

Ridin' High Cowboy Church

8771 FM 35

Union Valley/Royse City, TX

Pastor: Steve Bishop

***Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy:
Without holiness no one will see the Lord
Hebrews 12:14***

December 4, 2016 – Merry Christmas from the FAM O Lee

Two gospels talk about the birth of Jesus (Matthew and Luke) and two begin with the ministry of John the Baptist (Mark and John). Matthew starts with the genealogy of Jesus, which can be really boring if you've ever read this.

But it was very important. Matthew wrote to the Jews and wanted them to read about Jesus and because if Jesus is the Messiah, he has to be related to David because the Old Testament says the Messiah would come from the line of David. If he is not related to David, there is no reason to talk about him.

Matthew 1:1 This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah the son of David, the son of Abraham: Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac the father of Jacob, Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers. And it goes on and on and seems really boring.

Most history is written by people who were hired to write all the good things and leave out the bad things ... defeats were not recorded, kids who did bad things were not talked about.

Then Matthew does something really weird and strange, he begins to add women to the genealogy (4 in fact) women were never mentioned in these and the point was to show how Jesus' father was related to David.

Two of the four had a bad past, three of the four were not even Jewish (no pure blood lines).

3 Judah the father of Perez and Zerah, whose mother was Tamar,

Next week, we will talk about Tamar, there are some verses about her that even I won't read in church (ever have family members you don't want to say you're related to?)

Perez the father of Hezron, Hezron the father of Ram 4 Ram the father of Amminadab, Amminadab the father of Nahshon, Nahshon the father of Salmon, 5 Salmon the father of Boaz, whose mother was Rahab, (Rahab had a nickname, the _____) **Boaz the father of Obed whose mother was Ruth,** (Ruth was from Moab, a huge enemy of the Jewish people).

Obed the father of Jesse 6 and Jesse the father of King David. (Matthew should have stopped right there, but he goes on) **David was the father of Solomon, whose mother had been Uriah's wife,** (Matthew did not have to mention that) **Bathsheba.**

Why did Matthew include these people in the history of Jesus. Why not just stick with the men's names like normal and not mention everybody's flaws...

Because Matthew had spent 3 years with Jesus, he stood next to an empty tomb, he watched Jesus die on a cross, he heard Jesus teach, all these shady characters that nobody wanted to talk about with all their embarrassing stories. Matthew knew, these people were the point, that sin and sinners was why Jesus came.

Jesus did not only come FOR sinners, he came FROM sinners, the story of Jesus is about the light coming to a dark world. Matthew also knew that these characters in the heritage of Jesus were his kind of people and his story.

The day Matthew met Jesus is recorded in Matthew 9

Jesus and the disciples were getting off a boat in the city of Capernaum. As soon as he got off people would lay sick people in front of him, some guys bring a paralyzed man to Jesus and he says **"take heart your sins are forgiven"** I'm sure they look at their friend and tell Jesus thanks, but inside they're thinking you missed the real problem, this creates a huge fight, because the religious leaders say only God can forgive sins (Jesus says which is easier to say) you can't prove or disprove the forgiveness of sins, but so you know I can forgive sins, Jesus says to the guy, roll up your mat and take it home.

Seconds after that Matthew was looking eye to eye with the Savior of the world. For the first time.

Matthew 9:9-13 9 As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth. Imagine getting caught doing something you wouldn't want people to see (it would have been embarrassing to see Jesus and be sitting in a tax collector's booth; people bought the right to collect taxes for five years, you added money to the tax to make your living, tax collectors were always linked with sinners but they had their own category. They had decided that God was not going to help his people any more so they would get all they could in this life. This was the worst thing you could do to

betray your own people and God for money, most of their families disowned them.

The disciples were getting ready to say something to Matthew because they hated tax collectors and he was there by the port collecting taxes.

“Follow me,” he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him.

Maybe Matthew turned his tax collecting over to someone who worked for him. We don't know, but something about Jesus was more attractive than money at this point.

10 While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples. 11 When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?”

12 On hearing this, Jesus said, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. (When Jesus said this Matthew and his friends looked down the table at each other and could have been offended, Jesus is calling me sick, but do you know what people who are far away from God know? That they are far away from God.

13 But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’ For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”

Matthew was not offended because he and his friends knew they were sinners. Matthew knew also that as he begins to write his version of the life of Jesus, it was ok to include all the sinners in Jesus' family because sinners are the POINT.

Why would we focus on these people at Christmas? Because when the angel announced the birth of Jesus, he said here is the “savior of the world” the Savior from Sin.

Matthew knew that when Jesus came all of a sudden the rules changed, now God was approached based not on what we have or have not done but based on what Jesus did on the cross.

Matthew knew that the story of Christmas is about a savior being born for those who know they don't have it all together, not for those who think they are doing pretty good.

Matthew must have laughed writing down the genealogy; I have to include Tamar, Rahab and Uriah's wife.

Here is my goal for the next few weeks while we talk about these stories. If in your mind you think you get in good with God because of what you do or have done, you will totally throw that out the window.

The most religious people in the building struggle with this the most.

The story of Christmas and the story of Jesus is that system being done away with forever.

We come to God based on what Jesus has done. Jesus did not come to be a helper, but to be a Savior.

My prayer for you today is that you will be freed from a false sense of righteousness and hopeless sense of unrighteousness because God sent a Savior. This is the story of Christmas...