

Jesus is The Christ

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[0 : 00] Well, if we could, this evening, with the Lord's help and the Lord's enabling, we could turn back to that portion of scripture that we read.

Matthew chapter one, and for a short while we'll look at this chapter. Matthew chapter one, if we just read again, at verse one, where Matthew writes, the book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham.

The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham. Now, it's often said that those who don't learn from history are doomed to repeat it, because as you know, we can learn a lot from history, but we can also learn a lot about ourselves from history, because when we look back and when we consider the generations that went before us, we can learn about who they were and what they were like and what they faced.

You know, that's why genealogies and family trees are important and they're very interesting to many people, because when they study them, they find out who their ancestors were and who their relations and connections are, and maybe even what they endured in the past.

In fact, there was actually a TV series on, not so long ago, I don't know if you saw it, it was called Who Do You Think You Are. It's very interesting. Maybe you watched it yourself and it followed the lives of different celebrities and it looked back into their genealogy and discovered who their ancestors were and where they had originated from and even who they were related to and what their past ancestors got up to.

[1 : 49] And for some of them, they made shocking discoveries about their family history and what their forebears went well, what they got up to. And you know, in a similar way, when we look at genealogies, Jewish culture is very interested in genealogy and ancestry and family history, because in Jewish culture, your family is important, your relations are important, your history is important.

For a Jew, their lineage and their genealogy is something that they would investigate and learn about and even cherish, especially because they would want to know who their descendants were and what tribe of Israel that they were part of.

So genealogy is something that was part of Jewish culture and that's why Matthew begins his Gospel with the genealogy of Jesus Christ.

But you know, when we come to a section like this, with this list of endless names that I can hardly pronounce, you know, it's tempting for us to just skip over it, just think, well, it's not really important. It's not as important as the rest of the Gospel. But you know, what Matthew is doing by giving us the family tree of Jesus is that he's reminding us from the very outset as to who this Jesus really is.

[3 : 08] And Matthew tells us right at the beginning in verse one, he tells us that Jesus is the Christ. And as you know, Christ is not his surname. It's his title.

He's the Messiah. He's the anointed one. He's God's King in God's world. And Matthew uses this genealogy in order to prove that Jesus is the Christ.

And Matthew does that by stating that Jesus is, first of all, he's a son of David. He's of royal descent. He's of the seed and lineage of King David. But more than that, Matthew affirms that Jesus is a Jew.

He says that he's the son of Abraham. He's a descendant of faithful Abraham. He's part of the covenant of grace that was given to Abraham. And so as Matthew introduces us to Jesus, the Christ, and he introduces us to Jesus using this genealogy, what he's doing is that he's drawing our attention to three things about Jesus.

And these are the three things I want us to see this evening. What is to see his family, his function and his focus. So we see three things about Jesus in Matthew chapter one, his family, his function

and his focus.

[4 : 23] So first of all, his family. His family. And then verse one, the book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

Abraham was the father of Isaac and Isaac, the father of Jacob and Jacob, the father of Judah and his brother and so on.

Now, prior to his conversion, when Jesus called him from his tax booth to be a disciple, as you know, Matthew was a tax collector, and as you might expect, a tax collector was one of the most despised occupations in Israel because tax collectors, they were Jews and they worked for the oppressive Roman government in Israel.

And like Zacchaeus, who was renowned for his greed and his corruption, Matthew would have exploited his own people just like Zacchaeus did. But one of the roles of a tax collector, other than collecting tax for the Roman government and then making a profit on it by adding your own to it, one of the roles of a tax collector was to be acquainted with all the public registers, which were lists of genealogies and family trees and all these family connections.

And so as a tax collector, Matthew would have known the family history of every household in Galilee that was being taxed. And because Jesus, as we know, he was a Galilean, Matthew would have probably known Jesus's family history.

