

-Jesus the Messiah

Matthew 1:1-17

13 Sep 09

Let's take our Bible and open to the gospel of Matthew. This morning we're going to begin to study through this gospel, the gospel of Matthew. This evening we're going to study through First Thessalonians. I encourage you to be here for that as well. But this morning I want to direct your attention to Matthew Chapter 1, verses one through 17. Matthew 1:1-17. And I want to start by reading those verses, so in case you ever wondered how to pronounce all of these names, here's where you'll find out.

"The record of 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, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers. Judah was the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, Perez was the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram. Ram was the father of Amminadab, Amminadab the father of Nashon, and Nashon the father of Salmon. Salmon was the father of Boaz by Rahab, Boaz was the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse. Jesse was the father of David the king. David was the father of Solomon by Bathsheba who had been the wife of Uriah. Solomon was the father of Rehoboam, Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asa. Asa was the father of Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah. Uzziah was the father of Jotham, Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah. Hezekiah was the father of Manasseh, Manasseh the father of Amon, and Amon the father of Josiah. Josiah became the father of Jeconiah, and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon. After the deportation to Babylon: Jeconiah became the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel. Zerubbabel was the father of Abihud, Abihud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor. Azor was the father of Zadok, Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud. Eliud was the father of Eleazar, Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob. Jacob was the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, by whom Jesus was born, who is called the Messiah. So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; from David to the deportation to Babylon, fourteen generations; and from the deportation to Babylon to the Messiah, fourteen generations."

Let's pray as we come to God's Word. Father, as we come to Your Word, and as we begin this new study through the gospel written by Your servant Matthew, we pray Lord that you'll give us attentive minds, give us receptive hearts, especially, Lord, as we focus our attention on Jesus the Messiah. I pray Lord that our Messiah, the Lord our Savior, would be revealed, made manifest to us, we'd be drawn closer to Him. So we thank You for this opportunity. We pray that You'll help us in this study. In Christ's name. Amen.

Now, you might think that starting with a genealogy is a boring, irrelevant way to begin a gospel. You might think that Matthew's in jeopardy of losing his audience before he ever really gets started. But for Matthew who was one of the Lord's apostles, and his primarily Jewish audience, this is exciting. I mean, this is good news for them. Because Matthew is announcing Jesus the Messiah, and that is glorious

news. But to support the claim that Jesus is the Messiah, to his Jewish audience, Matthew has to start this book with this genealogy. Genealogies were very important to the Jews. For example, when God led Israel in to the Promised Land, the land was divided up by the tribes, so you had to know what tribe you were in so you knew where you were supposed to live. Genealogies were important for those kinds of matters as well as any transfer of property that would happen amongst the Jews. It was also important when the Jews returned to the land after their captivity in Babylon. They had to establish who was qualified to serve as a priest in the temple and the genealogies were crucial in establishing the right order. And here we see that a genealogy is necessary for establishing the royal succession. Who is in the royal line of King David? And you might remember that at the time of Jesus's birth, Joseph and Mary had to go to Bethlehem because a census was being taken and everybody had to go to their family's home town. You had to have genealogies to be able to figure that all out. Genealogies were very important in the life of the Jewish people and you see several of them in the Old Testament beginning in Genesis chapter five and a significant one is given in First Chronicles, the first nine chapters. That's why they call it Chronicles. The first nine chapters are nothing but genealogies. Makes your reading through that portion of the scriptures go faster.

So here as Matthew proclaims Jesus as Messiah, he has to support that claim by means of a genealogy, a genealogy that is going to support the fact the Jesus came through the rightful and the promised line. So he has to, if he's going to support his claim the Jesus is the rightful, the promised Messiah, he's got to establish this through the means of a genealogy. He refers to him as Jesus the Messiah, or Jesus the Christ. The word simply means the Anointed One. And in the Old Testament they would anoint prophets and priests and kings. And Jesus is all three. He's the Prophet, He's The High Priest, and He is The King of Kings. He is The Anointed One. He's the one that the Jews had been looking for. Jesus is that Messiah. The genealogy supports that proclamation. This is good news of great joy.

