe you start like Mark, opening with a bold statement about the Good News of Jesus being the hope for all the world. Or like John by declaring the eternal existence of Jesus as God and that He is creator, sustainer, and the purpose of all things. We probably would not begin where Matthew begins, with a genealogy. Let's be honest, most of us aren't even interested in reading our own family tree in paragraph form, much less someone else's. Yet, Matthew begins with 42 generations, 42 fathers who begat. Yawn, right?! Yet, every word in Scripture is inspired by God, and is profitable for us. And this text is full of deep and beautiful meaning.

Matthew's goal in writing is to convince his own people, the Jews, that Jesus was the long-awaited Messiah, the anointed ruler of God's people who had been promised for over a thousand years. Matthew was a tax-collector, which means that he basically sold his own people out to get rich by the hands of the evil Roman Empire. But he met Jesus, left his post to follow, and spent the next three years as one of Jesus' disciples. Matthew is an eyewitness of the events of the story, and was present when Jesus was arrested and taken away to be crucified. And he was present when Jesus showed up in the room with them three days after He had been brutally executed. Matthew has a burden that his Jewish friends and family look to Christ and find in Him the hope to fulfill their longings. Still, to prove his thesis Matthew had to show that Jesus stood in a place of complete fulfillment of the promises, prophecies, and pictures painted in the Old Testament. To be the promised rescuer/king a person had to be a descendant of both Abraham and David. All Jews stand in Abraham's line and therefore are included in the promises of the covenant promises God made to him. King David is in this line as well. God formed another covenant with David, one of royal descent. In this promise God declares to David that the throne will never leave his family and from his descendants will come an Eternal King who will sit on an Eternal Throne and rule over an Eternal Kingdom. What a promise! But for a person to be the Messiah he must be a son of Abraham and a son of David. So Matthew begins with a genealogy because any Jewish reader who understands the prophecies of the Old Testament would not care what a person had done if they did not fulfill the bloodline of the Messiah. You could perform all the miracles you want, if you were from the tribe of Benjamin or Levi you could not be the Messiah. You could even be in the tribe of Judah (like David), but if you weren't David's descendant, no go. So Matthew begins here, showing from a careful genealogy that Jesus' human ancestry is the one that was promised in the Scriptures.

But this is not all that is revealed in Jesus' family tree. The human ancestry is full of jacked up people, a long line of failures. If you were to go back and read the stories of these people you would find misfits, outcasts, rebels, and tyrants. In the initial promise to Abraham there is the promise of a seed, a descendant who would bless not just Israel, but all nations. Every one of these births came with the hopeful expectation that they would usher in these promises, and every life was wrought with sin and failure demonstrating the absolute need of a Savior who would rescue from the mess. Yet

from this line arose a line of kings and the promise of the one day Messianic King who would rule in justice and righteousness. Jesus' line brings the entire story of the Old Testament and the hope it raises to its intended fulfillment. He is the promised Savior whose life and sacrifice fulfills the Temple worship and all the sacrifices in the Old Testament. His salvation brings us our forgiveness and rescue from sin. And He is the risen King whose coming ushered in the Kingdom of God and by whose resurrection all enemies are defeated. The lives of the people in Jesus' family tree reveals the need for a Savior who can forgive, and a King who will rule over their own lives. And it reminds us of our need as well.

Bible Reading for the Week

Daily Bible Readings

Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
John 3	John 4	John 5	John 6	John 7	John 8	John 9

Reading from this past week: Matthew 1:1-17

Reading in preparation for this coming Sunday: Matthew 1:18-20

Family Worship

Song - *Sing we the Song of Emmanuel*

<https://youtu.be/7xuk10742vE>

Gospel Project

Story: The Holy Spirit came

Story Point: God kept His promise to send the Holy Spirit

Big Picture Question: How does the Holy Spirit help Christians?

Answer: The Holy Spirit comforts us, shows us our sin, and guides us as we live for God's glory.

Scripture: Matthew 28

New City Catechism

Question #50: What does Christ's resurrection mean for us?

Answer: Christ triumphed over sin and death so that all who trust in him are raised to new life in this world and to everlasting life in the world to come.

Verse: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-14

Scripture

Matthew 1:1-17

*Pick three or four names from Jesus' genealogy you recognize. What do these names tell us about the reason Jesus came into the world?

*Why was it important for Matthew to point out that in his humanity, Jesus is the son of Abraham and the Son of David?

*Why do we need a Savior? Why do we need a King? How is Jesus the fulfillment of both for us?

Prayer

*During the second week of Advent, pray that as we wait for the coming of Jesus we would deeply experience the love of Christ and therefore become people who love each other and our neighbors well.

*Pray that we would look to Jesus as both Savior and King this week.