[5 : 56] Matthew would have probably known that Jesus was, as we've read there, a descendant of Abraham. Matthew would have probably known that Jesus was a descendant of Judah, from the tribe of Judah, and even from the lineage of King David.

But you know, what's remarkable in reading this and reading and understanding that Matthew wrote it is that in the providence of God, Matthew's experience as a tax collector was used to the glory of God.

Because you know, before Matthew was ever called from his tax booth by Jesus, before Matthew was a Christian, the Lord was preparing Matthew for works of service.

The Lord always knew that Matthew's experience of names and family connections and family trees, the Lord always knew that it would be used here in order to explain who Jesus Christ really is.

And you know, not to make us realize that when it comes to the Lord, nothing is wasted. All our past experiences, whether they've been dark and difficult, whether our past experiences were full of sickness or sorrow, none of it is wasted with the Lord.

[7 : 08] None of it is wasted with the Lord because the Lord uses all our providences and all that we go through in our lives, the Lord uses it in order to shape us and to prepare us for works of service.

And you know, that was certainly the case with Matthew. Because when Matthew was called from his tax booth to be a disciple, he was going to write his most important work, which is the gospel we have before us, the gospel of Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

And the Lord used him. The Lord used him because Matthew clearly explains to us right from the outset who Jesus is and why Jesus came.

But as Matthew begins his gospel, he introduces us to Jesus by telling us who his family are. That's very similar to the way we are.

We try to explain who someone is by talking about their family name or their family nickname. Or we talk about who their parents are and who their grandparents are and what craft they lived on.

[8 : 09] And in a similar way, that's what Matthew does. He says that Jesus is first of all a son of Abraham. He's a descendant of faithful Abraham.

And faithful Abraham, as you know, the Lord promised to him that he would have a big family. You'll remember back in Genesis 12 that the Lord promised Abraham that he would be a father of many nations.

The Lord said to Abraham, Genesis 12 verse one, go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation and I will bless you and make your name great so that you will be a blessing.

I will bless those who bless you and him who dishonours you. I will curse and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

So when the Lord entered into that covenant with Abraham, the Lord graciously promised that from Abraham's seat, there would come this great nation and through Abraham, all the families of the

earth were going to experience blessing.

[9 : 16] But of course, when Abraham was given that promise of blessing, he was an old man and Abraham's wife, Sarah, she was old too. And it wouldn't be for another 25 years until Abraham was 100 and Sarah was 90 that they would have their firstborn son called Isaac.

And yet the Lord was faithful. The Lord was faithful to his covenant promise. And what we see throughout the history of Abraham's lineage is that the Lord remained faithful throughout every succeeding generation.

And you know, when you consider the family tree of Jesus, when you read it and all these names we read and when you think of the history that's connected to all these names, you see that there were so many obstacles to overcome in order to ensure that the Messiah would actually be born. Because well, there was a Isaac right at the beginning. His mother, Sarah was barren most of her life, but she gave birth to Isaac at the age of 90. That's probably not the best age to give birth to your firstborn son.

And then Isaac's father, Abraham, he had to be obedient to the Lord in Genesis 24 by offering up his only begotten son as a burnt offering.

[10 : 34] He was to offer up his son as a burnt offering. Then when Isaac married Rebecca, she was also barren. There was another obstacle. But then she had twins.

She first had Esau and then Jacob. And the Lord said that the older shall serve the younger. And that wasn't without its family difficulties. And then you have Jacob himself who was, as we're told, he was a deceiver.

And yet he fathered 12 sons who would become the 12 tribes of Israel, one of whom was Judah. And it was on Jacob's deathbed that Judah was promised that he would be of royal descent because we're told that the scepter was not to depart from Judah.

But that also wasn't without its problems. Because we're told in verse three that Judah fathered Perez and Zerah by Tamar. And Tamar, as you know, it's a messy chapter, that was Judah's daughter-in-law.

And you know what becomes glaringly obvious as you go through this genealogy is that sin and moral failure makes this family tree more and more complex.