Matthew has an exciting message to proclaim. Jesus is the Messiah and this genealogy supports that proclamation. And it answers the attacks of the critics. Often in the gospels we see Jesus's critics, His enemies, attacking His origins. How can this guy be the Messiah? He's from Nazareth. Or, how can this guy be the Messiah? We know His brother and his sisters. How can this guy be the right guy? This addresses those issues and today Jesus's enemies are still attacking His origins. This opening of Matthew's gospel closes the mouth of the critic, and boldly proclaims that Jesus is the Messiah.

Now there are a lot of things to take note of in this genealogy, believe it or not. There are a lot of things we could look at and consider and take a lot of time with this morning. But, I just want us to consider four things, I want to boil it down to four things, that really relate to the message that Jesus is the Messiah. And the first and the most basic thing is to understand that Jesus is the promised Messiah.

First thing you take note of is that Jesus is the promised Messiah. Verse one says that this is "the record of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham." So notice that he begins by introducing Him as the son of David. That all by itself is a messianic title: son of David. And this is a title you are going to see repeated all through Matthew's gospel. Repeatedly you will see Jesus referred to as the son of David. Why is that significant? Because God made a covenant with David that from his seed, from his line, from his descendants, his family, would come the king, the ultimate king. That

covenant was first stated in Second Samuel, chapter seven. And it's important that we read some of these verses just so you see the connection, especially so you see why Matthew's making a big deal out of all of this. In Second Samuel chapter seven verses 12 through 16, we see God making this covenant with David. He says to David, "When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever [this is speaking of Solomon]. I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me; when he commits iniquity, I will correct him with the rod of men and the strokes of the sons of men, but my lovingkindness shall not depart from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. Your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever." So God's making a promise there to David regarding his kingdom, regarding his throne, and regarding his house, his family line. The ultimate king, the king of kings, is going to come through David's line. And this is confirmed in a number of places just to read some of them to you. Second Samuel chapter 23 starting in verse one, this is the words of David, it says, "Now these are the last words of David. David the son of Jesse declares, the man who was raised on high declares, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, 'the Spirit of the Lord spoke by me, and His word was on my tongue. The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spoke to me, He who rules over men righteously, who rules in the fear of God, is as the light of the morning when the sun rises, a morning without clouds, when the tender grass springs out of the earth, through sunshine after rain. Truly is not my house so with God? For He has made an everlasting covenant with me.'" So here David affirms and confirms the fact that God made this everlasting covenant with him regarding his house, his family, his line, his descendants. Reading in Psalm 89 and we could read the whole thing, but just to read a part of it, Psalm 89 verses 28 and 29. It says, "My lovingkindness I will keep for him forever, and my covenant shall be confirmed to him [this is God speaking of David]. So I will establish his descendants forever and his throne as the days of heaven." So there again just affirming this fact that a ruler, a king, the ultimate king is going to come through the line of David. And of course you're familiar with the prophesy in Isaiah. Isaiah chapter nine verses six and seven says, "For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore. The zeal of the lord of hosts will accomplish this." There is a son coming who is going to rule on David's throne. God guarantees it. Jesus is that promised fulfillment of that covenant to David. This is the One, this is the One God was talking about. This is the One scriptures are pointing to. This is that descendent of David. He's Jesus the Messiah, the son of David. It's critical that Matthew establish that right from the beginning. But He's not just the son of David, as he says in verse one, He's also the son of Abraham who's the father of the Jewish people, and a man with whom God also made a covenant. Now that covenant is first stated in Genesis chapter 12. Let me just read you a couple of things in relation to that covenant. Genesis chapter 12 is the first statement of it. Now the Lord said to Abram, go forth from your country, and from your relatives and from your father's house, to the land which I will show you; and I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great; and so you shall be a blessing; and I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed." So Abraham is the father of a

particular nation, the nation of the Jewish people, but through him all the nations are going to be blessed. Well, how's that going to happen? Well, you see this covenant confirmed in chapter 15 and chapter 17 of Genesis but an interesting statement is made in Genesis chapter 22 verse 18 where God says, "In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed because you have obeyed My voice." In your seed. There He's specific. And you might remember in Galatians three the apostle Paul picked up on this and referred it to Christ. He's that seed coming through the line of Abraham who's going to bring blessings to the whole earth. So Jesus is in the line of Abraham. More specifically He's in the line of David. In fact, He is the promised One. He is the seed. He is the king. He is the Messiah. Jesus is the Messiah.

