

# THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

JANUARY 25TH-26TH // BOOK OF MATTHEW

## MATTHEW CONNECTS THE TESTAMENTS

- Matthew refers back to the Old Testament about 60 times, connecting Jesus' work to the OT.
- Matthew is also a "mini-Bible" of sorts because it gives us a snapshot of what happens from Genesis to Revelation.
- Without Matthew it is impossible to fully understand either testament.

## SO, WHY 4 DIFFERENT GOSPELS?

Each gospel gives a different perspective on Who Jesus is, therefore giving us a complete picture of Him.

## MATTHEW'S AUDIENCE AND PERSPECTIVE IS JEWISH

Mark focused on Romans, Luke on Greeks, John on all people, but Matthew was called to make the case for Jesus as the Savior to the Jewish people.

## MATTHEW WAS AN ODD CHOICE

God choosing Matt to write one of the most important books of the Bible is a very odd decision. Matthew was a Jewish tax-collector for the Romans. This means he basically robbed his own people.

- Matthew was also the journalist of the original disciples. He documented all of their travels.

## THE CENTRAL MESSAGE OF MATTHEW

Matthew was deeply concerned for the restoration of God's Kingdom and making it clear that Jesus is the Savior sent to save humanity.

- The key verse in Matthew is 27:37, "**This is Jesus King of the Jews.**" Matthew clearly claims that Jesus is the prophesied Messiah.

## HISTORICAL SETTING OF MATTHEW

The time between Malachi and Matthew was a time of prophetic silence. God had not spoken any new revelations to humanity in over 400 years. In this time, the people of God anticipated the coming of their King.

- The prophetic silence would be broken by **God in the flesh coming to earth.**

## IT WAS A TIME OF GREAT CONFUSION

The Jews were ruled by warring pagan nations and much of their cultural and religious identity had been lost.

- In the 400 years of silence God was setting the stage for His Son to start the redemption process for humanity and His planet.

## A BATTLE OF COSMIC PROPORTION

The main context of Matthew is the realization that **God will unify and establish His kingdom with His people.**

- The Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6 is the fulfillment of the Father's dream for His kingdom to be realized "on earth as it is in heaven."

## THE PROMISES STARTING TO BE FULFILLED

The 2 major consequences of mankind's fall in Genesis 3 **are the need for humanity to be redeemed and the need for the earth to be reclaimed.**

- God made 2 promises, one to Abraham and one to David and in Jesus Christ we see both promises begin to come to fruition.

## CONTEXT & TIMELESS LESSONS

- In reading the Word, it is important we learn the historical and cultural context, while also taking the timeless lessons to heart.
- The Bible wasn't written to us, but for us.

## GENERATIONS (MATT. 1:1-17)

### THE OLD TESTAMENT IS VITAL!

Many discount the OT, but one must understand that God had been setting the stage for Jesus for many centuries.

## MATTHEW 1:1 CONNECTS THE OT TO THE NT

The immediate mention of Christ being the "Son of David" and the "Son of Abraham" shows that Jesus is the culmination of all the OT promises.

## THE GENERATIONAL LIST IS VITAL

The Jews wanted the Messiah to come as a politically connected, extravagant, and militarily powerful earthly king, but Christ was a carpenter from a backwoods town.

- But, the genealogy does show that He did have royal roots, even coming from Abraham and David. **Jesus didn't just come out of nowhere.**

## THE LIST IS IMPRESSIVE AND PROGRESSIVE

Not only does this humble carpenter have royal roots and the legal right to the throne of Israel, there are 4 women listed in the genealogy, some of them are Gentiles, and one was involved in an affair with David.

- We see the inclusion of non-Jews, women, and people who had made mistakes.

### Redemption is for everyone!

## HISTORY IN 3 PARTS

The genealogies are broken into groups of 14: Abraham to David, from David to the Babylonian Exile (Book of Daniel), and from the exile to Jesus' birth. Not every person is mentioned. It is more about landmarks than precise lists, but it does clearly connect Jesus to the royal line.

## PROVING GOD?

The Bible gives ample historical evidence via locations, events, and genealogies to its authenticity and to Jesus' existence. A belief in God will always take an act of faith; believing in the unseen. **One cannot simply use archeology, genealogy, or science to prove or disprove God.**

## STRESS (MATT. 1:18-19)

### CHRIST CARRIES A LOT OF WEIGHT

As Matthew tells us about the birth of Jesus, he instantly tags on the title *Christ*, showing that this isn't just a baby, but God incarnate.

- This distinction still needs to be made today because many try to separate the divinity of Jesus from His humanity. **We must decide if He is Lord, liar, or lunatic.**

### "...PREGNANT BY THE HOLY SPIRIT."

It was important that Jesus be born to a virgin because it solidifies that Jesus wasn't only man, but divinity. Jesus was the only God-man, and God's plan wouldn't have worked if He were not both human and divine.

- **Again, we have to come to a conclusion on Who we believe Jesus is.**

## THIS WAS A MUCH DIFFERENT CULTURE

The marriage customs of Jesus' day called for a couple to be betrothed, which was as binding as a marriage ceremony, but they could not be sexually active until an official wedding night.

- Mary was found to be pregnant before the culmination and while she was out of town.

## IMAGINE THE WEIGHT ON THESE "KIDS"

Mary was probably 14-16 years old and Joseph was probably in his early 20's. Imagine the trust they both had in God, imagine the stares of others, and imagine the stress of knowing Who your baby is!

- **We learn the importance of character, trust, obedience, and love in the story of Jesus' birth.**

## MESSENGER (MATT. 1:20-25)

### JOSEPH HAD DOUBTS, AND RIGHTFULLY SO

Joseph was a great man, but like any of us, he had his doubts about his young bride claiming to be a pregnant virgin. God intercepted his doubt and Joseph listened.

- **It is not a sin to have questions or to sometimes doubt, but when God speaks to us we must respond or we are sinning.**

## THE COUPLE REMAINED CELIBATE FOR A TIME

After the birth of Jesus, Mary and Joseph had other children that were "half" siblings of Jesus. God had blessed them because of their righteous living and obedience.

- **How often do we get so wrapped up in the intensity of the moment that we forget how faithful God has been?** Do we take time to remember?

## THEY NAMED HIM JESUS

Jesus was actually a very common name that Jewish boys had been receiving for centuries. It is the Greek equivalent to the Hebrew Joshua, "God is salvation."

- Why such a common name? **Because Jesus is God for everyone. He chose to come in quiet humility rather than opulent arrogance.**

## JESUS WAS AND STILL IS THE BRIDGE

His name, how He came to earth, and His mission that we will study, show us that Jesus was God incarnate and had come to earth in order **to reconcile fallen humanity to a perfect God.**

- **For the humble seeker of truth, the gospels tell us how to find our purpose and identity in the true God.**

## WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED TODAY?

**Context** and pulling out timeless lessons are important to understanding the Bible. We can't prove or disprove God through history, archeology, and science. It takes faith. There can be mistakes in our family trees, but God can still use us. **For God to use us, we have to trust and obey Him. Jesus is the Savior for everyone who wants Him.** We will doubt and question at times, but the real issue arises when we are not **looking for truth, listening for an answer, and then responding to what God shows us.** We must have "ears to hear."