[11 : 43] And you look at it and you almost think, well, it's just like the families we have today. Nothing's changed. Nothing's new under the sun. And you know what's interesting is that Tamar wasn't the only woman who's mentioned in this family tree.

We're told in verse five that Salmon was the father of Boaz by Rahab. And Rahab, as you know, she was the prostitute from Jericho whom the Lord spared because she hid the spies by faith. But more than that, we're told that Boaz married Ruth the Moabites. And we know all about the love story between Ruth and Boaz from the Book of Ruth. Which when Ruth and Boaz finally got together, they had Obed.

And Obed was the father of Jesse. And Jesse was the father of King David. Therefore Ruth, as you can see there, Ruth was David's great-grandmother.

But there were even more obstacles in this family tree to overcome because David, we're told, was the father of Solomon. And as we know, Solomon was born as a result of David's lies and his lust and his adultery with Bathsheba and his murder of Bathsheba's husband Uriah.

[12 : 50] And you know, you go through this family tree and you consider the history of all these different people. And you see the family tree of Jesus and you think, well, this is something out of his tender.

All these different people, it's so complex. Because well, there's prostitutes, there's incest, there's Moabites people from outside the covenant being brought in.

There's so much opposition to the covenant promise and there's so much moral failure from the covenant people. And yet the one person who shines through the whole of it, this whole genealogy is the Lord and his faithfulness to every generation.

The Lord was faithful to the covenant promise he made with Abraham. And as we were singing in Psalm 105, he was faithful to a thousand generations, which means he's still going to be faithful.

The Lord is remaining faithful throughout every succeeding generation. But you know, these women who are mentioned in the genealogy of Jesus, Tamar, Rahab, Ruth and Bathsheba, they were not only women of disrepute and moral failure.

[14 : 03] They were also Gentiles. They weren't Jews. They weren't direct descendants of Abraham. They were what you could call outsiders.

They were outsiders, but in the Lord's providence and grace, they were brought in. They were brought in to experience the blessings of the covenant. And you know, with that, Matthew is reminding us from the outset of his gospel, that the gospel is for all people.

It's not just for the Jews. It's to the Jew first, as Paul says, but it's also for the Gentile. It's for those who are outside the covenant of grace. It's those who are strangers to grace and to God.

It's for whosoever, because as we all know, the whosoever can be brought into God's covenant family by faith in this Jesus who is the Christ.

The whosoever can be brought into God's family. And you know, my friend, even though Jesus's family tree was full of division and difficulty and people of disrepute, it was a family full of sinners.

[15 : 13] But what Matthew reminds us is that the gospel of grace is for sinners. The gospel is for families, for your family and for my family, for the families of this community.

The gospel is for them because the covenant promise given to Abraham was a blessing, the promise of blessing of salvation to be upon homes and families.

And you know, the Bible reminds us in Acts chapter two to plead the covenant promises of God because his faithful promises, they are to us and to our children.

So we are to plead the promises of God. You know, if you have children tonight who are unconverted or husbands who are unconverted or wives who are unconverted, we're to plead the covenant promises because the promise of blessing was a promise to our families.

It was to us and to our children. And so we're to plead to our faithful God, a faithful God who is faithful as we see in this family tree, faithful to every generation.

[16 : 26] He's faithful to every generation. And so when we consider who Jesus is, we see that his descendants, they may have been sinful, but from them came the savior.

And then secondly, when we consider who Jesus is, we see his function. So his family, he is part of the family of Abraham, but also his function.

We're told in verse one, the book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

Now as Matthew explains Jesus's genealogy and family tree, he not only emphasizes that Jesus was a Jew from the covenant promise of Abraham. Matthew also explains that Jesus is a king and he's a king because he's from the royal lineage of King David.

In fact, the emphasis, the whole emphasis of Matthew's gospel is that Jesus is a king. Because when you consider the other gospel writers, Mark's gospel, he tells us that Jesus is the suffering servant.