Now, I want you to take note of something really important here. Mark this down in your mind and don't ever forget this. Christianity is not primarily a code of morals. Christianity is not primarily a list of rules. Christianity is not primarily a whole bunch of principles for how to live your life. Also, Christianity is not primarily a system of theology. Christianity is not a bunch of doctrines, primarily. Christianity certainly deals with morality. Christianity definitely presents a theology. No doubt about that. But Christianity is primarily about a person. It's not rules to live by, it's not doctrine to think about, it's about a person. Christianity focuses on a person. And that person is Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham. So many problems could be avoided if you would just remember that. Christianity is about a person: Jesus the Messiah. It's all about this person. And Matthew is excited to tell us all about Him. Because this is what it's all about. This person. He's Jesus the Messiah. He's Jesus the promised Messiah.

Secondly, He's Jesus the Gracious Messiah. Jesus the Gracious Messiah. Verses two through 15, I won't read all the names again. You can do that over lunch this afternoon. Decide which one you want for your next child or pet. But realize when you read this list, this is a list of sinful people. Even the best of them on this list. Well, let's just think about Abraham and David. Can you think of some sins they committed? Some whoppers. This is a list of sinful people. Yet, they are all people who are in the line, the family line, of the Messiah. Now that's amazing. The sinfulness of man doesn't thwart the plan of God. He brought the Messiah, the promised Messiah, in to the earth at exactly the time He had planned from eternity past, and He brought Him in through this long line of sinners, and no matter how much they sinned, it did not mess up His plan. But you know there is something that Matthew does here that is very unusual in a genealogy. He mentions certain women. Four women in particular. Now that's unusual for a couple of reasons. One is because women were not usually listed in a Jewish genealogy, so this is highly irregular. This is extraordinary. This would have stood out to any Jew reading this genealogy and Matthew puts these women's names in there for a reason. He's trying to communicate something. These names would have stood out. And we'll talk about why in just a minute. But, another reason this is unusual, this is irregular, is because if you're going to pick four women to put in to this genealogy of the Messiah, these probably wouldn't be the four women you would choose. I mean if you're going to pick four women to put in to a Jewish genealogy, you're going to pick the big four: Sarah, Abraham's wife, right? Rebecca, Isaac's wife, and Leah and Rachel, Jacob's wives. They're the big four. They're the one's you are going to put in your Jewish genealogy. The one that you're proving this is the Messiah that has come. If you're going to pick women, which would be usual to begin with, you're going to pick four

women, those would be the four more likely that you would pick. But under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Matthew chose a different group of four. Why did he do that? Well, let's look at each one of these women and think about that for a minute. The first one is listed in verse three and that's Tamar.

Tamar was the daughter-in-law of Judah. Married Judah's oldest son. That son died so the next son, Judah's second son, took Tamar as his wife, which was according to the custom of that time which really helped with the premarital counseling because all the brothers, they had to buy in to this one that big brother is marrying. Second brother takes her as a wife, he dies also. Judah has a third son, he's a little hesitant. He's a little hesitant to give son number three to Tamar. She's established a track record here. Actually it was due to the sinfulness of those two sons that they died. But when it became clear that Judah wasn't going to follow through and do even what he said he would do and give this third son to Tamar, you might remember what Tamar did. She disguised herself as a harlot. She seduced Judah and the result is these two sons that are listed here: Perez and Zerah. You can read all about it in Genesis 38. Gross immorality is in the line of the Messiah.

Doesn't get any better when you look at the second woman in verse five. Her name is Rahab. Now we know that lady Rahab by a more full title. She's Rahab the harlot. That was her profession. She was Rahab the harlot. You can read about her in Joshua chapter two. So, you got gross immorality in the line of the Messiah. You got harlotry in the line of the Messiah.

Third woman listed here is Ruth, also in verse five. Ruth, she's a Moabite. Came from Moab, country of Moab. Actually came in to living with Israel, living within Israel, through some sin of some Israelites who left the land and went and lived in Moab. But anyways, do you remember how the Moabite nation came in to existence? It was through the act of drunken incest between Lot and one of his daughters. You can read about that in Genesis 19. But this Moabite married in to Israel and is a part of a family which gave birth to the Messiah. And there's a whole book written about here. The book of Ruth.

The fourth is listed in verse six. She's the wife of Uriah. Some of your Bibles might list her name, Bathsheba. That's not in the original, but that's who she was. Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah. What's Bathsheba famous for? Yeah, an act of adultery with King David. And when she became pregnant, David tried to cover it all up, make it look the child of Uriah. But when Uriah didn't cooperate, David had Uriah killed. You can read about that in Second Samuel 11 and 12.

So, the mention of these four women would bring to mind immorality, harlotry, incest, and adultery. And, why does Matthew include that? Why does he pick these four women? Why does he do this unusual thing? Because this highlights the fact that Jesus is a gracious Messiah. Jesus is a gracious Messiah. He came to save sinners. And that's good news. He is a gracious Messiah. In fact, His name is from the Jewish name Joshua. Joshua means 'YHWH saves'. We have a saving God who sent His son to be a gracious and saving Messiah.

That was good news for Matthew. We'll read of his conversion when we get to chapter nine. But Matthew had been a tax collector. They're still not very popular. But tax collectors in Israel were hated and despised by their fellow Jews because they were considered traitors. Because you see they were collecting taxes from their fellow Jews and giving it to the hated Romans who had control over Israel at

that time. So they hated tax collectors. They were considered traitors. Traitors to Rome, unfaithful to Israel. And, tax collectors were extortioners. They would collect more than what was required and they made themselves rich in the process. So talk about somebody you want to hate. Somebody whose collecting taxes for your enemy and getting rich off of you in the process. Well that was what Matthew was doing. Matthew was a sinner. Matthew was selfish. Matthew was driven by self interests. He didn't care about loyalty to his people. He didn't care about loyalty to his country. All he wanted to do was get rich. And this was a way to do it. Matthew was a sinner. But Jesus is the gracious Messiah. That's good news for him. That's good news for sinners like us. That's good news for me. Jesus is a gracious Messiah who came to save sinners. He came to save sinners. He does the saving work. He is the Savior. Like we sang in the song, if He hadn't loved us first there is no way we would have loved Him. I wasn't sitting around thinking about how I could love the Savior. In fact, I was totally indifferent towards the Savior. I was mostly ignorant of the Savior. He came and found me, and saved me. He's a gracious Messiah. My salvation wasn't initiated by my faith and repentance. It was initiated by Him, the gracious Messiah. Jesus is the Messiah. He's the promised Messiah. He's the gracious Messiah. He's the one who came to save sinners.

Thirdly, He is the Holy Messiah. The Holy Messiah. Verse 16 says, "Jacob was the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, by which Jesus was born, who is called the Messiah." Now here you see a significant change in the record of Matthew's genealogy. Rather than continuing on with so-and-so was the father of so-and-so, it says Joseph the husband of Mary, by whom, and in the original that is a feminine whom, by Mary, from Mary, Jesus was born. Joseph was not the physical father of Jesus. Now next week we'll learn about the virgin birth of Jesus. And this is just one way, another way, in which people attack Jesus. And in some ways it's really bizarre. Roberta and I visited a little village up on the Golan Heights, a Druze village. Druze people are kind of a hybrid mish-mash of different beliefs. Some Muslim, some Christian, it's all mixed up. The goofiest thing about what they believe is that they believe that a man is going to give birth to the Messiah. So, the more devout amongst them walk around with these like big pockets on the front of their pants ready to catch the Messiah when they give birth to Him. That's bizarre. That's strange. But that's a twisting and perversion of the truth that's led people astray.