[17 : 34] When you read John's gospel, John begins in eternity and he tells us that Jesus is the eternal son of God. He's the word who became flesh. But you know, when you look at Luke, Luke tells us that Jesus was the perfect son of man.

And that's why Luke also has a genealogy. He gives a genealogy of Jesus in Luke chapter three and you can read it for yourself. Because in Luke's genealogy, he traces Jesus's ancestry all the way back, further than Abraham, all the way back to Adam.

And the reason Luke did that was because he was not only stressing the humanity of Jesus, he was also highlighting that Jesus is the second Adam. Jesus is the son of man.

Jesus is the son of Adam. He's the last Adam. He's the new Adam. And he's the son of Adam who was promised way back in the Garden of Eden that he would be born into this world to crush the head of the serpent.

And as Luke reminds us in his gospel, the son of man, the son of Adam, he came to seek and to save the lost. But for Matthew, his genealogy, his genealogy presents to us Jesus as the king.

[18 : 51] He's the son of David. He's the royal descendant of King David. And because he's the royal descendant of King David, he's the Messiah. He's God's king and God's world.

He's the anointed one. He's the Christ. He's the Christ. And you know, that's what was promised to King David a thousand years before Jesus was born.

The Lord promised David in 2 Samuel 7 where we read there about the Davidic covenant. The Lord promised David, I will raise up your offspring after you who shall come from your body and I will establish his kingdom.

He shall build a house for my name and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be to him a father and he shall be to me a son.

And that's why Matthew follows this royal lineage because the promise was that one of David's descendants would sit upon his throne and establish the throne of King David forever.

[19 : 57] But it wasn't to be an earthly throne. It was to be an eternal throne with a kingdom from heaven. And the Lord will say about his Messiah, I will be to him a father.

He shall be to me a son. And you know, Matthew, he brings us through all the generations of this royal lineage. He brings us through all these kings Solomon, Rehoboam, Abijah, Esaph, Jehoshaphat, Joram, Uzair, Jotham, Ehaz, Hezekiah, Manasseh, all these generations of kings. And he brings us through this royal lineage and then he brings us right down to Jesus. And he says, this is him. This is if Matthew is pointing at Jesus and he says, this is him.

This is the one you've been waiting for. This is the son of David. This is the royal descendant. This is the Messiah. This is God's King and God's Word.

And Matthew is saying to us, Jesus Christ is King and he's King in the kingdom of heaven. But you know, the reason Matthew wrote his gospel about King Jesus is because for the Jews, for the Jews, he wasn't the king they wanted.

[21 : 17] The Jews wanted their Messiah to be this conquering king like King David. They expected their Messiah to be a warrior king that would defeat all their enemies just like King David. They thought that the savior of the world would overthrow this opus of the King.

The world would overthrow this oppression that was being pushed upon them by the Romans. And they thought that their King would restore the nation of Israel again.

The Jews assumed that Jesus was going to be this earthly king with an earthly kingdom and have political power. And instead when Jesus came, he came to establish an eternal kingdom in the kingdom of heaven.

But for the Jews, Jesus wasn't the king they wanted. That's why they crucified him. He wasn't the king they wanted. And you know, that rejection, it was part of Jesus's humiliation.

It was part of his humiliation. In fact, that's how Matthew presents his whole gospel. Matthew presents Jesus to us, not as an exalted and reigning king, but as a king who was humiliated.

[22 : 26] And Matthew explains that Jesus's first act of humiliation was when he humbled himself by taking to himself our nature.

Because you know, as soon as this genealogy is complete, Matthew gives to us the birth narrative of King Jesus. And what we read there, it's not a royal coronation.

It's an act of humiliation where King Jesus were told he's born in a barn in Bethlehem. And then as the narrative of Matthew's gospel progresses, it's not a progression of exaltation.

There's no rise in this king's status. No, it's more humiliation. It's all down, down, down. Where the entire life of Jesus, as you follow him through the pages of Matthew's gospel, it's an act of humiliation in which we're told just a few chapters later he's tempted by the devil.

And then he's rejected by his people and he's chased out of cities and synagogues. He's opposed by the religious elite, even his family disowned him. King Jesus, he's humiliated down, down, down.

[23 : 39] And yet Matthew all the time, he keeps reminding us that this humiliated king, he's still king in the kingdom of heaven. Because from Matthew, everything is about Jesus functioning as king.

When Matthew records Jesus's first sermon, Jesus says, repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. When Jesus gives his sermon on the mountain, Matthew five to seven, he teaches what it means to live in the kingdom of heaven.

When Jesus tells all his parables, he begins them, he begins all of them by saying the kingdom of heaven is like. King Jesus is revealing to his people what the kingdom of heaven is like.

But as you know, the humiliation of King Jesus, it goes down, down, down, all the way to the cross. Because we read the narrative, there's a plot to kill King Jesus.

Judas is the villain, the chief priests of the instigators, the Romans of the executioners. And Matthew's gospel describes the humiliation of King Jesus from the crown of glory to the cradle in Bethlehem, all the way down to the cross of Calvary.

[24 : 55] It's from the crown to the cradle to the cross. King Jesus was humiliated to death, even the death of the cross.

But as you know, that's not the end of the story. Because as Paul reminds us, God the Father highly exalted him by raising him from the dead. On the third day, the tomb was opened.

Jesus gloriously ascends up on high in order to lead the captives free. And the risen and exalted King, he has been given this name, which is above every other name.

And Paul tells us that it will be at the name of Jesus, that every knee will bow in heaven and on earth, and even in hell, and every tongue will confess that he is Lord to the glory of God the Father. And you know what Matthew is reminding us about King Jesus as we look at his gospel, is that he entered into this world in humiliation from the crown to the cradle to the cross, but he left it in exaltation.

[26 : 01] He came in humiliation, but he left in exaltation. And the wonderful thing is tonight that he is enthroned on high.

And the Bible reminds us he has put all his enemies under his feet. And because he has all authority in heaven and on earth, King Jesus commands everyone everywhere to repent. You know my friend, his function as king was to defeat sin, to conquer the grave, to bring life and immortality to light through the gospel, and to call sinners to repent and believe in that gospel. Jesus is king. That's what Matthew tells us right from the outset. But because Jesus is king, Matthew is telling us the responsibility of the church is to now call sinners to come. Or to call sinners to repent and believe in the gospel. The responsibility of the church and the Christian is to call sinners to abdicate the throne of their heart.

[27 : 14] It's to call sinners to realize that they are not king and queen over their own lives. The responsibility of the church is to call sinners to surrender their life and bow their knee in humble submission before King Jesus.

Because that's his function. He is king. He is king. But what about his focus? His focus, and this is what's wonderful.

His focus is you. That's why he came. And that's what I want us to consider lastly and briefly. Because as Matthew introduces us to Jesus using this genealogy, he draws our attention to his family, his function and his focus.

We read in verse 17. So all the generations from Abraham to David were 14 generations. And from David to the deportation to Babylon, 14 generations.

And from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ, 14 generations. Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit.

[28 : 29] And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife.

For that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.

So following the genealogy of Jesus Christ, Matthew concludes by explaining in verse 17 that there were 14 generations. 14 generations from Abraham to David, from David to the exile into Babylon, and from the return of the exile into Babylon to the birth of Jesus Christ.

These 14 generations. And to be honest, no one knows why he mentioned this. Donnie will probably have a different opinion, but nobody knows why he mentions this or the significance of it. There's lots of speculation, and many assumptions have been made over the years. But the truth is no one, no one really knows. The New Testament theologian, Leon Morris, he said, the number 14 must have been significant to Matthew.

[29 : 46] But he forgot to share that with us. That's the way he left it. But the number 14, it wasn't Matthew's focus. He mentions it for one verse, but Matthew's focus was Jesus.