Joseph is not the physical father of Jesus, no man is. Next week we'll learn about the virgin birth of Christ and why that's important, but what we see here is so amazing. Joseph is not the physical father but he is the legal father. And Joseph had to be the legal father because he's in the royal line of David. So for Christ to be a part of that royal line, the promised line, he's got to be connected to Joseph legally, and He is. Joseph is His legal father. He's the one married to Mary who gave birth to Jesus. But he can't be physically connected to Joseph for a couple of reasons. If He is the physical son of Joseph, well then He's just a man. And if he's just a man, then He's a sinner. And if He's a sinful man He cannot save other sinful men. He cannot be the Messiah. He must be sinless. He must be holy. So he can't be the physical son of Joseph. Now Jesus was a man. And He was born by Mary. But His conception was miraculous to say the least. We'll talk about that next time. And by the way, through Mary Jesus is physically connected to David. Luke chapter three verses 23 through 38 gives another genealogy. The best way to understand that genealogy and how it compliments Matthew's genealogy is to say that that genealogy traces the line of Mary. And even though that genealogy says that a man named Eli was the father of

Joseph, the way to understand that is that Eli is the father-in-law of Joseph and the father-in-law would also be considered a father, or could be called a father. Some of you might call your father-in-law 'dad'. And that's the same idea here. So Jesus is a blood descendent of David through Mary and He's a legal descendent through Joseph. That's amazing how God superintended all of that and made it all come together. And that's one reason why the virgin birth is so significant.

But there's even a more remarkable element to this story. Notice in verses 11 and 12 the mention of a king named Jeconiah. Jeconiah was the king of Judah at the time of the deportation to Babylon. Jeconiah you'll also see him referred to as Jehoiakim and sometimes Coniah. I don't know how that all works. Maybe Jehoiakim is his full name, Jeconiah, and his close friends call him Coniah. I don't know. But it's the same guy. And you need to see something very significant that God said about this man Jeconiah. It's found in Jeremiah chapter 22. Jeremiah chapter 22. You know that Jeremiah was a prophet at the time of the Babylonian deportation. Jehoiakim was serving as a king during that time. And here's some interesting words regarding this man. Jehoiakim, or as he's referred to here, Coniah. Verse 24, Jeremiah 22:24, it says, "As I live, declares the Lord, 'even though Coniah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah were a signet ring on My right hand, yet I would pull you off; and I will give you over into the hand of those who are seeking your life, yes, into the hand of those whom you dread, even into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and into the hand of the Chaldeans. I will hurl you and your mother who bore you into another country where you were not born, and there you will die. But as for the land to which they desire to return, they will not return to it. Is this man Coniah a despised, shattered jar? Or is he an undesirable vessel? Why have he and his descendants been hurled out and cast into a land that they had not known? O land, land, land, hear the word of the Lord! Thus says the Lord, write this man down childless, a man who will not prosper in his days; for no man of his descendants will prosper sitting on the throne of David or ruling again in Judah.'" Well those are strong words regarding this man Coniah and his descendants. When it says write him down childless that doesn't mean that he wasn't going to have any children, in fact it mentions his descendants. What it's talking about specifically is that none of his descendent, none of his physical descendants, is going to sit on the throne of David. You might go, well that causes a problem because God made a promise to David that from his line was going to come this ultimate king. Now God is saying this man Jehoiakim who is in that line, nobody from his descendants is ever sitting on that throne. So did God get around that? Jesus is not a physical descendent of Jeconiah. He's legally the son of Joseph, He's not physically the son of Joseph. He's not physically a descendent of Jeconiah. The only way to resolve this problem was through a miraculous virgin birth to present and preserve a totally holy Messiah. Jesus by not being a physical descendent of Joseph is spared from the curse pronounced on Jeconiah and his descendants. Jesus is absolutely holy. Conceived in a supernatural way that uniquely qualifies Him and Him alone to be the Messiah. Jesus is the Messiah. Jesus is the promised Messiah. Jesus is the gracious Messiah. Jesus is the holy Messiah. If He's not holy, He's no Messiah at all. And here we see God providentially sovereignly working through the events of history to present this One, the Messiah. Boy, this is exciting to Matthew. This is incredible. And to all of his Jewish readers who are reading this list, they know all of these issues. And they see how God resolved it. This is good news. God's plan isn't thwarted by Jeconiah doing what he did. God presents His Messiah, the holy Messiah.