And Jesus's focus was us. Because as we read, and as the Apostles Creed puts it, Jesus Christ was conceived of the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary.

That's a summary of the verses we've just read. Jesus Christ was conceived of the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary. And you know, my friend, the incarnation, as we were looking at it last week in Psalm 40, the inflection of God, God taking to himself our nature, God adding to himself our human nature.

It's the greatest mystery. And yet it's the most wonderful provision for sinners. And it's the most wonderful provision because his focus, Jesus's focus by coming into this world, being born of a

Virgin, his focus was you and me.

And that's what Matthew affirms to us when the angel said, call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins. Call his name Savior, call his name salvation.

[31 : 07] That's what the name Jesus means. Call his name Jesus because his focus is to save people from their sins. His focus was to go to Calvary in order to save you from your sins.

And you know, now as someone who is saved, you're saved, you're being saved and you will be saved. That's how the Bible presents it to us. You're saved past tense, being saved now present tense and will be saved when you reach glory.

But you know, as someone who is being saved now, Jesus's focus is to protect, to protect you in his care, to provide for you his sufficient grace and to promise to you.

He's to provide, protect and promise. And you know, I always go back to his wonderful promise in John 14, where Jesus says, let not your heart be troubled.

You believe in God, believe also in me. In my father's house are many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you, I go to prepare a place for you.

[32 : 16] And if I go, I will come again and I will receive you unto myself that where I am there, you may be also. And you know, the wonderful thing is that Jesus reminds us that we don't need to focus upon anyone else because Jesus's focus is you.

His focus is you. And so you need to focus on him and keep your eyes upon him and be assured of his, his protection and his provision and his promises to you day by day.

His focus is you. Call his name Jesus for he will save his people from their sins. And so just very briefly from this interesting and a very important genealogy, Matthew has reminded us who Jesus is.

We've learned from his family that he's the son of Abraham. He's an heir of the covenant promise through whom all the families of the earth would be blessed and he's teaching us when to plead the covenant promises of God.

We've learned about his function that he's King. He's the son of David. He's a royal descendant. He's the promised Messiah. He's God's King in God's world.

[33 : 32] But he's a King who was humiliated to the point of death, even death on the cross. But he's also exalted. He's an exalted King tonight, ruling and overruling in all things.

But Matthew also has wanted to remind us this evening that Jesus has a focus and his focus is you. His focus is you as his people.

You are his inheritance. You are the heritage of the Lord. So your focus is Jesus. His focus is you. And his desire, his passion is you. Do you know I always go back to the fact that Jesus is praying for us right now.

That's his focus. He's praying for his people. You read John 17. That's all Jesus is doing. He's praying for his people because his focus is you.

[34 : 30] And it's all because he loves us and gave himself for us. So there's Matthew chapter one. His emphasis call his name Jesus for he will save his people from their sins.

May the Lord bless these thoughts to us. Let us pray. O Lord our gracious God, we give thanks to thee for thy son Jesus and the Marvelord that we're able to call upon his name.

That he has been given a name that is above all names and such a precious name to thy people that we are able to call upon the name of Jesus and to know that he is our savior.

He is our salvation. He is the reason we get up in the morning because he has saved us from our sin. And Lord our longing is that more and more would know about him that they would realize that he promises to us great and precious promises and that he is the king.

He is the royal descendant of King David and that he is the one who calls everyone to bow their knee before him and to confess that he is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

[35 : 39] Lord bless us we pray. Help us to focus upon Jesus and help us to be assured that his focus is his people. Lord bind us together we ask.

Bless us Lord we pray in all that we seek to do. Remember us Lord. Remember those who especially were not with us this evening and those Lord who are laid aside that our words meet them at their point of need that they would know the upholding them granting them strength day by day or do us good than we pray go before us taking away our iniquity and receiving us graciously for Jesus sake.

Amen. Amen.