So the fourth thing we will take note of, and that is that He is the Only Messiah. Jesus is the only Messiah. Verse 17 is an interesting verse. It says, "So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; from David to the deportation to Babylon, fourteen generations; and from the deportation to Babylon to the Messiah, fourteen generations." And Matthew does something really interesting here. He's broken the genealogy down into three groups of fourteen. These three groups highlight three significant periods in Jewish history. The first period begins with the great patriarch Abraham. Second period begins with the great king David. And the third period begins with the disgraceful deportation to Babylon. Three significant periods in the history of Israel, highlighted by how Matthew has broken down his genealogy. Now, if you're an astute student of the Old Testament, which I know you all are, and you can count, which I'm assuming you can, these groupings may not work out as neatly as Matthew seems to make it look like here. If you compare his list with Old Testament lists in history you'll start saying this second group of fourteen, it's missing some names. It's like missing four names. Also, you might think that as you count and recount group number three, maybe there's only 13 names in this third group here. But all of that is okay because Jewish genealogies, they're pretty loose. Father of can mean grandfather of, great-grandfather of, it's not that specific. So why is Matthew doing this? What's his purpose? He's trying to make something that's memorable. Three groups, 14 in each group. This genealogy to him, this is important stuff, this is worth memorizing. I'm going to put it together in a form that makes it easier to memorize. Three groups, 14 in each group. Remember, they didn't have books in those days. Most of what they learned, they learned by memorizing. Also there's something interesting about breaking the groups down into fourteen. You know, Hebrew didn't have numbers. The letters had numerical equivalents. In Hebrew, which doesn't have vowels, just consonants, David's name consists of three letters. The equivalent of our D-W-D. The numerical value of these three letters is four for a D, six for a W, and then four more for that third letter, that other D. Now let's see, 4+6, carry the 1, add the 4, 14. The numerical value of David's name is fourteen. How many were in each one of these three groups? Fourteen names. Who's the 14th on the list? David. Matthew is using every device available to him to produce a list that's going to be as easy as possible to memorize because this is good news of great joy, Jesus is the Messiah. Here's His genealogy. It all lines up. It all proves it. You're going to want to remember this. So he's done everything he can to make it memorable. And you're thinking, when I read Matthew I start at verse eighteen. Not Matthew. Not his readers. This is exciting stuff to them. This is the news of our Messiah. I want to remember this. This is important stuff. Why is it important? Because it's the genealogy of the Messiah. Verse 16, the Messiah. Verse 17, the Messiah. This is the genealogy of the Messiah. Boy, I want to get this one down.

And Jesus is the only Messiah. And this genealogy brings this out. This book was written primarily to Jews, but not exclusively because Abraham, we're told, through his seed all the nations would be blessed. Not just the Jewish people. All the nations would be blessed. Jesus isn't just the Messiah of the Jews but He's the Messiah for the whole world. These women who were highlighted in the genealogy not only is it interesting to consider who they are and the sin that attached to their life and their history, but none of them were Jews. Tamar and Rahab were Canannites. Ruth was a Moabite. Bathsheba was married to Uriah the Hittite. None of them were Jews. The gospel is good news for the whole world. And Matthew's gospel really forms a bridge between the Old Testament and the church, because twice in this gospel we hear Jesus talking about the church that He's going to establish. Matthew 16, "Upon this

rock I will build My church.” Matthew 18, when He’s talking about discipline, dealing with sin within the congregation He says, “Tell it to the church.” This forms the bridge between the Old Testament and the church. And the message of Jesus the Messiah is for all the nations because at the very end of this book, as Jesus is about to ascend back into heaven, He tells His disciples to go and make disciples of all the nations. Jesus is the only Messiah.

And again, if you look at this genealogy you’ll see Jews and Gentiles, you’ll see men and women, you’ll see those that were considered good kings and those who were considered evil kings. You’ll see people who were well known and some people who were totally unknown, except for their name being on this list. The point is, all of them, whether they are Jew or Gentile, man or woman, whether they’re considered a good person or an evil person, whether they are known or unknown, everybody needs Jesus as the Messiah. This genealogy tells us an incredible story about Jesus the Messiah. He’s the promised, the gracious, the holy, the only Messiah. Matthew is proclaiming exciting news that brings joy because it tells of a Messiah and it tells an incredible story. One writer put it this way, “Through all the troubled centuries, through all the national changes, whether reigning in splendor or dethroned and in captivity, or afterwards subsiding into insignificance under the rule of the high priest or of Herod, the appointed line was preserved until among the rude population of an obscure village are found the hard working carpenter and the poor maiden who were chosen to rear the seed of Abraham, the Son of David.” It’s an incredible story of how God worked out. It’s a mind boggling record. Jesus is the Messiah. Jesus is the anointed king.

But that’s only good news if you know Him. It means nothing if you don’t know Him. One writer said, “Jesus is the anointed king, but not everyone who hangs around the court speaks with the king.” What we’re doing here today at Believer’s Fellowship, we’re kind of hanging around the court. We’re hearing the proclamation regarding the king. We’re hearing the announcement of the anointed one which is confirmed by His heritage, His genealogy. You’ve heard it. You’ve heard the announcement and the confirmation that Jesus is the Messiah. The question is, do you have a speaking acquaintance with Him or are you just kind of hanging around the court? You can know a lot about Him without ever knowing Him. And, in fact, perhaps your reaction to this genealogy reveals where you stand. If you found it boring and disinteresting then perhaps that’s because you don’t know Him. Because if you knew Him, boy this would excite you.

Here’s the good news. If you don’t know Him, you can today. You can turn from following whatever else has been ruling in your life and turn to follow Him today. For those who know Him, like Matthew did, now this is great news. This is confirming. This is assuring. And this is humbling. That God in His providence would so preserve this promised line and bring forth a Messiah who would save me from my sin by giving up Himself in my place, to think that God would do that, it’s overwhelming. It is not what I deserve. It’s an amazing demonstration of grace. It is incredible mercy that God would make these promises about a coming Messiah and He would keep His promise, preserving this line, resolving all problems, and present this Messiah. For people who didn’t want Him, for people who didn’t ask for Him, for people who quite frankly were perfectly happy living apart from Him. I mean, when I got saved if somebody had said, hey how would you like to be happy in your life? If that was their gospel approach, I would have said I’m happy. Man I got everything going my way. Beat it! Go talk to somebody who needs

you. We didn't want Him. We were content without Him. And yet He came after us. It is a cause for most profound thanks. This is something we should repeat to ourselves every single day. God make a promise, He graciously kept that promise, He sent a perfectly holy savior, the only one that can pay for my sin, and He's the only way and He drew me to that only one. You ought to start off everyday preaching that to yourself. You might think a genealogy is boring. Matthew said, man, let's see, how can I start off my gospel in a really powerful way? Genealogy, that will do it. Because this is exciting news. Jesus is the Messiah. We just need to say thank you Lord. Amen? Let 's pray.

Father we thank You for the good news. The good news of a Savior. And as we reflect upon this genealogy and all that it represents and all that it tells us, it tells us of a God who deliberately, purposefully, works in history to bring about salvation. The story doesn't end with this genealogy, the birth of a Savior. The story is still being written. Names are being added. The history is yet to be finished as the one who came as the Messiah continues to save people. Father we give You thanks today. We give You thanks Lord that You would work in such a way that one was born who could represent us, who could stand in our place, and based upon His own sinless perfection and holiness could offer Himself up as the sacrifice in our place so that all of our sins could be forgiven and His righteousness could be credited to our account. It's absolutely overwhelming Lord. I can see why Matthew was excited about this. I can see why Matthew wanted to make it memorable. Lord, help us to pray these things deep within our own hearts and in our own memory so that when we face temptation, when we face opposition, when we face difficulties we might be reminded of Jesus the Messiah. I pray that Jesus would be exalted in our lives, in our hearts, in our words, in our church, that it would become clear that for us Christianity is not about a list of rules or a system of theology. It's all about this person, the person of Jesus. Jesus the Messiah. Lord, we give you thanks for Him today and we pray this in His name. Amen.